

Baghawad Geeta, Class 148: Chapter 11 Verses 33 & 34

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Therefore you rise up, (and) gain fame; and
defeating the enemies, enjoy a prosperous kingdom. These have
been killed
verily by Me even earlier; be you merely an instrument, O
Savyasacin (Arjuna).

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, appreciating Vishwarupa of Lord, Arjuna goes through two emotions; one of wonder and another of fear. He saw Lord destroying everything; seeing the destructive aspect, Arjuna had questions if Lord was had any compassion at all. So, he asks, “Who are you and what do you do”?

And there Lord Krishna said: That I am the kala tatvam; because kala or time is non-separate from the universe; if universe is My body; time is also an integral aspect of Mine; And therefore from the standpoint of time, I am called kala; I am called Yama; the one who controls the movement or controls all the processes of the creation; Yama means, all controller.

Our sandhyavandanam also
has worship of Yama. Yama controls world according to
universal laws.

Then Sri Krishna said, now
I am going to destroy warriors on both sides as per their
Prarabhda karmas. God
himself does not kill anybody; rather he uses some, as
instruments, to perform
this task. He tells Arjuna, you can also be an instrument of
mine; and in the
process, you will get name and fame.

The sentence, Nimitha
Matram Bhava, you be my instrument, has been read as fatalism.
There are two
points made here.

1. “ Everything is already
determined by God”; meaning death is pre-determined, is the
message or
fatalism; We have no control on destiny.

2. Second idea here
is, You be my instrument. So, here, God is controller and we
are just
instruments.

Swamiji says, we have
to read this sentence carefully. Shastras don't accept
fatalism. They don't see
us as puppets without free will. In fact fatalism is rejected.

When we reject fatalism
we are not rejecting idea of fate. The difference between two
can be explained
as follows:

Fate is accepted by
shastras. It is result of actions performed in past janmas or
destiny also
known as prarabdham or Daivam, and it as seen in a horoscope.
Our prarabhdam

influences our life, not the stars. Prarabhdas are indicated by planetary positions. It is like a fuel gauge in a car that is an indicator alone and not an inflencer. This is Prarabhda or fate.

Fate verus Fatalism:

Fate is one of the factors influencing life. If fate alone determines, it is fatalism. Shashtra says the other factor of influence is Free will or Purushartha.

Thus:

Fate + Free will=Our
Future

Let us discuss what the problem is, if you accept fatalism? Then, God decides everything; we are just his instruments.

Advantages of Fatalism:

1. You need not take responsibility for your atrocities; we can always blame god when we look for a scapegoat.
2. When God does everything and since we worship god and god is just; we are able to accept suffering. So fatalism helps in accepting problems.

However shastras don't accept fatalism. Shankaracharya also says this is the correct position. Thus, we identify six problems with fatalism.

1. If God is doing everything and we are his instruments then God is karta and we are Karanam. Whoever is karta,

he alone is Bhokta as well, per shastras. Thus, God alone gets all papams and punyams. All Sanchita and Agami karmas go to God. Thus, Bhagavan becomes the Mahasamsari; which is absurd. Thus Maha Samsaritam is first dosha.

2. Since we are instruments, we don't get Karma phalam, we get only Karanam; thus, if a car hits somebody, you don't arrest the car rather you arrest the driver. All my actions will not get Karma Phalam or punyam or papam; if so, we should all get moksha because Jiva becomes an A-samsari; which is also absurd. Thus, A-samsaritam is a dosha.
3. If God does everything, God alone will cause the suffering of all people. If God is responsible for suffering, he must be a most cruel God; he cannot be a Karuna Murthy. This is known as Nairgrinnya dosham and it means God will be subject to the charge of cruelty.
4. While God has made people suffer; he has made people enjoy as well. All people are not uniformly enjoying; some are happy, some happier and some happiest; thus there are gradations of enjoyment. So God must be responsible for partiality. This is known as Vaishamya dosham, meaning partiality.
5. Since God does all actions, we are mere instruments, we don't have to know what is right and what is wrong. So, we not hear Dharma shastras. God alone needs to learn them. This is known as Dharma shastra vaiyarthyam dosham.
6. If we don't have free will, we are just instruments, we will never have a conflict in life. An Instrument need not choose a course of action; so we wont have conflict. All conflicts belong to God alone. When do we have conflicts? Citing an example: Suppose there is only one road to your house; here there is no choice of another road. Now if there are two roads to your house and here you have to choose.

**Thus Freewill, Choice and Conflict, all go together.
Even waking up to an alarm clock is a conflict. Human life is
a series of
conflicts, indicating choice, using freewill.**

Say you have a Driver.
Both of you get into car. Driver has no conflict, as he is
just an instrument.
Conflict lies within the owner, as he has freewill.

If there is no free
will, there will be no conflicts in human beings.

Only animals are free
from free will, choice and conflicts. Human beings always have
choice, conflict
and free will.

So, we have free will.
For human beings future is determined by both fate and free
will. Animals don't
have freewill.

In different contexts,
either freewill or fate will dominate. Sometimes they are even
and may even end
up in a tie. So, by our prayer we try to influence the fate;
and by our planning,
we try to contribute to our will.

Then
comes the final question. Then why did Krishna say
nimittamatram bhava savyasachin; why did
He say be an instrument in the hand of the Lord.

What
do you mean by becoming an instrument? In the case of a human
being, becoming
the instrument in the hands of the Lord is following a dharmic

course of action,
because Bhagavan controls the
world through dharma. Bhagavan
harmonizes the world through dharma; and when I use my
freewill to be in
alignment with dharma;

Because,
everytime I have to choose, I can go either by dharma or I can
go by my raga dvesha. Raga dvesha tells you do
that or do not, do that; Pay tax or do not pay tax. Or violate
the traffic
rules or do this. Therefore every time you have a choice;

We can go according to our Raga dvesha or we can go according
to the dharma shastra; when my life is governed by dharma
shastra; when my freewill is in alignment with dharma shastra,
I become the instrument of the Lord. And therefore Arjuna
himself is facing a conflict. Dharma shastra says Arjuna has
to fight this war:

According
to dharma, Arjuna's duty is fight the war, because Kshatriya
has to
fight for the sake of dharma. And Duryodhana has explicitly
taken to adharma;
therefore dharma tells Arjuna fight. In fact, because of that
alone, Arjuna has
to take to battlefield.

But before he started the fight, his raga dvesha came. And
raga dvesha tells after-all, Bhishma, Drona, etc. are my
kith and kin;

Thus, this statement
says, Arjuna, may you align your will with mine.

Shloka # 11.34:

You destroy Drona and Bhishma, and Jayadratha and Karna as also the other heroic warriors who have been killed by Me. Do not be afraid. Fight! You shall conquer the enemies in battle.

Arjuna faces conflict because he has a freewill; he has a choice; he has to choose between what and what; His dharma knowledge tells that you have to fight the war; but his attachment tells: do not fight the war; His conscience tells fight the war; his attachment tells do not fight; Therefore there is a conflict; And what is becoming the instrument of the Lord; Krishna tells: do not go by your raga dvesha. Then what you go by: you go by dharma; and when you go by dharma, you are going by the Will of the Lord, because dharma is God's will; so my freewill is now aligned to dharma; my freewill is not gone; my freewill is aligned with dharma; my freewill has aligned with God's will; and when my freewill is in alignment with God's will, I become an instrument in the hands of the Lord; Therefore this statement is not saying: you do not have will; this statement tells: Arjuna, May you align your will to my Will. In short, follow dharma. I hope you have no conflict now.

So here Krishna tells what is the course of the creation in keeping with the law of karma or the law of dharma, which Arjuna has to align with. He says all these people's time has come. According to dharma or law of karma, they require disappearance from the earth; who are they; Drona; Bhishma; Jayadratha; karna; all these people as well as the others belonging to both sides of the army;

Sri Krishna says, they are already dead; which means the law of karma or the law of dharma has indicated their death but in the case of Arjuna, the Lord is here to come and tell what has to happen; what is according to the law of karma, the time of death has come; Bhagavan comes and tells.

Therefore here the difference is in the case of Arjuna,

Bhagavan is here to come and tell what is the fate but in our case, our fate is not known or knowable. That is why it is called adrshtam; therefore we can never know clearly what is our fate; and therefore we know only what is the freewill or our capacity; **Therefore do your action as though every thing is in your hands; receive the result as though everything is in God's hands. This is the working approach. Because when you do the action, you do not know the power of fate.**

That is why they try to read the fate through astrology; so astrology is supposed to indicate the direction of the fate and they give prayascitha as well. But an astrologer may read it properly, or it may be improper. So, the alternative is surrender to Lord; do your best and leave the rest to him.

Take away:

Thus Freewill, Choice and Conflict, all go together. Human life is a series of conflicts, indicating choice, using freewill.

Fate + Free will=Our
Future

Therefore
do your action as though every thing is in your hands; receive the result as
though everything is in God's hands. This is the working approach.
Because when you do the action, you do not know the power of fate.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy