

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, Kleivyam (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 Shruvanam, 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:

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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, kroda, 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

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 साक्षात्कृतं संसारं साक्षात्कृतं – 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: *आत्मैव हि भवति प्रसन्नः* "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 on an unpredictable, perishable, external factor). Arjuna faces this deep attachment *संसारं साक्षात्कृतं* *संसारं साक्षात्कृतं* . The intensity of grief depends on the intensity of attachment. For Arjuna, his intense sorrow was overflowing into the physical body also.

संसारं साक्षात्कृतं संसारं साक्षात्कृतं संसारं साक्षात्कृतं

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

Delusion, not able to determine what to do; MohaH or avivekaH. Arjuna can't decide whether to fight or not and draws a series of wrong conclusions.

Confusion 1: Arjuna sees Dharma Yuddham as adharma now. The greatest irony is in Verse 36 line 2 where Arjuna says: □□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□ "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.

Confusion 2: Arjuna sees running away from a righteous war as dharma. If a Kshatriya runs away from a righteous war, he is shirking his duty, which is considered a sin of omission. The sin of omission is called □□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□ "akaraney prathavayaH" (absence of action is a sin).

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

Sin of Commission – committing an amoral act

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. □□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□ "dharma adharma avivekaH" – utter delusion where he cannot distinguish between dhaarmic and adhaarmic actions. Arjuna's delusion is complete and it has overflowed into his intellect. The intellect will not be able it 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:

संसारं कर्मणां तन्मूलं धर्मोऽन्वयते ॥
संसारं कर्मणां तन्मूलं धर्मोऽन्वयते ॥1.40॥

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 मुक्ताH (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 personVedanta Shaastra संसारं कर्मणां तन्मूलं धर्मोऽन्वयते ॥ "Dainya bhavaH" affliction, state of being; or संसारं कर्मणां तन्मूलं धर्मोऽन्वयते ॥ "kaarpanyam" pitiful circumstances.

Swamiji recites Chapter 2, Verse 6, Line 1:

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः ॥ २.६ ॥

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):

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः ॥ २.७ ॥

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):

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः । अहं कुरुक्षेत्रे
सर्वभूतानां पापिणः ॥ २.७ ॥

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 श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ; ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः

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

1. Karma YogaH – to become a Jnana Yogyata
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 "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

वर्णसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण च भवति नरकः ॥

वर्णसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण च भवति नरकः ॥1.42॥

वर्णसंकरेण confusion of castes भवति for the hell ॥ also कर्मसंकरेण of the slayers of the family ॥ कर्मसंकरेण of the family ॥ and कर्मसंकरेण fall ॥ कर्मसंकरेण the forefathers ॥ verily ॥ कर्मसंकरेण their कर्मसंकरेण deprived of the offerings of riceball and water. Once the varnasankara(intermingling of 4 groups) takes place, even ॥ कर्मसंकरेण 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.

वर्णसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण च – because of the confusion, this will lead to naraka because all karmas are sacrificed. कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण – 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 कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण Vedic religion prescribes five fold compulsory rituals for every कर्मसंकरेण or कर्मसंकरेण 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. कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण Forefathers will be deprived of कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण pinda kriya- sradham, कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण udaka kriya-tarpana; कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण कर्मसंकरेण lupta 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.

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, (ruin) dharma nashaha, (downfall) pitrnaam 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

thus having said Arjuna in the battle on the seat of the chariot sat down

Arjuna having cast away bow and arrow 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. Arjuna 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. Arjuna's "Sva dharma tyagaha" – indicating conflict or mohaha; Arjuna 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: Arjuna's paradharma grahanam(taking the duties of another caste), svadharma parithyagaha(deserting your own duties) Arjuna having uttered all these words to Krishna, Arjuna did this he sat down on the chariot seat

At this crucial juncture, Vyasacharya says:

Om tat sat
Arjuna
Arjuna

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 – avati iti om; Avati is the protector; protected us from all obstacles
Tat – one who is beyond sense perception; Para (beyond) and Aksha (eye);

beyond the cognizance of the senses

Sat – eternal (past, present, future); From Tatva Bodha:
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय The eternal protector who is
beyond our sense perception.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय – oh Lord, by your grace, we have completed the
1st chapter called

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय – the grief of Arjuna. The main theme is
vishada – raga, shoka and moha.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय – 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 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 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:

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

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 (ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय yoga shastra): ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय Veda

poorva bhaga(first part of Veda); कर्मकाण्ड 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 योग्य योग्यता jnana योग्यता (eligibility). First part of life get fit, then gain knowledge

2. Philosophy (ब्रह्मविद्या brahma vidya): अन्तर्भाग Veda antha bhaga(latter part of Veda); ज्ञानकाण्ड jnana kanda – which relates to knowledge of the one Spirit Philosophical part – gives jnanam (knowledge)

Prasna Upanishad, Class 7

Important points made by first section:

Shristi is the first point: Life and death are not opposite but complementary pair of nature; similar is growth and decay. We must accept the pair. Shristi as a form of mithunam. Five shristies mentioned in the first section are:

1. Mithuna shristy
2. Loka shrishty
3. Kala shristy
4. Anna Shristy
5. Prajapathi

Second point is Chukla Krishna Gathi topic was discussed after shristi as a diversion.

Third point is discipline of brahmanacharyim

Second Section

Para vidhya and apara vidhya are from Mundaka Upanishad. Apra

Vidhya or preparatory knowledge consists of karma and upasana. First chapter of Mundaka Upanishad elaborately discussed karma (e.g. agni hothram) but upasana (mental activity for saguana brahman) was not discussed in detail. Physical activities like pooja are not upasana. Vedanta is mental activity for nirguna brahman.

Second section: Hiranyagarbha (prana) sthuthi. Prior to upsana, the upsana deity should be glorified.

Hiranyagarbha is consciousness with the total (all) subtle body. This total subtle body is available as individual subtle body for everyone. Of the 17 organs of sukshma sareeram, prana is the most important one. Prana keeps body alive. Also during sleep, all sense organs come to a standstill except prana.

Third Section: Hiranyagarbha (prana) upasana is samashti prana, because Hiranyagarba blesses everyone as prana.

V1

Question: What are the devadas that sustain the people (sareeram)? Devadas are various factors or principles behind every inert object. This consciousness principle is called Devada. Sun is not just an object, but when we consider that sun is pervaded by Eeswara, we call it Surya Deva. Each principle is called deva for this reason. So the first question is how many devas are sustaining the sareeram. Second question what principles (devas) are publicizing their own glories. Third Question is among these devas who is the greatest devada?

V2

First principle sustaining the sareeram is 19 devas. because it provides a place to live. The 24 devas are:

- Panca Botham (akasa – space, vayu – air, agni – fire, apaha – water and prithvi – earth)

had this attachment but it remained hidden. But once this attachment overpowers him, he suffers the immediate consequence of sorrow. Sorrow is directly proportional to the attachment. Hence, his sorrow was equally intense and it affected his physical body (his limbs were trembling, his arms are weak, etc.). This is shown starting with Verse 29. Vyasarcharya shows how raga and shoka is leading him to moha: conflict or confusion.

Moha is मोहो धर्मो अधर्मो भ्रमो "dharma adharma avivekaha" aviveka – absence of judgement or discrimination, not being able to judge between dharma and adharma. When there is a confusion, dharma appears as adharma and vice versa.

Arjuna's duty as a kshatriya is to fight this war and this yuddham is dharma for Arjuna. But Arjuna sees this dharmayuddham as adharma. This is the first conflict.

Secondly, a kshatriya should never run away from the battlefield. This is shirking his duty. Arjuna is seeing अधर्मो पापं "adharma palaayanam" as punya karma. Arjuna's confusion is complete.

When the emotional mind(attached and confused) begins to overpower a person, it stifles even the educated and well informed intellect. The intellect, not being able to overcome the emotional mind, begins to support the mental weakness. If the mind has a feeble addiction, the intellect can fight and overcome this weakness. If the addiction is intense, the intellect will justify the mental weakness.

From Verse 38 through 46, Arjuna, having been deceived by his intellect, talks about the evils of war. He says to Krishna, the Kauravas do not see the evils of war. अधर्मो धर्मो – heads of the family are killed, thus destroying the families, and the consequences of destroying families are terrible.

□□

अधर्मो धर्मो च अधर्मो – hurting our own kith and kin; another

mahapaapam which they are not seeing but we are seeing clearly. We should help our friends. Let us decide to withdraw from war.

Chapter 1 Sloka 39

Arjuna is confused about the Kauravas' actions. He says to Krishna:
Sloka 1.39

Arjuna says to Krishna: "Why should we not learn from sinners how to turn away from the destruction of families? We clearly see the evil of the Kauravas, O Janardana."

Arjuna, feels that the Kauravas are confused but now that his thinking is clear, he says to Krishna:

Hey Janardana, we are able to clearly see the negative consequences of destroying families.

Having seen this evil clearly, why can't we withdraw? This is a sin (this war) which involves the destruction of families..

Why should we have a false ego? Regardless of what others may say, let us withdraw from war. Arjuna is pleading for Krishna's support to retrieve. Krishna, however remains silent because he feels that Arjuna is not yet ready to hear his advice. Talking to a non receptive person is called vana rodana – crying in the forest.

Chapter 1 Sloka 40

Arjuna says to Krishna: "In the destruction of a family, the family's religious rites perish and become immemorial. O Krishna, let us withdraw from war."

Arjuna says to Krishna: "In the destruction of a family, the family's religious rites perish and become immemorial. O Krishna, let us withdraw from war."

spirituality **being destroyed** **the whole family impiety overcomes** **indeed.**

Arjuna further explains the consequences of family destruction. What are the consequences if there are no healthy families in society (have broken families)? Arjuna wants to say that without family life, dharma, religion and culture can never grow. Spirituality is never possible. These grow in a society where the family is strong, stable and long lasting.

Our scriptures give a lot of importance to family life. Without good family structure, cultural growth is inhibited. A stable family is required for Cultural/Ethical growth, Dharmic growth and Spiritual growth. These are known as **Kuladharma** (practice or observance particular to a group or family).

So Arjuna says, **without a stable family, kuladharma will perish.**

– when this dharma is destroyed

– adharma (life in which importance is given to **and**); only material values become important. This materialistic lifestyle will overpower all the good values.

Chapter 1 Sloka 41

1.41

from the prevalence of impiety **0 Krishna**
become corrupt **the women of the**
family **in women** **(being) corrupt** **0**
Varshneya **arises** **caste mixture.**

Swamiji first explains the importance of a stable family for

cultural growth.

A stable family is needed for a cultural or a healthy personality trait to be formed in a child. This needs to be done at a very early stage in life. A baby or young child does not have the capacity to discriminate/judge what is important or valuable. A child learns to value things based upon the set of values of the parents (god like to the child). While child is developing values for various things, the respect it develops towards itself (self value) is also learned. The self image development is also very important. A newborn does not have an idea about itself – “am I a wonderful child or useless child; respectable or a rejected child”. This self opinion is developed based on the parent’s opinion of the child. If the life of the mother is centered on the child; parents respect the child; treat as a VIP in the first 5 years of life; be at his beck and call; with all the needs fulfilled; etc., then the child develops a beautiful self image, self worth and self confidence. This self opinion developed within the first 5 years can never be erased. If this is not developed within those few years, the child will condemn itself and develop inferiority complex, lacking self confidence. This negative value is developed not due to the child’s mistake – but they are the values the parents have imparted. A healthy mind is one which has self respect.

Swamiji refers to Chapter 6, Verse 5 where Krishna says:

आत्मनि कथं कश्चिन्नश्यति ।
आत्मनि कथं कश्चिन्नश्यति । 6.5

“Arjuna, once you condemn yourself, no one can help you”.

If you don’t have self-confidence, no God, Guru, or Shastra can help. Ishvara kripa, Guru kripa, and Shastra kripa are secondary. These graces will be valid only when the most important grace “atma kripa” आत्मनि कथं कश्चिन्नश्यति – is there (self respect/self image/self confidence). This must be formed

within the first 5 years of life with the help of a stable family and parents who respect the child. Therefore, family life is very important to develop psychologically healthy children that will become self respecting citizens in a society.

This is “ego nourishment” but nourishing the ego will enable the ego to grow, and as the ego grows it ripens, then the ripened ego can drop(like a ripened fruit falls from a tree, when it is ready).... leading to moksha.

The second importance of family is to impart cultural values, again done early in a child’s life(nonverbal communication). The child learns by observing and imitating the parents. Even a newborn gets influenced by the thought of the mother during pregnancy, the manner in which the mother welcomes the child, the manner in which the family greets the child, etc. All these nonverbal communications have a psychological impact on the child. Every word and action of the parents are being imbibed by the child. Parents have to serve as a model to teach the cultural values.

Matha, Pitha, Guru, Devyam.... Mother is the first model, then the father. If the parents are not available as the models, then they seek for a model elsewhere.

The parents(models) should be consistent and constant in their lives. The parents should have trust, understanding and harmony between themselves to provide a suitable and nurturing environment. A father or mother should not contradict each other in front of the child. This causes confusion to the child since both parents are Godlike and both are correct.

Here Arjuna says, among the parents, the mother is more important – because the mother is intimately attached with the child. And if the head of the families are destroyed, the women may become corrupt. A young girl growing up in a broken home does not develop cultural values. And when she becomes a

mother without values, she will not be able to teach her children. Hence a vicious cycle is created where the generations to come have no values. All values will be utterly destroyed.

When the families are destroyed, a girl child gets spoiled, she will become an unhealthy mother.

corrupt women (destruction of entire society)

addressing Krishna, as descendant of Vrishni. "vrishni kula samudbhoota"; you are born in a beautiful family; and know the importance of family

there will be utter confusion in regards to varnaashrama dharma.

Sankara means confusion.

Varnashrama dharma – In varna dharma, the veda prescribes certain duties for each class of people. Brahmana have certain cultural duties, Kshatriya have political duties, Vysya have economic duties, Sudra have supporting duties towards the other three. All these duties are important for the growth of a society.

Veda says that everyone has to take one of these duties(profession) based on birth or based on character i.e. choose to be a politician, business man etc.

Imagine a society which values money. This will lead to everyone choosing a profession based on whichever brings them maximum money. Once a society is materialistic, a class that was devoted to cultural growth of a nation will diminish. Learning dharma shastra & the scriptures and following & propagating the dharma shastra will not thrive.

Varna sankara – everyone will take every other profession but

no one will come forward to study the scriptures. There will be confusion among the duties and no one will preserve and propagate the religious and spiritual culture. Society will be corrupt leading to destruction of humanity.

All these will happen when families become unstable...due to the war...so lets abolish war...drive chariot away from battlefield.

Prasna Upanishad, Class 6

Prasna Upanishad, Class 6 – Dec 20, 2015

Continuation of explanation of verse 11.

[divah: bhuvarlOkha. pare: beyond]

SuryalOkha is in a place beyond bhUvarlokha. (bhUlOkha is earth, bhuverlOkha is intermediate, suverlOkha is in a higher space).

Adhithya is also purishinam (plenty of water). Why? Sun alone is responsible for rain. Some sages glorify the sun in these terms. Other sages glorify the sun in other terms, including vichakshanam (illuminator of all), Hiranyagarbha (which is samashti buddhi), omniscience, one with 7 chakras (7 horsed), 7 colours, six-spoked (each season being a spoke and life moves in seasons alone).

With this, the samvatsare shrishti is over but not the kAla srishti.

Verse 12. mAsa shrishtih: (division of month)

mAsa is a manifest of PrajApathi. Must come in dual (mithuna) form. – complementary pair: krishna and shukla paksha. For

those rishis that meditate on shukla prAna, their rituals will be as good as when done in shukla pakshi. Rituals during Shukla pakshi are more efficacious than in krishnapakshi. If you do upAsana on shuklaprAna, rituals on k-p will be as effective as done in sh-paksha. Any karma done with upAsana will have better effect.

Verse 13. (division of day into day and night)

Day and night are also prajApathi. Day is prAna and night is matter. The rule given to householders is that sthri samyoga should only occur at night, otherwise if during daytime, they lose all their energy. Daytime is presided over by prAna and they will be dissipating it. At night time, it is as good as observing bhramcharyam.

Verse 14. anna Shrishtih:

After dEsah: and kAlaH:, now comes annam. PrajApathi alone is food. Annam also must consist of rayih: and prAna but this not mentioned here. From food is derived the seed (retah:) (meaning here sperm and ovum). All beings are borne from the combination of the male and female seed and hence from food and hence from PrajApathi.

Verse 15. phala stuthi

Some vratham has to given to those not into vEdantam. PrajApathi vratham develops self control in sthri samyoga. Thos who follow this p-vratham will get mithunam (complementary pair). P-vratham is an important condition for attaining krishnagathi and shuklagathi. [in this verse bhulokha stands for chandralOkha]. This will be attained for those who follow austerities'discipline and who are truthful. For vedAnta jnAnis also, brahmacharya vratam is highlighted.

Verse 16.

Only for those following Brahmavratam is BrahmaLoka possible. BrahmaLoka's benefit is shukham. An important qualification is that one must be free from 3 evils:

1. Free from vakra buddhi (negative motives, seeing wrong side of things).
2. Lying
3. Fraud, cheating (mAyA chethi)

Prasna Upanishad, Class 5

Rayee and prana are conceptual pairs. Prajapathi alone comes as conceptual pairs of rayee and prana.

Samvatsara, consisting of dakshinayana and utharayana (kala) is prajapathi.

Krishna kathi and chukla kathi are subtle or divine road through which a jiva travels to other logas. Krishna kathi leads to Chandra loga and chukla kathi leads surya loga or brahma loga. Those people who perform rituals go to Chandra kathi and those who perform upsaha will go to surya loga. Gyani does not go through either of the logas because he gets moksha here and now. Dhashinayanam represents Krishna kathi and represented by various dhashinayana devadas; utharayanam represents chukla kathi presided by utharayana devadas.

Krishna gathi, dakshinayanam and Chandra loga are all rayee; Utharayanam, surya loka and chukla gathi are all prana.

Verse 10

Chukla kathi is the path; the travelers are upasaha or karma upasa samuchayaha. Brahma loga is immortality because brahma loga gives moksha which is immortality. Upasaha seek

surya loga, upasana by following discipline (control of sense organs and faith in scriptures). For all pranās, this surya loga is the goal. This loga is meant for upāsahas only and not available to others.

Verse 11

Adhithya praised as a destination of chukla gathi: Surya is endowed with five feet (five seasons are taken as feet of Surya loga because Surya moves creating the five seasons) so surya is called panca patham. Six seasons in scriptures are spring, summer, rainy, autumn, pre-winter and winter. In this verse pre-winter and winter are combined as one season. There are 12 different appearances to the sun one for each month. Due to utharayanam and dakshinayanam, sun is the father of all beings.

Bagawat Geeta Class 7

Namaste!

Summary of class on December 12th:

Swamiji says that no value can be followed unconditionally because every value has an exception. When everything else fails, himsa is allowed.

Verses 24 and 25: (Sanjaya said) " Oh Dhrtarastra! Commanded thus (to place the chariot in between the armies) by Arjuna, Krishna placed the great chariot between the two armies in front of great warriors like Bhishma and Drona and all other kings and said thus – " Oh Arjuna! See these Kauravas assembled."

Krishna placed the chariot particularly in front of Bhishma and Drona towards whom Arjuna has the most attachment.

Verses 26,27,28: (These three verses show the problem of attachment. They also show the first symptom of samsara for Arjuna) " There Arjuna saw fathers*, grandfathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, and well wishers assembled in the two armies. Seeing all these relatives assembled, Arjuna was overpowered by deep attachment. Grieving, he said the following."

Swamiji says everyone has five fathers:

1. The biological father
2. The one who gives the sacred thread during the Upanayam ceremony
3. The guru. Going to the Gurukulam is considered as a second birth. At our first birth, we are indiscriminate and instinctive. We are physically human, but mentally not. With Gayathri as the mother and Acharya as the father, we acquire reason and learn to live a life based on Dharma.
4. Annadhadha – one who feeds you when in need
5. The one who rescues you from adversity/crisis

When Arjuna sees all his family, a transformation takes place because he is overpowered by attachment. Arjuna, the soldier, now has become Arjuna, the samsari. Attachment leads to sorrow which leads to conflict.

Swamiji says a Jnani is the master of emotion while a ajnani is a slave to emotion.

Verses 28: This verse shows the sorrow that comes with attachment. This is the second symptom of Samsara. " Arjuna said, " Oh Krishna! I see these relatives of mine who are assembled..... (continuing into verse 29 which Swamiji will explain in the next class)

Arjuna uses the word svajaha meaning "my people" – I belong to them and they belong to me. When a sense of belonging becomes attachment and when attachment clouds our judgement, then the line between Dharma and Adharma blurs. Arjuna did not develop attachment in the battlefield. Attachment was not evident till the possibility of losing the object of attachment (Bhishma, Drona....) occurs.

Regards,

Usha Chandran