

Baghawat Geeta, Class 116: Chapter 8, Verses 23 to 28

Shloka # 22:

ॐ शिवो जगत्कर्मणो भवति ॥
ॐ शिवो जगत्कर्मणो भवति ॥ 8.22 ॥

The supreme Spirit, O Arjuna! may be won by means of unswerving devotion-the Spirit in whom all beings dwell and by whom all this is pervaded.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, Sri Krishna made a comparative and contrasting study of two possible destinations for a human being. Although one can have many goals including the four purusharthas, Sri Krishna compressed all those goals into two types. One is an infinite goal while the other is a finite goal. Every goal is finite or infinite. Even dharma, artha, kama moksha are finite. Because dharma means punyam and any amount of punyam you acquire, it is born out of finite actions. Wealth accumulated is finite; Kama that includes all forms of entertainment is also finite. The 14 Lokas including Brahma loka, even Brahmaji himself, are all finite. They may have a long duration of existence, but nevertheless they are finite. Even the sun will explode one day showing its finite existence.

Finite goals can also be called anatama while infinite goal can be termed as atma or god himself. God is sashvatham everything else is ashashvatham. Intelligent person must see god alone. So choose god alone as your goal. This is what Krishna's advice or teaching is. And to drive home this point, he just discussed this elaborately from shloka's #15 through # 22.

And when we say God is the destination, initially we present God as a person, situated in some loka, like Vaikuntha or

Krishna marga: Gloomy path. In this path one enjoys pleasures of another world and then returns. It is known as Devayanam or Krishnayanam.

Shloka # 24:

अग्निं ज्योतिं दिनं चतुर्दशं च षट्मासं
उत्तरायणं ब्रह्मज्ञानं प्राप्नुवन्ति ॥८.२४॥

The fire, light, day, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern solar movements, departing in time marked by these, Brahman-knowers reach Brahman.

Sri Krishna defines Shukla Gathi or Devayanam here. Those who go through shukla marga attain God or Krama mukti. To attain karma mukti one goes first to Brahma loka, gets Gyanam there and then gets liberation. The nature of shukla marga is now described. Vedas talk of Shukla and Krishna margas. Brahmasutra provides greater details of both these paths. There are guides, devatas, to help travellers in these paths. They take you to a particular destination and hand you off to another guide. Who are these devatas? They are: Agni, Jyoti, Ahaha, Shukla and Uttarayanam. These are the five devatas for Shukla marga.

Uttarayanam is the six-month period when sun travels north. Devata here means the intelligent principle governing laws of nature. All devatas put together is Hiranyagarbha Tatvam. These five devatas are the guides.

Who is the traveller? They are special people entitled to this travel. They are Saguna Brahma Upasakas or worshippers of God with attributes. Ritualists or Karmi's don't get to travel in this marga.

A Gyani will also not get to travel this path because he gets his liberation here itself. A Gyani does not need Krama mukti. The karmi, ritualist, does not get any mukti, jivan or krama. So, the route is shukla gathi and the traveller is also known.

Shloka # 25:

धूम्रं रात्रिं चान्धिकां च षण्मासं सूर्यस्य
दक्षिणमार्गगत्य तदा योगिनो लौकिकं ८.२५

Smoke, night, the dark (fortnight) the six months of the sun's southern course-passing away during time marked by these, the Yogin reaches the lunar light and returns.

In shloka:

Tatra means the second path or Krishna marga.

Yogi means Karmi or ritualist; they don't practice upasanas. They obtain punyams of a lower quality. Upasana gives the highest quality of punyam, as mental sadhana is more difficult. Karmi reaches swarga loka or Chandra loka that are lower than Brahma Loka (satya loka).

The guides here are: Dhuma Devata (smoke); Ratri devata; Krishna paksha devata and Dakshinayana Devata. More devatas are cited by Chandogya Upanishad to take one to Swargaloka.

Why is swarga loka path a dark one? Here he will go and enjoy, but once punyam is over he has to come back to this world. Even thinking of his return adds to his misery. The traveller here is a karmi or a ritualist.

Shloka # 26:

एतौ च लोकाश्चान्धिकाश्चैव सततं
संजायन्ते ८.२६

These two are indeed the light and dark courses held to be eternal for the world. By means of the first one goes and does not return; by the other one comes back again.

Sri Krishna is gives the names of the paths here. The two paths are known as Shukla gathi and Krishna gathi. When were the two roads created? They were created with the creation of

travellers. Knowing the difference between the two margas a Yogi, an intelligent seeker, a viveki, is never confused with respect to the path.

O Arjuna I assure, you are an intelligent seeker; so become an upsaka or take the path of upsana. Continue with karma but also perform Saguna Ishwara Upasana.

Yoga in shloka means Saguna Ishwara Upasana. Between Karma and Upasana choose upasana. Keep in mind Gyanam is still superior to both Karma and Upasana. It is, however, not discussed in chapter # 8.

Gyanam comes back in Chapter # 9. With this the discussion on this topic has concluded. Now Sri Krishna glorifies God as the destination.

Shloka # 28:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 8.28 ॥

The meritorious fruits (of learning) the Vedas, of sacrifices, penances and gifts-all these the Yogin transcends by knowing this, and he also reaches the supreme Primal State.

Yogi Idam Sarvam in shloka means Saguna Ishwara Upasaka. Having understood the teaching, this upsaka votes for Krama mukti and attains God.

Here God is described as Param adhyam sthanam; the supreme and beginning less abode; or destination; So adhyam means sarva karanam; param means the highest and sthanam means destination, which is none other than nitya Ishwaram upaiti.

What is glory of Nithya Ishwara? It is greater than all karma phalam's including Veda parayanam, rituals, vows, charity and many more such karmas. Veda promises punya phalam. However,

Upana phalam transcends all these karma phalams. Upasana gets God, so take to saguna Ishwara Upasana. So, O Arjuna! remember God at time of death, says Sri Krishna. With this the seventh question of Arjuna also has been answered.

So thus is concluded the 8th chapter titled, aksharam brahma yoga. Better title for this chapter might have been prayanakala smarana yoga. In some books, this chapter is titled, Taraka Brahma yoga. They are all acceptable.

Ram Ramaswamy

Sadhana Sadhushta Sambandhi

Scriptures (and Swamiji) frequently emphasize that to acquire vedic knowledge, one should have sadhana sadhusta sambandhi or improve up on four requirements. I am writing this post for easier recollection.

Swamiji introduces the concept of sadhanasadhustasambandhi in TatvaBodha class and calls them as four "D's". Swamiji elaborates this concept in other classes as well. The four "D's" are:

1. Discrimination (Vivekaha)
2. Dispassion (Vyragyam): Free from ragha, krotha and bayam; one who enjoys calm mind.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, from shloka # 15 to shloka # 22, Sri Krishna is comparing two forms of human goals.

One attainable through karma through a varieties of actions, loukika and vaidika; scriptural and non-scriptural; secular and religious. They can give one set of results and the other type of goal attainable is through Nishkama upasana.

Sri Krishna wants to point out that Karma phalam is finite while upasana phalam is infinite. We are not comparing gyanam to any other sadhana here. Here comparison is between karma phalam and upasana phalam. Upasana phalam is superior to karma phalam. Karma can give all types of results upto Brahma loka but they are all finite in nature. Nishkama Upasana gives one Krama Mukti, which is an infinite result.

Therefore, karma phalam is parichinnam whereas Nishkama upasana phalam, krama mukthi, is aparichinna. This is the idea Sri Krishna wants to convey through the shlokas beginning from the 15th to 22nd.

While talking of material results, the highest goal possible, within time and space, is Brahma Loka prapthihi, which is also finite. Sri Krishna admits that while Brahmaji's life is a long one even he finally faces an end. He spoke about one day of Brahmaji as being 2000 Chatur Yugas. It appears as though it is infinite, while in reality it too is finite.

Sri Krishna gives some incidental information now. When Brahmaji's day starts, creation comes into being. When he goes to sleep creation goes into an unmanifest condition. Similar process plays out with an individual as well. When he wakes up everything rises. And when he goes to sleep his private world is resolved. This is known as Laya.

In Brahmaji's world, objective world rises and resolves. In shloka # 18 all Vyaktas arise from Avyakta condition. They were resting in Brahmaji in a potential form.

We also experience this through our dream world every day. We throw our dream world from our own mind; our today's dream is potentially there in our mind in form of Vasanas and impressions. We throw out the dream-space; dreamtime and dream objects and we have duration for the dream as well. In the same way, with Brahmaji, he withholds the creation and again throws them out. And that form withheld by Brahmaji is called avyaktam.

Similar idea was discussed in chapter 2 as well. Thus we learn that the universe is never created by anybody. Creation is wrong word to use; **nothing is created or destroyed**. This applies to the creation of the world as well. So the question of why god created does not arise for us. For us, the world is there eternally. Nobody created the world. It is against law of conservation of energy. **Thus the word creation must be replaced by the word manifestation. The world was always there, God did not create; it was there in potential form; and the potential matter; the potential world in time acted upon by time, undergoes a modification and the unmanifest, now modified, becomes manifest.**

Time is an integral part of matter and creation. Matter and time cannot be separated. They are inseparable. That is the reason we do not know about time before the big bang.

With time everything goes back into unmanifest condition then it comes back as manifest. This cycle of manifest and unmanifest is an eternal process. So, unmanifest does not mean an end of the world.

Shloka # 19:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 8.19 ॥

This same host of beings after repeated births, get dissolved, helplessly, O Arjuna! at the time of nightfall and are born at day break.

If universe goes to unmanifest and then again manifests, what happens to all jivas?

Sri Krishna says the individual will also have the same destiny. They also will go to unmanifest condition; in which all the Jivas will remain potentially inactive, dormant, like the hibernation of some animals; we all will go back to hibernation. And after remaining in potential form for many yugas; again the jivas will emerge with their own karmas, punyam and papam intact.

How will we remain in pralaya? God has given us a simulated experience. We get a taste of it when we go to sleep. In sleep, our ego gets resolved and it remains dormant without destruction.

Citing an example, suppose in tonight's sleep, all the 8th chapter knowledge was destroyed, then next class I have to again start with the same topic. But how am I able to continue with the same topic? Because, during sleep, your knowledge is not destroyed, it goes to a potential condition. In the same way, during pralaya, all the Jivas go to their potential condition and again come back in the next srishti.

The same group of Jivas will go dormant, but will come back again and again in an eternal process. Thus, no new jiva is created. The question comes up, if no new jiva is created why is there a population explosion? When we think of jivas we tend to think of human beings alone. In reality jivas include all beings including human, animal, plants, insects, lokas, asuras, devas etc. All of them put together, the number remains same as per our scriptures.

Swami Chinmayananda used to say; previously there were many forests with animals. They were hunted and killed. They all were converted to human beings.

New Jivas can't be created. Even if one can be created what type of body should it get? A Jiva has to have past karmas.

the witness of unmanifest and manifest condition of matter. That witness consciousness does not fall within the witnessed field because the observer is different from and beyond the observed.

To understand this, in the waking state, material world, time and space are experienced. In dream too I experience a world conditioned by time and space.

When I go to the sleep state, the whole material world is resolved; and the time and space also go to unmanifest condition; and **there is total blankness; but even at that time, there is someone who is aware of that condition.** Who is aware of that; I am aware; how do you know, I am aware; because when I wake up, I am able to talk about the blank state, that means I was continuing, unchangeably, even when the duality came and the duality got resolved, I remained unaffected by that. This observer of the matter, this observer of the change, is the changeless consciousness principle, which is beyond time and space. Consciousness does not fall within time. Consciousness does not fall within space.

It is beyond time and space.

Consciousness therefore does not fall within matter and therefore consciousness does not fall within the physical and the chemical laws. That is reason the scientists are struggling to understand Consciousness; the physical and chemical laws do not appear to apply to it. It does not follow physical and chemical laws. Therefore, scientists are not able to understand it. Some scientists have started saying consciousness is beyond these laws and cannot be located. Only something in space can be located. Who is this consciousness? It is the witness consciousness. It is God, says Sri Krishna. It is Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam Brahman.

What about various forms attributed to God? A gross mind cannot grasp the subtle consciousness, which is beyond space

and time.

Therefore until the intellect gets sufficiently sensitized, until it is sufficiently prepared, we have to attribute a form. We have to worship form. Ultimately God is Shudha Chaitanya Swarupam. O Arjuna! Become one with this God.

And O Arjuna, I want to you to discover oneness with that God. That is the aim of all religious and spiritual struggles.

One, avyaktha is nothing but unmanifest matter; other than that unmanifest matter, there is something else, which is a third entity. So the three entities are:

- 1) manifest matter No.1;
- 2) unmanifest matter No.2; you may call it energy and
- 3) 3rd one is consciousness, which is beyond manifest and unmanifest matter.

These three principles exist. Consciousness is known as Sanatana, one not affected by time. It witnesses time, its arrival and dissolution without being affected by time. Hence it is called immortal or timeless. Where is it present? It does not perish even when all beings perish through unmanifestation. Its location—it does not have a location; rather time and space are located in consciousness.

A God is located in space is the basis for the question where is god? It cannot be answered.

In field of god, cause and effect do not enter. So you cannot ask the when, where, why, how etc in relation to God, all these questions can be answered only with regard to a thing, which are time, space and causality

If you remember Kathopanishad's definition of

Brahman; it is one which is beyond the concept of causality;

Through knowledge you do not reach Brahman,

Through knowledge you drop the notion that Brahman is away.
So all these are the important fundamentals of Vedanta, which you have to reflect upon and it is about reaching one from whom one never returns.

Sri Krishna, Rama etc are my inferior nature or Apara Prakriti. Consciousness is Para Prakriti. Start with AP then one day goes to PP.

Shloka # 22:

ॐ परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं
परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं परमं सत्त्वं 8.22

The supreme Spirit, O Arjuna! may be won by means of unswerving devotion-the Spirit in whom all beings dwell and by whom all this is pervaded.

O Partha! So this avyaktha No.2; this consciousness

principle is called Para purusha; So he is the supreme purusha; supreme Brahman, the highest reality; the absolute truth. I have given two meanings of the word

purusha. One is that it is the absolute Brahman in which all beings rest. The other is the idea that Brahman does not exist within the creation rather the whole creation rests in that Brahman.

Purusha is a description of nature of Brahman.

In him alone all beings rest. By this Consciousness whole creation is pervaded. If anything exists, consciousness must be there. To know it exists, the being requires consciousness. Existence presupposes knowledge; it pre-supposes consciousness. So, this consciousness pervades whole creation. Sri Krishna feels this may be too high a matter to understand. Don't get disheartened, he says. What is required is sincere

desire to get this knowledge.

So, Sri Krishna says, You can go to nirgunam brahma by your Nishkama bhakthi; once you understand that alone is the ultimate goal; because anything else falls within domain of time and space and therefore mortality; I am no more interested in mortality and the tyranny of time. But once you have understood tyranny of time, and once you are sincerely devoted to the timeless Brahman, you are called a Nishkama bhaktha; or a mumukshu; and with this sincere desire, you continue your saguna bhakthi; sooner or later, you will get the qualifications required for that nirguna bhakthi; therefore he says that Brahman is attainable.

So with this Sri Krishna completes his comparative study of God as higher goal and world as the lower goal, and an intelligent person would vote for god and not for

world and if you vote for God you become a Nishkama upasaka.

Take away:

1. The world was always there, God did not create; it was there in potential form; and the potential matter; the potential world in time acted upon by time, undergoes a modification and the unmanifest, now modified, becomes manifest.
2. The same group of Jivas will go dormant, but will come back again and again in an eternal process. Thus, no new jiva is created.
3. Nothing is created or destroyed. Thus the word creation must be replaced by the word manifestation.
4. Through knowledge you do not reach Brahman;

Through knowledge you drop the notion that Brahman is away.

Ram Ramaswamy

Vyragyam – Detachment

Tattva Bodha defines Vyragyam as desirelessness for the pleasures of this world and the other upper worlds.

Put it in another way, it is discriminating the REAL from the UNREAL and renouncing the Unreal and adopting the Real .

In KATHOPANISHAD'S language, it is rejecting the "PREYAS" and electing the "SREYAS"

Bharthruhari, a great SAGE , compiled 100 mind boggling Sanskrit slokas , entitled "VYRAGYA SATHAKAM". which makes any one, to take up SANYASA instantly.

In Chandogya Upanishad, Narada Maharshi approaches his guru, Sanath kumara and asks for higher knowledge. The guru asks him to enumerate all he has already learnt so he can instruct him on the rest. Narada, enlists his knowledge which includes astrology, astronomy, literature, music, art, dance, grammar, logic, all the material sciences, vedas, animal and snake knowledge etc. To this Sanath Kumara replied that what he learnt was mere NAMES and missed the entire **essence** and hence taught him the atma vidya.

Sankara Charya, in a simple treatise called "BHAJA GOVINDAM" brought out the same message .

Sasthras use a familiar theme called "PRATHI PAKSHA BHAVANA" (REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY) to explain away the spiritual facts.

This process involves, first presenting the world view of happiness , the **traditional reality** (VYAVAHARIKA SATHYAM) .Then analyzing and concluding the reverse to be the actual truth, the **Absolute Reality** (PARAMRTHIKA SATHYAM) and redirecting the individual towards the real truth.

It is important to note that Sasthras do not condemn attachment, (especially in the early stages of life) , towards the possessions and people.

What sasthras condemn is the addiction(THIRST) towards these material pursuits.

Ultimately ,of course one need absolute detachment to attain freedom.

It is like , to close the bank account, you need to pay off

the debts or with draw the balance as applicable.

Similarly, to achieve total freedom, you need to clear both the papam and punyam balance and get a clearance certificate.

As long as you recognize your possessions and people are different from you(MAMA KARA) and they can leave you with out notice in accordance to their PRARABDHA KARMA , it is acceptable to love them. This is allowed attachment.

But when you convert your people and your possessions as part of your self (AHAM KARA) and cannot accept them to be separate from you and cannot tolerate their loss, this is called excessive attachment or addiction .

This addiction is what the Sasthras vehemently warn us to avoid.

This was the problem with Arjuna also , when he treated his grand father , Bhishma , as part of himself and could not separate him as another individual. So he did not want to fight with him.

In the very first stanza of BHAJA GOVINDHAM , Sankara denounces the acquisition of material sciences (APARA VIDHYA) all our lives.

Although they are important and needed in the initial period of life, we need to understand that they do not give us freedom .

Ultimately you need to acquire PARA VIDHYA which alone makes you free from samsara..

Next , Sankara takes up the issue of acquiring money. Money is very important and sasthras recognizes this fact and allows it as long as it is earned ethically, live modestly and share it with the needy. It is the excessive thirst for accumulating money that is condemned by sasthras.

Sankara boldly proclaims that too much money is an obstacle for peace of mind.and declares that It does not give even a trace of happiness .

Sankara asks us to remember this truth constantly.

He says that we need to fear even our own son when we are too rich.

When you are able to earn money, your dependents adore you.

When your money dries up, they do not even say hello to you.

When you are alive, your relatives inquire your welfare. When the PRANA leaves the body, even the darling wife is afraid of touching your dead body.

This is the way of the world.

It is but natural to have attraction towards opposite sex and the attractive body parts. This excessive attraction towards the beauty is a delusion because on analysis we came to realize that they are mere ugly masses of flesh, fat and blood only.

Life is unstable like a water drop on a lotus leaf. As long as it stays on the leaf, it is unsteady and dancing all the time. But when it finally falls on the water under neath, it merges with water and retains stability.

In the same way, as long as we are in samsara, the life is very turbolant . The permanent peace is achieved only when one merges with BRAHMAN.

Who is your wife and who is your son, Sankarra wants us to inquire. When analyzed, your wife is the daughter of someone else and joined you only at some time in your life. She brought with her, her own PRARABHDHA and needed to exhaust it .You should treat both as travellers and should recognize that you need to depart when you reach your destinations as dictated by the KARMA.

The son also came through you, but he is a separate individual with his own prarabdha to experience and exhaust. Realize that all the losable things, including your money, your youth, your relatives etc. will be gone at any time without notice. They are all impermanent . BRAHMAN alone is permanent and hence try to attain Him.

Few other comments.

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Monkey story. There was a monkey which was eating the peanuts of a farmer. He tried to chase it away but the monkey kept on coming and eating the peanuts. The farmer designed a plan to teach the monkey. He fixed a pot on the ground and filled the pot with peanuts. The pot has a narrow neck which enables the monkey to put his open hands in and out. but not the closed fist. The monkey grabbed the fist full of peanuts and tried to eat but could not do so because of the narrow neck. The farmer came and started beating the monkey. The monkey would not let the grip go and hence received the banging. If only he lets the grip go, he will be free.

In the same way as long as you hold on to the people and possessions, freedom is not possible. You need to learn to let

go.

—
Napoleon the great, who conquered the whole world, instructed his people, to parade his coffin along the streets of the city with his empty hands up in the air , proving to every one that he is leaving this world empty handed.and none of his achievements travelling with him.

When one dies, all the wealth acquired is left behind at home. The friends and relatives are left behind at the cremation ground.

Only the punyam and papam acquired in one's life accompanies him .

Bhartruhari, in his "VYRAGYS SATHAKAM " describes three possible destinations to the money you earned.

1.BHOGAM—(Enjoyment)— Enjoy the wealth you acquired for your personal comforts. Feel free to enjoy all the pleasures to the fullest.

2.DHANAM--(Charity)-After fulfilling your comforts , donate freely to the needy and less fortunate.

(Do not leave too much money to the children. As Warren Buffett said, leave just enough so they still have incentive to work ,not too much so they stay idle and waste the money and also their life.)

3.NASAM—(Loss) Total waste of your hard earned money.

Sage BHARTHURHARI , sympathizes with those unfortunate souls who neither enjoyed their wealth nor donated and helped the needy.

Their money goes to the third destination – which is total waste of all his efforts in accumulating all the wealth all through his life.

DEVARAJULU NAIDU KATTA.

Tatitreyā Upanishad, Class 46

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 6, Shloka # 1:

He knew that Bliss was Brahman, for, from Bliss all these

beings are produced, by Bliss do these things live. They go to Bliss on departing and become one with it—this is the knowledge learnt by Bhrgu and taught by Varuna. This is established in the supreme space—in the excellent cavity of the heart. He who knows thus becomes one with Brahman. He becomes the possessor (assimilator) of food and the eater (enjoyer) of it. He becomes great in progeny, cattle and gains the splendor of true brahmana-hood. Indeed, he becomes great through fame and renown.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, we have completed first six anuvakahas of Brghuvalli. In these anuvakahas the Upanishad gave a summary of Brahavidya. Let us remember that Brahavidya was already discussed as the main topic of Chapter two. Chapter 3 has provided us with a summary of Jivatma-paramatma aikyam, revealed through pancha kosha viveka. Jagat karanam Brahma is Pancha Kosha Vilakshanam atma. This Pancha kosha Vilakshana atma was identified as ananda atma. Here teaching reaches its culmination. This pancha Kosha vichara was named Tapas. Veda Purva Bhaga defines Tapas as austerities. Vedanta, however, does not define Tapas as austerities but as one pointed enquiry into Self. Pancha Kosha viveka enquiry process was discussed in this context. Through the story of a father and son the necessity of a guru was indicated; even Brghu needed a guru. In this portion an important mantra was quoted as Brahma Lakshanam or definition of Brahman as Srishti, sthithi, laya karanam. With this the first part of Brghuvalli is over. Benefits of this Brahma vidya were next provided. Life remains settled. Psychologically one remains in a settled condition, relieved and in lightened condition. Worldly benefits were also mentioned. Now we are entering second part of Brghuvalli in Anuvakaha # 7.

Ch 3, Anuvakaha # 7, Shloka # 1:

Do not blaspheme food; that shall your vow. Prana is food. Body is the eater of food. The body is fixed in prana. The

prana is fixed in the body. Thus food is fixed in food. He who knows that food is fixed in food, becomes one with Brahman. He becomes possessed of food and he becomes the eater of the food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle wealth and in splendor of Brahmanhood. He becomes great in fame.

In the following anuvakahas, the Upanishad will prescribe certain meditations to prepare for self-knowledge; certain descriptions are mentioned such as Vrttam; four or five Vrttam's are suggested. Most of them are connected with annam. Why is so much importance given to annam? Annam is the first stage of Vedantic enquiry. It is the grossest stage and most of our worries and time are spent connected to annamaya in search of security. This is grossest form of "I". Through this we reach the subtlest "I". Annam is first rung of this ladder. So to express gratitude to annamyam and annam (essence of annamaya) several Vrthams are given.

A particular meditation group is also prescribed. Intention is to look at whole universe as body of God. This new perspective is that universe is not fragmented, but is one cosmic organism or is Ishwara Shariram. This macro Ishwara is Virat Ishwara. It is a unique teaching by the Upanishad of what god is. In other religions, god is a separate entity who remains away from our world in an unseen place. This is known as Tatastha Ishwara, a god away from world, who is safely ensconced somewhere.

Vedanta says, Ishwara is not away from world; rather he is manifestation of the world. How to manifest this? How can I look at world as one whole principle? Citing example of our body, individual bodies have several parts, organs etc. Why do we look at a bunch of organs as one whole body? There is logic to it. Even though there are several parts to our body, they are all an interconnected whole. Each organ is connected and dependent on other organs, interconnected and interdependent. So, if one organ gets affected, others are also affected, although probably over a period of time. Thus, in diabetes,

while pancreas is affected, over time it also affects the feet and the brain. This connection is not physically perceptible. Similarly, whole cosmos is one organic whole. Every part of creation is related to various parts of creation. Environmental balance is affected, related to rainfall especially, when deforestation occurs.

The more we study, the more we see interconnectedness between human beings, animals, plants, rivers etc. Similarly it is with the butterfly effect where the flutter of wings of a butterfly can affect a far away star as well.

Everything is interconnected and in a symbiotic relationship. Upanishad wants to reveal this interconnection. Three pairs of objects are taken and we are asked to meditate on the interdependency of each pair. This interdependency is presented as two types:

1) Annam Annadaha Sambandam;

Here it is consumer and consumed relationship. Thus when we are alive we (body) consume earth or products coming out of earth such as plants. This is the Consumer.

After death the earth consumes our body; so here it is consumed.

So our body is once a consumer and at another time it is consumed.

2) Pratishta Prathishthita sambandam

Mutually supported relationship. Each pair supports each other. Thus, when we are children, our parents support us. When same parents grow old, in their second childhood, it is children's responsibility to support them. This is mutual support. The same situation plays out in gurukulam. Brahmachari is not charged a fee for his stay in gurukulam. But when Brahmachari leaves and takes up Grahastha ashrama he

should support the gurukulam.

Gurukula initially provided support but later it becomes the one that is supported.

In Anuvakaha # 7, this relationship is illustrated via one's between three pairs respectively.

First pair is Annam and Shariram.

This pair is meditated upon to see relationship in two types mentioned.

In anuvakaha # 8 the pair is Agni and Jalam. In this upasana the two types of relationship are meditated upon.

In anuvakaha # 9 the pair is Prithvi and Akasha. Here again one meditates upon two types of relationship.

By meditating on these three pairs we can see interconnectedness of this universe. Thus, dharma is defined as one that ensures this cosmic balance is not disturbed. We are destroying trees and creating a lung problem for the universe. If I am aware of the cosmic rhythm, I will not perform an apa-shruti. While chanting a mantra if one person chants in a different shruti, it jars. Similarly, adharma is disturbance of cosmic harmony. It's negative effect won't be felt immediately, but after decades the problems are felt. Some are even irreversible. Sri Krishna in the Gita talks of this effect as act of an immature and selfish person's who is not aware of this balance.

This is a beautiful meditation. Daily Sandhya vandanam

too has a portion addressing this. During sandhya vandanam, when we say Tarpayami, it means I am aware of this interconnectedness. These three upsanas together equal the Virat Upsana or Vishwarupa upasana. It is very important to know this before understanding Nirguna Brahman. This is the topic of anuvakaha's # 7, 8 and 9 respectively.

Explaining anuvakaha # 7 Swamiji said:

The first discipline: When food is given, do not complain about the food. Accept it with satisfaction. Keep in mind that you get what you deserve. This should be taken as a vow, as Annam is Brahman.

The First pair is Pranam and Shariram.

From one angle Shariram consumes Prana Shakti. From another angle this role is reversed where it is consumed, meaning Shariram is consumed. How to assimilate this concept? At time of breathing, the air is taken into body where it is consumed as prana vayu. Here prana is annam.

Another angle is, when you are physically active.

To reduce obesity, one exercises. At that time Prana is activated; then Prana eats body's own weight. Thus prana eats up body. So, here body is annam and prana is annadam, the first relationship.

Second relationship: Pratishta Prathishthita sambandam: Here body is supported by Prana and Prana is supported by Shariram. How to assimilate this?

Body can't be alive if not backed by Prana Shakti. Prana is the supporter that keeps body alive.

Another angle: Prana Shakti is capacity to act or it is also Kriya Shakti. Prana, however, can function only in an enclosed body. So, a body is required for Prana to function. After death, Prana is still there but it needs another body for it to act. So, body supports Prana to function.

Can Prana be active without a body? Prana cannot turn even a page without a body. It needs shariram to be alive. This is Pratishta Prathishthita sambandam.

Therefore annam (prana) and anavan (shariram) of the pair are

mutually supported. This meditation is to be practiced. What is benefit of this meditation? Whoever benefits on this mutual dependence of prana and shariram will be well supported in his life. Not only will he have good support, he will also get other worldly benefits, namely name, fame, food and health. One vrtham and upasana are now complete.

CH 3, anuvakaha # 8, shloka # 1:

Do not reject food. That is duty. Water is food. Fire is the food eater. Fire is fixed in water, water is fixed in fire. So food is fixed in food. He who knows that food is fixed in food, gets established in Brahman. He becomes possessor of food and an eater of food. He becomes great in progeny, in cattle and in his spiritual lustre. He becomes great in fame.

Second Vrtham: Don't waste food on plate. It is disrespect to Annam. Suppose I am full, should I keep eating? Don't let such a situation develop. Take only what you need to begin with. Suppose server keeps serving despite my protestations? Here again one may cause waste of food; but here the papam belongs to the server. So be careful in eating and serving. **Do not waste food is the vratham.**

Upasana # 2: The pair is Agni and Jalam.

Water is annam, the consumed. Fire is annada, the consumer.

In role reversal, water is consumer and fire is consumed.

How to assimilate this idea? At internal level, when we drink water it is consumed by Vaishvanara Agni of body or digesting fire.

Another angle is that when we quench fire and a fire hazard occurs, we extinguish fire with water. Here water consumes fire.

Take away:

1. When food is given, do not complain about the food.
2. Do not waste food is a vratham.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 113 : Chapter 8, Verses 8 to 12

Shloka # 8:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥८.८॥

0 Arjuna! Steadily thinking with an unswerving mind, disciplined in the yoga of repeated practice, one proceeds to the supreme, divine Spirit.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, Sri Krishna answering the seventh question of Arjuna, from the fifth shloka onwards, is dealing with topic of remembering God at time of death. He is also dealing with Saguna Ishwara Upasanam or meditating on god with attributes. This Upasaka is a nishkama upasaka whose goal in life is spiritual and who has acquired Vairagyam.

And this Nishkama upasaka can take to two different courses of

life, one is practising Nishkama upasana for sometime, and thereafter switching over the sadhdana to the vedanta vicharah; or nirguna ishvara gyanam in form of sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. By performing this upasana one obtains Jivan mukti. This topic of nishkama upasana is however further elaborated in chapter # 9.

Another path for an Upasaka is where he or she continues in Saguna Upasana. Here Upasaka feels he is not qualified enough; or an appropriate acharya was not available to him or due to his poor health etc. So, due to some obstacles he is not able to perform Nirguna Upasana. So, he continues in Saguna Upasana. Sri Krishna says, since this upasaka values Ishwara parpithi he too remembers god at time of death. He, however, after his death goes to Brahma Loka where he enters into Nirguna Ishwara Upasana. In Brahma Loka he obtains Gyanam and this gyanam is called Krama Mukti. This Krama Mukti is the topic of the current Chapter 8.

How can a person remember god at time of death when my control over my fading senses is weak? Sri Krishna says it will become effortless if your devotion enters and permeates your subconscious mind. So, at time of death, even if conscious mind does not think, subconscious mind will certainly think of god. Swamiji repeated his favorite phrase in this context:

Watch your thoughts; they become the words;

Watch your words, they become your actions;

Watch your action, they become your habit;

Watch your habit; they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

So therefore an alert life from now itself is called abhyasa yoga. And with a mind which is strengthened by abhyasa yoga, and therefore with an undistracted mind, when a person

are abstract goals; and these abstract goals are concretely symbolized as the physical God; and therefore anoh aniyamsam, whose real nature is formlessness.

The word **Sarvasya Dhataram** means the one who is the substratum; the support of the entire creation; being the very cause of the creation; just as ocean is the very substratum for all the waves and bubbles, they all rise in the ocean, rest in the ocean, and resolve in the ocean. Similarly, the Lord is vishva-adharam and in vedantic context, we use the word, sadrupam; sattha; the one who is the very existence principle.

In Chandogya Upanishad, the Lord is presented as the very existence principle, which supports all. But to understand the existence principle, we require a subtle intellect and therefore we symbolize the 'sat' in a particular form; but existence has no form at all. Therefore sarvasya dhataram;

The word **Achintya rupam** means one who is incomprehensible, one, who cannot be objectified.

Mind can only study attributes. It cannot study one without attributes; just as a car cannot move in the ocean or a ship on the land; the Mind is not meant for a field without attributes.

God is the subject that objectifies everything; so he can't be objectified. But God is temporarily objectified in the physical formed god. By stepping through every attribute one reaches the attribute-less god.

For those people who cannot conceive of the attribute-less truth, the Upanishad comes down and presents the attributed God. By stepping through every attribute one reaches the attribute-less god; therefore achintyarupam

The word **Adityavarnam** means One who is like the sun. In Katho Upanishad it says one sun illuminates everything. Just as one

Sun illumines everything, God is that one consciousness, because of which we are conscious of everything else; therefore adityavarnam is the one who is all-illumining consciousness.

Tamasaha Parastat means one who is unaffected by darkness. The difference between sunlight and atma jyoti is that sunlight can't illuminate darkness. Swami Chinmayananda used to tell a story: somebody told Sun God: There is a beautiful girl, Miss Darkness; so you can get married to her. Therefore the Sun God decided he should meet Miss Darkness; so he asked, where is Miss Darkness; they told him it is on the other side of the earth; so the Sun started running after Miss Darkness. The Sun is still going round and round; that is why we have sunrise and sunset;

Sun can illumine everything, but he can never illumine darkness; that is the limitation of the Sun. Consciousness is, however, a superior light, which can illumine the Darkness as well. Thus, think, how do you know if it is dark? Because you know it is dark. It is not affected by darkness.

Such a nishkama upasaka meditates upon god including at time of death. Swamiji said this shloka is grammatically incomplete as such we have to add that: he obtains god or krama mukti.

Shloka # 10:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 8.10 ॥

At the hour of departure whoso with steady mind, and with devotion and the power of Yoga, sustains aright the life force between the brows (and remembers), reaches the Spirit supreme, divine.

Here Sri Krishna talks of how the Nishkama Upasaka remembers

god at time of death. This process is detailed in Katho Upanishad.

At time of death the pancha prana's are withdrawn to Hridayam; then they are directed to Sushumna Nadi that opens at the top of the head; then Brahma marandram launches prana through shukla gathi to take it to Brahma Loka.

For all these things, he has to prepare. Therefore, he has to bring the prana to a place between the eyebrows; which represents sushumna nadi, because it is supposed to travel through the middle of the head and directly behind the brahmadanda.

How can I withdraw prana, at time of death? Sri Krishna says if a person wants karma mukti, he must not only be a great upasaka but a great yogi as well. A yogi well versed in ashtanga yoga so that he can control prana. There are yogis who can control involuntary muscles. So Sri Krishna says, upasaka must be a yogi to obtain karma mukti.

To obtain jivan mukti one need not be a great yogi. By strength of yoga one can withdraw prana and direct it. He also enjoys a mind, which is very steady and undistracted at time of death. This is possible through the discipline of yoga.

He must be totally devoted to Me. This devotion is powered by yoga by which he can direct the mind towards the Lord.

By such upasana he obtains lord himself. What type of Lord? One who is param purusham divyam or the highest, limitless and is of the nature of consciousness. This leads him to karma mukti.

Shloka # 11:

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

8.11

That Imperishable which the Veda-knowers set forth, which ascetics, devoid of attachments, enter, and seeking which, they live a life of continence-that goal, briefly, I shall declare to you.

Here, Sri Krishna talks of glories of god.

All Vedic learners learn that the aksharam or ultimate reality is the only source of fullness, happiness etc. Committed seekers reach this ultimate reality.

The word Yataha means Sanyasi, who single-mindedly pursue spiritual goal. Sanyasi need not be an external sanyasi; it is anyone who has turned away from finite goals of life. They understand that everything is Apra Prakriti; that they are not permanent, that they cannot give emotional security. So, they have turned to the infinite. They lead a life of Brahmacharya or committed to study of scriptures.

Word Brahmacharya is Brahma, meaning scriptures and Charya meaning dwelling in them.

Sri Krishna says I shall briefly define the nature of this Ishwara. However, he does so, only in shlokas 20, 21 and 22.

Shloka # 12:

8.12

Controlling all gateways of the senses, confining the mind in the heart, fixing the life breath in the crown and intent on the maintenance of Yoga.

God's nature is formless. It is difficult to conceive this formless god, hence scriptures created alambanam, a concrete symbol. And this alambanam or symbol is of two types; one is called prathima alambanam, and the other is called pratheeka

alampanam; prathima alampanam is a symbol, which has got all the limbs or organs like a head, hands, legs etc. where the Lord is personified.

Thus, Sri Rama's picture is a pratima alambanam. Pratika alambanam, like a shiva linga does not have limbs. Even a flame can be a pratika alambanam even as turmeric powder too is one used to denote Ganesha.

One can choose whichever alambanam suits him or her.

Omkara is also an alambanam. Katho Upanishad says when you visualize god in Omkara it is Omkara upasana. It is a well-known upasana. It is discussed in several Upanishads. So, Sri Krishna also borrows it here in shloka's # 12 and 13 respectively.

When Sri Krishna talks of Omkara upasana, it is just one of the choices, among several upasanas. The goal here is that one should have a concrete symbol for the abstract god to meditate upon. Then, one should withdraw from one's sense organs at time of death and bring mind to one's heart where god is visualized. Shankaracharya says: "at time of death all yama dutha's are coming and threatening me and criticizing me for wasting my life. At that time when I am frightened, I am booking you now itself; you should come into my heart and dance in my heart so that Yama duthas run away." This poem is known as Shivashankara ashtakam.

So, having withdrawn mind and having placed it in the heart, prana should be withdrawn and brought to top of head. At that time mind should be focused. This comes from long practice. This is Omkara Upasana.

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 44

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 1, Shlokas 3:

To him (Bhrgu) he (Varuna) again said: that from which these beings are born; that by which, having been born, these beings live and continue to exist; and that into which, when departing, they all enter; that seekest thou to know. That is Brahman." He Bhrgu performed penance; and after having done penance....

Continuing his teaching, Swamiji said, we are in anuvakaha #1 of Brghuvalli (Ch 3) in which the student Bhrgu approached his father Varuna and asked him for Brahma Vidya. Varuna taught him Brahma Upalabdi dwarani that provide clues to recognize Brahman through Pancha Maha Koshas. He also provided him the definition of Brahman as Brahma lakshanam consisting of Jagat, Srishti, Sthithi, Laya Karanam. Such a definition is a known as Tataksha Lakshanam. He said, Brahman is the cause of creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe. In chapter 2, a different definition was given as: Satyam, Gyanam and Anantam. This definition is called swarupa lakshanam, a direct definition. The definition in chapter 2, the direct one, point's to Brahman's nature while the second definition is revealed in relation to Universe. Karanam is a relative definition and can be understood only through Karya prapancha. This is called indirect definition or Tatkshaya definition.

Srishti Sthithi Laya karanam is upadana karanam. Nimitha karanam is intelligent cause while upadana karanam is the material cause. The difference between intelligent cause and material cause is that intelligent cause is only responsible

for production of creation as such it is also known as Srishti karanam or Srishti matra karanam. Citing an example, while a carpenter produces furniture he is not responsible for maintenance and survival of furniture.

Material cause is required for production of product but even survival of product depends on this material cause. Thus, without wood as material cause, furniture can't survive and without gold, ornament can't survive. So, material cause is srishti and sthithi karanam. Not only is material cause responsible for sthithi karanam it also absorbs all destroyed products. Upon destruction all destroyed products are again absorbed in material cause alone. Thus, all melted gold goes back into gold, wave goes back into water etc. It is the swallowing, resolving cause or Laya Karanam as well.

Thus, material cause, Upadana karanam, is Srishti Sthithi Laya Karanam. Here Brahman is defined as Upadana karanam or Srishti Laya Karanam.

In chapter 2, Brahma has been defined as Gyanam (as in satyam, gyanam anantam,) the consciousness principle. **Consciousness Brahman is material cause of universe. Thus, the material cause is consciousness itself.** No other philosophy or religion has come to this unique conclusion. **Ultimate stuff or content of the universe is consciousness. Cause of the tangible world is this intangible Consciousness.**

Another important point here is, when we say Brahman is ultimate cause of universe, it means Brahman is it's karanam. Here Karanam does not mean in its literal sense. This is called Gauna (secondary) Pragya. Citing an illustrative example of this: When we say a person is a pillar of the organization it means, he is like a pillar in some aspects but not so, in some other aspects. This is known as Sadharmyam (common feature) Vaidharmyam (uncommon feature).

When we call him a pillar it means he supports the

organization. It also means he supports like a pillar only in the supporting aspect alone .He, however is not an insentient matter, like a regular pillar. A normal pillar does not move from place to place, but this person does move. So, here too Brahman is the karanam, it is only a substance, while karyam is always nama and rupa alone.

Therefore Brahman is the only substance available, all the rest, such as Akasha, Vayu, Lokas are all just nama and rupa alone. None of them have substantiality of their own.

In such cases which aspects to take and which aspects to reject? When something is called karanam, it means it can be modified. Thus, wood changes to furniture under a carpenter; gold changes to an ornament under a gold smith; a seed grows into a tree; food changes into flesh, bone, blood and thus into a body. Generally karanam conveys vikaraha or change. With reference to Brahman, we should not take the modifications part attributed to Brahman; thus inertness of pillar is not extended to man, only the supporting part is extended. Similarly any modification is not extended to Brahman.

Brahman is nirvikaram. So, Brahman is called the changeless cause of creation. Vivartha Upadana karanam is Brahman. Brahman is the ultimate substance of Creation, but it is not a changing substance.

Wood can change; hence it is called Parinami upadana karanam. Brahman however does not change. This is the difference.

(Note: Maya undergoes change to create the world hence it is called the **pariNAmi upAdAna kAraNAm**; meaning a cause, which changes, to produce effects. Atma does not undergo any change to manifest the world and hence is called vivarta upAdAna kAraNAm; meaning a cause that does not undergo change to produce effect.)

Therefore, knowing Brahman is the ultimate changeless material

cause of the universe and having got the clues of pancha maha koshas, keeping all this in mind, Brghu had to do his home work. He had to meditate on this Brahman.

Brghu is going to go in the direction of Pancha Kosha Viveka. This chapter will go through this viveka although in an abbreviated manner, as this topic has been elaborated upon in CH 2.

Chapter 3, Anuvakha 2, Shloka # 1:

Brghu learnt that food is Brahman because it is from food that all beings are born; by food, when born, do they live and having departed, into food they enter. Having known that, he approached his father Varuna, and said: Revered Sir, teach me Brahman. Varuna told him:" By deep thinking (tapas) seek thou to know Brahman. Tapas is Brahman."He performed tapas and having performed tapas...

Brghu took up annamaya kosha for study. He wanted to find Srishti, Sthithi, Laya Karanam of annmaya kosha. He found annam or gross matter as the cause of the kosha.

Thus, earth converts to food that converts to Purusha or annamaya kosha. Annam is material cause of body. Annam enters father's body via his seed and enters mother's body via her egg. Seed and egg come together and create a body or a being.

Body survives due to annam. At death body, buried or cremated, goes back to earth as fertilizer. We then become food for the next generation. Thus Srishti, Sthithi, Laya Karanam is for all beings. Brghu thus understood Annam Brahma.

Brahman also means all pervading. All annamaya koshas are born out of annam. They survive due to annam. Word Prayanti is a present participle or in Sanskrit known as Shatru pratyantha. Prayanti means "while dying"; it is not a verb. So all beings while dying merge into annam. So, annam is Laya karanam.

Having done the homework Brghu was happy. However, on rechecking he found he had not arrived at Brahman. The problem discovered by Brghu was:

While annam is srishti, sthithi, laya karanam it is not the ultimate karanam. Brahman, by definition is the ultimate (mula) karanam while annam is only an intermediary karanam.

Upon enquiring, using different pramanams, we find annam itself is a product. Pramanas used were:

1. Shruti pramanam. It says annam is matter.
2. Yukti pramanam or Logic: Anything subject to change is a product. How do we know this? If anything changes, it should have six fold modifications. Thus, birth of furniture is a modification of wood. Anything with six fold changes means it has birth, which is a change. Gross food is Sa-vikaram, hence it is a product as such it can't be the ultimate cause as well.

(Note: Tatva bodha: Gross body undergoes *six modifications* like asthi (existence), Jayathe (birth), vardhathe (growth), viparinamathe (maturity), apaksheeyathe (decay) and vinashyathi (Death).

Ultimate cause, (mula karanam), does not have any cause.

So, Brghu was disappointed that he did not identify the ultimate cause. Citing a story in this context, Anjaneya searching for Sita in Ravana's palace saw Mandodari; thinking she was Sita, he jumped with joy. Seeing Mandodari sleeping; confusing her as Sita, he was disappointed that sita would sleep in Ravana's palace. Similarly Brghu was also disappointed.

Brghu does not know what to do? So he goes back to his father to clear his dissatisfaction. He tells Varuna, " Please teach me Brahma the mula Karanam". Then Varuna said, " I have explained Brahma Upalabdi Dwarani and Swarupa lakshanam. I

have nothing more to add. But you are seeking in the right direction. May you seek to find Brahman through Tapas. Tapa here means Brahma Gyana Sadhana.

Explaining the word tapas; it is like saying, money is everything; but you can't eat money; however, money can get you every thing you need. Similarly tapas too is a sadhana to obtain Brahman. So, Brghu went back to his tapas.

Commenting on Varuna's comment to Brghu, swamiji said, one should remember the phrase," When all doors to a solution are closed, remember all doors are not closed".

Chapter 3, Anuvakha 3, Shloka # 1:

Brghu understood that prana is Brahman; because it is from prana alone that all living beings are born; having been born from it, they live by it and (in the end) on departing, they go towards prana and become one with it.. Having known that, he again approached his father Varuna saying: "O Revered Sir, instruct me about Brahman". He, Varuna, told him: "Desire to know Brahman by tapas, tapas is Brahman." He performed tapas and having performed tapas....

His father gave him another clue. Keeping pranamaya kosha, he found samashti prana is cause of all beings or prana maya kosha. So, Prana Tatvam, subtler cause, is Brahman.

Thus from gross material one comes to its elements then to molecules; then to atoms; then to subatomic particles and lastly to energy; the subtlest of them all.

Prana is a nonphysical, intangible entity. So Brghu is happy. All individual prama maya koshas are born out of prana. They sustain due to prana; and at death, they go back to prana. At that point prana merges into samashti prana.

Having discovered this Brghu was happy at first but then he discovered this too was not the mula karanam. So, he goes back

to his father with his doubts.

Take away:

Ultimate stuff or content of the universe is consciousness. Cause of the tangible world is this intangible Consciousness.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhgawat Geeta Class 112, Chapter 8: Verses 5 to 8

Shloka # 5:

अन्तर्धानो यो देहो ध्यायन्ममैव चित्तम्
तदा तदात्मनो यो भवेत्पुनरुत्थितः॥८.५॥

At the end, whoso departs giving up his body, and remembering Me alone, proceeds to My status; of this there is no doubt.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, based upon the last two shlokas of chapter 7 Arjuna raises his seven questions reflected in Shlokas 1 and 2 of this chapter # 8. In shloka's # 3 and 4 Sri Krishna answers the first six questions.

From the fifth shloka onwards, Sri Krishna answers the seventh question elaborately on the topic of remembrance of god at time of death. This topic is going to be answered in the rest of the chapter # 8. And, by way of answering this question, Sri Krishna is also dealing with Saguna Ishwara Upasanam or meditating upon a god with attributes. Every dhyana shloka, be

it on Rama, Krishna, Devi etc., describe the respective god's attributes. Saguna Upasana can be classified into two types as Saguna and Nishkama. Saguna upasana is for worldly benefits or other than spiritual benefits, or for artha and kama in this life or next. Miraculous powers also come from such an upasana.

Nishkama upasana is for spiritual growth or obtaining required qualifications and opportunity for moksha. And this nishkama saguna upasana itself can be divided into two types. In one, person practices Nishkama upasana for acquiring all the qualifications for entering into nirguna gyanam. Because we have seen in the 7th chapter that saguna ishvara is not the ultimate reality. Saguna Ishwara is only an empirical vyavaharika satyam or it is also mithya; only the nirguna Ishwara also called para prakrithi in chapter 7, that alone is the ultimate reality; and we have to come to the ultimate nirguna Ishwara.

Thus one can start with Saguna Upasana and then come to nirguna upasana. Nirguna upasana will lead person to nirguna upasana gyanam. This gyanam will result in Sadyo mukti or jivan mukti. Sadyo mukti is instant liberation.

Alternative method:

Saguna Upasana leads to nirguna Upasana. However person is not able to go to nirguna Ishwara. Switching from a god with attributes to a god without attributes is difficult. Nirguna Ishwara enquiry requires a very subtle mind.

So, if the mind is not ready for nirguna ishvara it will not appeal to that person. Then what should that person do? No doubt, he wants moksha; no doubt he wants to become one with God; he does not have interest in any other material goal; he is a nishama purushah; he is a mumukshu purushah; but his mind is not ready for nirguna vicharah.

Sri Krishna offers a solution. He says such a person should

In this context, Swamiji reminded us of a beautiful proverb which he likes:

Watch your thoughts; they become the words;

Watch your words, they become your actions;

Watch your action, they become your habit;

Watch your habit; they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Your destiny is already determined by the thoughts you entertain. Sri Krishna says this rule also applies to next life. Jada Bharata story in Bhagawatham says he got attached to a small deer. His obsession over the deer came up at the time of his death when he was worried as to who would look after his deer. Because of this obsession at time of death, he was born again as a deer.

And this important lesson Krishna imparts in this shloka. Suppose a person drops the physical body at the time of death; remembering various objects in his mind, any particular object, any particular goal in mind, remembering, then, he will certainly attain only such a birth which is in keeping with the person's thought process. So, Arjuna, remember this is the most important law.

The question comes up if there is a loophole at time of death that one can get around it regarding thinking about god? Sri Krishna says you never know when death will come to you. Thoughts of a person are based upon: his will power and Vasanas (habits, samskaras, impressions). Thoughts in mind are decided by will power or vasana. There is a constant clash between the two. As we grow older vasana becomes more powerful, powered by many years of thinking. Our subconscious mind is saturated with vasanas while our will becomes weaker. At time of death it is very difficult to control thought. So,

Sri Krishna says, saturate your vasanas with spiritual thoughts. So preparation for this should start this very moment. Rehearsal for death should start right now.

Sri Krishna discussed this topic although many will not like it. He says constant practice makes subconscious mind divine oriented.

Citing story of Appaya Diskhitar a great devotee, he wanted to find out about subconscious mind. He wanted to find out from our dreams. He drank milk made from erruka tree called errukam milk. Drinking this milk throws one off balance. He told disciples to write down whatever he said when he was not in his senses after drinking this milk. His thought came out as the Unmat- stotram out of his mouth uttered during his dream. It was a great hymn to the Lord Shiva.

Shloka # 7:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ७ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ७ ॥

Therefore, at all times, remember Me and fight. Dedicating mind and intellect to Me, rid of all doubts, you will reach Me, indeed.

So Arjuna, my advice to you is, may you always remember Me.

If I remember god all the time when will I have time for my normal duties? Should I become a Sanyasi? How to remember god all the time?

Sri Krishna says, don't drop your responsibilities. Continue with them. But you also have to fight, Arjuna. He means Arjuna should fulfill his duties as well. How can I do two jobs at the same time; remembering you and fighting?

Conscious mind cannot do two jobs simultaneously. Even when conscious mind is working on a job, in subconscious mind my priority should be clear. Subconscious mind can have Ishwara

chintana, while conscious mind can perform work. It is like a tamera sruthi in background. While singing, tamera sruti will still be maintained.

Citing another example Swamiji says, it is like when one gets down at a platform in a railway station to buy food. The person keeps one eye and ear tuned to any signal as to departure of the train. So, in life one should continue his normal activities while keeping mind alert to the divine as well. Our emotional personality should be focused on God. Learn to emotionally depend upon god rather than on mortals. Remember, a mortal will leave you one day as such are undependable. Love everyone but depend on saguna Ishwara. The Thyagaraja Krithis are all about talking to God.

May you be rationally be convinced; because the physical personal God symbolizes the truth; symbolizes immortality; symbolizes love; symbolizes compassion; symbolizes steadiness. Therefore the physical form we do not say is the ultimate truth; but the physical form represents the highest reality; and that is called the intellectual conviction. Until you understand this abstract truth till then you depend on saguna Ishwara.

This lifestyle will lead you to Me without doubt.

Shloka # 8:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८ ॥

0 Arjuna! Steadily thinking with an unswerving mind, disciplined in the yoga of repeated practice, one proceeds to the supreme, divine Spirit.

At time of death an Upasaka remembers God, the highest reality Purushaha.

Purushah, the word has two meanings. One meaning is the one

who resides in the heart of everyone; and other is the indweller of all. Puri or pure, means the body, shete means dwells, resides. Puarayati: one who fills whole world; Vidhyam: Chaitanya swarupam.

So Saguna upasaka remembers such a god with the strength of regular practice. It is a mind that is undistracted; with such a mind he remembers Me. Math prodigy Ramanujam at time of death, was asked for his

car's number. He said it is a number with two cube roots. He was able to do so because of what he valued. So, when you value God, you will remember him and merge into him. Merge here means Krama mukti.

Take away:

1. Your destiny is already determined by the thoughts you entertain.
2. At time of death one will remember only that which he values most in his or her life.
3. Watch your thoughts; they become the words;

Watch your words, they become your actions;

Watch your action, they become your habit;

Watch your habit; they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 43

Chapter 3 or Brghuvalli:

Chapter 3 preview:

Starting with his preview of Chapter 3, Swamiji said, Brahma Vidya teaching was completed in Brahmanandavalli or chapter 2. Now the Upanishad focuses on some allied topics. Brahma Vidya is not the focus anymore but it is discussed with other topics. The other topics are: Gyana Sadhanani or preparatory disciplines through which Gyana Vidhya occurs and remains in a person.

Two types of preparatory disciplines are indicated:

1. Remotely connected to knowledge.
2. Directly connected to knowledge or sakshat sadhanani or Vedanta vakya vichara. This is an important sadhana as it leads to knowledge and is also known as Pramana Vichara. Pancha Kosha vichara is highlighted here. The word Tapas is used again and again in this Upanishad in every section. Tapas, here means Vedanta vakya vichara or pancha kosha vichara. It is a direct means of self-knowledge. Although tapa also means penance and austerities, in this chapter it means Vichara.

Secondary disciplines, indirectly connected ones, are a few upasanas or meditations, for integrating the mind. Upasanas can't give direct knowledge. Vedanta vichara alone can give knowledge. Thus, Anjaneya upasana cannot give this knowledge. Anjaneya will bless upasaka with proper guru or the devata himself may also become his guru, if a guru is not found. The upasana devata can be any god including Anjaneya.

Vrthas or vows are also discussed. Four vrthas or austerities are discussed. Vrthas, upasanas and vichara are all Gyana Sadhanani. Vichara is a direct source of knowledge while Vrtha

and upsanas are indirect sources of knowledge.

Another topic in this chapter is Gyana Phalam. The benefit is that one will attain knowledge and its resulting benefits. This topic was also discussed in chapter 1 or shikshavalli. If so, why discuss it again? If a person studies Vedanta and still does not get knowledge, Upanishad wants to tell us that it is his own preparation that was not adequate.

To err is human but to put blame on another is even more human. If shastra's do not bless him with pramanam; Ishwara, Guru and shastra are not the problem. The problem is with the student who has not prepared enough for it. He probably does not know the sadhana chatushtaya sampathi. Shankaracharya asks students to check for their sadhana chatushtaya sampathi periodically during study of Vedanta vichara. Hence this chapter repeats importance of preparation.

Chapter 3, Shantipatha, Shloka #1:

Om, May he protect us both. May He help us both to enjoy the fruits of scriptural study. May we both exert together to find the true meaning of the sacred text. May our studies make us brilliant. May we never quarrel with each other.

The shanti patha is repeated as before. It is chanted by student and teacher in every class. It says:

1. It asks for an ideal relation with guru. Citing an example, without good relationship between husband and wife a family can't be functional. Similarly shishya must have shraddha and bhakti for Guru. Guru too must have compassion for student.
2. It is necessary for enough effort to be placed by both the student and teacher.
3. The teaching must culminate in Gyana prapthi.
4. Gyana phalam prapthi. The gyanam must be internalized and transforming.

All four should happen to me. If there are any karmic obstacles, please remove them, is the prayer.

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 1, Shloka 2:

Bhrgu, the well known son of Varuna, approached his father, Varuna and requested, " O revered Sir, teach me Brahman." Varuna said, thus, to him (Bhrgu)," Food, Prana, the eyes, the ears, the mind and the speech are Brahman."

Starting chapter 3, swamiji said this Chapter is in prose. This is a Brahmano Upanishad; hence, it is in prose. Mantra Upanishads are in poetry. Chapter 3 is divided into paragraphs called anuvakahas. Chapter 3 has 10 anuvakahas. First word of shloka 2, anuvakaha 1,chapter 3, is Brighu, hence the chapter is named Brighuvalli.

It begins with introduction of guru and shishya. It is a guru shishya dialogue. Vedantic teaching is always in a guru shishya discussion format. This is to discourage learning Vedanta by self-study. In Taittiriya Upanishad, in the first two chapters, there was no guru or shishya, although later chapters did. In this chapter the Guru is the father and shishya, the son.

When son is interested in knowledge and father is a wise man this, a guru-shishya relationship can happen and it is seen happening here.

Once upon a time there was a great sage called Bhrgu. Even Sri Krishna acknowledges him in chapter 10 of the Gita. Brghu was born twice. First as manas-putra, son of Brahma and a second time, as son of Varuna. Thus, Varuni Brghu is son of Varuna.

What did this Brghu do? He approached his father Varuna. Why the emphasis on how son approaches father in Upanishad? Other sons also approach their fathers for many other things; however here son approaches father for brahma vidya in a proper manner. He does so with shrddha and bhakti. He addresses

his father not as father but as, O Lord, May you teach me Brahman. Swamiji says, in Upanayana ceremony too the father becomes a guru. The formal mode of address by student indicates an evolved student; one who has Vairgyam, mumukshatvam and sadhana chatustaya sampathihi. He understands Brahma Gyanam can occur only through Guru upadesha. He is an advanced student.

Father certainly knows the condition of his son. He then taught the following to his son. He gives clues to pancha kosha viveka. The clues are:

Annam: Annamaya kosha.

Pranam: Pancha pranas

Vacham: Pancha Karmendriyani

All these together, Prana and vacha are pranamaya kosha.

Chakshu and stotram: Eye and ear are both gyanendriyas.

Manaha: the mind.

Mind with gyanendriyas is Manomaya kosha.

Vijnanamaya and anandamaya koshas, we have to supply.

First clue as per Shankaracharya is Brahma Upalabdi Dwarani to Brahma Gyanam.

Later he defines Brahman as shown in chapter 2 as Satyam, gyanam and anantam. This Brahman is also called swarupa lakshanam or a short or direct definition.

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 1, Shlokas 3:

To him (Bhrgu) he (Varuna) again said: that from which these beings are born; that by which, having been born, these beings live and continue to exist; and that into which, when departing, they all enter; that seekest thou to know. That is

Brahman.” He Bhrgu performed penance; and after having done penance....

Now an indirect definition is also given. This is one reason why Taittiriya Upanishad is so important. In this important mantra it says, Brahman is Jagat, srishti, sthithi and laya karanam. Vyasa in bhagavatham also gives the same definition.

Yataha in shloka means Brahman. Sthiti karanam means cause of preservation; Prayanti means destruction or all beings are resolved in Brahman; It also means Brahman is Laya karanam. Jatani means having been born. Jivanti means live.

Explaining further swamiji says:

Srishti: Brahma

Sthiti: Vishnu

Laya: Shiva

Brahma, Vishnu and shiva are all names for one Brahman alone. It does not mean that there are many Gods. They are three functional names of one Brahman. Furthermore, we have, in our confusion, even started comparing them by creating names of shaivism and vaishnavism. Vedanta does not consider any one of the trinity superior; they are all one Brahman. Vedantins are called smarthas, who are neither shaivas nor vaishnavas. Wearing Vibhuti on forehead does not mean one is a shaiva. Scriptures say if anyone compares gods and grades them they will get an upset stomach. So, all are one Brahman. Therefore Brahman alone is srishti, sthiti and laya karanam. May you know him through tapas, keeping the clues in mind. Thus Brghu started his teaching.

When we talk of self-enquiry, it is enquiry into Guru vakya or shastra vakya or it's vichara. Many people miss this and start self-enquiry through a questioning approach of, who am I? This independent enquiry without a guru is not in Vedic tradition.

Vedic enquiry is always inquiry with guru shastra vakya. Atma vichara is guru shatra vichara. It is also known as pramana vichara. Rejecting Guru and shastras; and practicing self-enquiry does not lead to Vedantic knowledge.

The word tapaha means enquiry based on Brahma Lakshanani and two of them were discussed: Brahma Upalabdi Dwarani and Swarupa lakshanam

The student, Brghu, having contemplated on the teaching now comes back with some of his doubts.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 42: Summary of Brahmanandavalli

1. Greetings All,

Swamiji said, today, I am giving you a summary of the Brahmanandavalli chapter. It is the main chapter of the Upanishad giving us the vedantic teaching. Chapters 1 and 3 are considered preparatory chapters dealing with preparatory disciplines only. Preparatory disciplines are also important in understanding Brahmanandavalli. In my summary, I am going to discuss it topic by topic.

Brahmanandavalli has nine sections or anuvakahas. It begins with Sutrabhaga, a capsule like aphorism, or capturing in a nutshell. A vrithi bhaga or a short note comments upon this

sutra. The Vrithi bhaga is further elaborated upon in Vyakhyana bhaga. Thus, Sutra, Vrithi and Vyakhyana are three bhagas of Brahmanandavalli.

Sutra Vrithi: The sutra says the knower of Brahman attains the highest. The highest can be moksha or Brahman. This leads to three questions?

1. What is Brahman?
2. What is the method of knowing Brahman?
3. What is meant by, attaining the highest?

All three topics are dealt with in the Vrithi Bhaga.

1. Regarding what is Brahman the Upanishad says it is Satyam, Gyanam and Anantam. Satyam here means pure existence; a noun and as a substance. Gyanam here means pure consciousness as an entity in itself or as a substance. Anantam means infinite or limitless as an adjective. **So, this limitless existence consciousness, this substance, is called Brahman.**
2. Regarding method of knowing Brahman, the Upanishad says, it is to be recognized in one's own mind. **It is known as "I" the witness of presence and absence of thought in the mind and as non-different from myself or as Aham Brahma Asmi.**
3. Regarding, what is meant by attaining the highest, the Upanishad says, it is attainment of all pleasures simultaneously. It is simultaneous fulfillment of all pleasures. Swamiji says, enlightened means mind becomes lightened.

With this Vrithi bhaga is over in anuvakaha # 1. Vyakhyana Bhaga was then discussed. It is an elaboration on the three topics already discussed. The elaboration is performed in following manner:

1. The method of elaboration on srishti prakranam is used to define Brahman.

2. Method of knowing Brahman is elaborated upon through pancha kosha viveka.
3. Method of attaining the highest is elaborated upon through ananda mimamsa.

Srishti prakaranam: From creation of akasha to the body is definition of Brahman. It is clarified in two ways.

1. Brahman is presented as Karanam.
2. World is presented as Karyam.

Karanam is that which exists before, during and after creation. Thus, clay exists before pot creation, after pot creation and after destruction of pot. Whatever remains in all three states of existence is Satyam. Karyam does not exist in all three states. It exists only in the present. Karyam, a product, does not exist separate from Karanam. World does not exist separate from Brahman. So, world is not a separate thing. Thus, one cannot say, water and wave are separate; similarly there is no duality between Brahman and the world. Thus, world cannot limit Brahman as there is no world other than Brahman. Therefore, Brahman is limitless anantham. Srishti prakaranam thus shows Satyam and Anantam. Gyanam comes later under pancha kosha viveka.

3. **Pancha Kosha viveka:** This topic is discussed from anuvakaha # 1 to anuvakaha # 5. Here the Upanishad takes the student to finer states of mind. Mind is brought to its subtlest principle from the gross. In anandamaya, subtlest form of mind, mind enjoys calmness and fulfillment or priya, moda and pramoda. This is all ananda maya kosha.

So, now, how does one get to atma?

Once mind becomes calm will atma rise? Answering, the Upanishad says, never look for atma. It is the onlooker, the "I", the witness of priya, moda and pramoda; that "I", am the atma. Atmananda is the subject of experience. When is it

available? It is available at all times say the shastras. Atma is ananda. This witness is called Brahman. It is a mahavakyam. With this pancha kosha viveka topic is over.

3. What is meant by the phalam or attaining the highest? This is discussed through ananda mimamsa topic in anuvakaha # 8. Anuvakaha 6 and 7 are discussed as side topics. Upanishad says there are two types of anandas: Atmananda and Koshananda.

The features differentiating these two anandas are:

1. Koshananda is a reflection while atmananda is the original.
2. Atmananda is a subject of experience. It is never an object. Whereas koshananda is always an object.
3. Atmananda is not subject to gradation. Koshananda is graded as priya, moda and pramoda, as such subject to gradation.
4. Koshananda can be attained through sense objects as well as through Vairagyam or contentment.

For getting atmananda there is only one method; that is by knowing that it is the very nature of the seeker. One who has all sense objects has koshananda. One who has vairagyam will also obtain koshananda. However, it is only the one who has gyanam that gets both atmananda and koshananda. One who has gyanam has koshananda and Vairagyam. Vairagyam is essential for gyanam. Gyani, thus, enjoys atmananda and koshananda. This is known as phala prapthihi.

Suppose this Gyani gets an opportunity for sense pleasures, does it make a difference to him? Swamiji says, it does not make any difference to him. With this anuvakaha # 8, on phalam is over.

All three topics have been elaborated upon. Now Upanishad concludes with an upasamhara. Conclusion is that Gyani is not afraid of losing ananda. Gyani also goes through empathy and other emotional feelings. At time of sharing grief with others

he is still aware of his own ananda. So, he does not fear.

Incidentally, the Upanishad adds, Gyani does not dwell on his past, his pre-gyanam days, and grieve. He does not feel hurt and guilt. Karta feels guilt while bhokta feels hurt. He sees them as mithya; as such he does not have samsara. This is moksha prapthihi. With this Vrithi and Vyakhyanam, both are over.

Anuvakaha # 6 and 7:

They are an aside of Brahmanandavalli. A student raised three questions. The questions are known as anuprashnaha. One question was an implied one while other two were explicit.

The questions were:

1. Is there a Brahman at all? Upanishad says, Brahman is not available for any transaction such as physical, emotional etc. What is proof of its existence? Some philosophers such as Visishta advaita don't accept idea of a nirguna Brahman. This implied question was answered elaborately. Seven answers were given. They are:

1. Brahman is nimitha karanam
2. Brahman is jivatma.
3. Brahman is the material cause; Brahman is existent as universe.
4. Brahman is Self Creator or Sukritam
5. Brahman is ananda.
6. Brahman is life principle.
7. Brahman is Bhaya Abhaya Cheta.

The final answer is that Brahman exists.

Now for the two other explicit questions, the answer is an implied one. The first answer is that the question is a wrong one to begin with. There is no question of attaining Brahman.

Brahman is not an object to attain. Brahman is "I" myself (wise or ignorant person). **So there is no reaching Brahman. I am Brahman. So long as I am ignorant, I feel a notional distance. Thus, one feels one has not attained Brahman. In wise person this notional distance does not exist. He does not crave for Brahman. There is no reaching Brahman for him. Therefore, wise person has "as though" attained Brahman.**

Take away:

1. Brahman is not an object to attain. Brahman is "I" myself (one with wisdom or ignorant one). So there is no reaching Brahman. I am Brahman. So long as I am ignorant, I feel a notional distance. Thus, one feels "as though" one has not attained Brahman. In wise person this notional distance does not exist. There is no reaching Brahman for him. Therefore, wise person has "as though" attained Brahman.
2. So, this limitless existence consciousness, **this substance**, is called Brahman.
3. It (Brahman) is known as "I" the witness of presence and absence of thought in the mind and as non-different from myself or as Aham Brahma Asmi.
4. The Upanishad says, never look for atma. It is the onlooker, the "I", the witness of priya, moda and pramoda.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy