

# Bhagwat Geeta, Class 170 – Chapter 13 Verses 8 to 12

In verses 8 to 12, Lord Krishna is dealing with jñānam. Jñānam is a set of virtues that indicate the level of mental health. This mental health is useful to enjoy a peaceful mind and is required for a vedantic student. If the mind is not healthy, the intellect will be a hostage of sick mind. A disturbed mind will suppress intellect. Mind is healthy when these virtues are followed.

1. Vairāgyam: Mastery of sense organs. Mastering Jñānendriyani, which receives input from the world and mastering Karmendriyani which transact with the world.
2. Indriyasthesu; Mastery form sense objects. Controlling sense organs requires being alert all the time because these sense organs come in contact with sense objects on a regular basis and these sense organs develop attachment to sense objects. You are allowed to enjoy pleasures without becoming a slave to those pleasures.
3. Anahangarah: Freedom from arrogance, vanity, pride; humility; Different than amanithyam; Amanithyam is freedom at the thought level; Anahangara is freedom at the verbal level; Adhambithvam is at physical level.
4. Don't be body-oriented life: This will lead to sorrow related to pain in birth, old age, disease and death. This doesn't mean neglecting the body, but remembering it is only an instrument. Constantly remember pain related to these dosha.
5. Asakthi: Mental or inner detachment, avoidance of mental slavery with regard to any external objects. Dispassion through discrimination and not by suppression.
6. Anabishishvangaha; Absence of excessive attachment with child, spouse, house etc.; things with which we move

constantly. Attachment to these can't be avoided, but we should avoid excessive attachment. Attachment is mamakara, excessive attachment is when I become one with that object and don't see any difference between that object and me.

7. Samacit tatvam: Being equanimous; this is the essence of karma yoga. Freedom from elation and depression of good and bad situation. Don't be carried away in good and bad situations. Every human being will have favorable and unfavorable situations. Spiritual growth requires suffering also. Accept every experience as eeswara prasadam for my spiritual growth.
8. Ananya Yogana: Bhakti; There is no question of secular karma yoga; karma yoga presupposes faith in God or bhakti. Prasadam means tranquility of mind; accept everything as a prasadam from lord. This is possible only when there is devotion to the Lord. Without bhakti and devotion, there can't be karma yoga.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 169 – Chapter 13 Verses 8 to 12**

From verse 8 to 12, Krishna deals with jñānam which is those virtues that will make the mind fit for self-knowledge. These virtues must be cultivated by everyone. Gaining self-knowledge is relatively easy, but cultivating these virtues take time and effort. These virtues are more important than vedantic studies. We have seen the first three in the last class. The virtues are:

1. Amānitvam: . Amānitvam is freedom from self-admiration

or self-conceit or humility.

2. Adhambithvam: Adhmbithvam is not requiring admiration at physical level. Not seeking attention; simplicity.
3. Ahimsa: Nonviolence; not hurting other beings.
4. Shanti: There are two aspects of shanti:

1. The first aspect of Shanthi is titikṣā, which is acceptance without resistance of all choiceless situations of life. There are many situations over which have no control. Those situations are all choiceless situations. Since I do not have control over these situations, I can only change my attitude towards these situations. This acceptance is called titikṣā. I have no control over past, even God can't change the past. So, the past comes under choiceless situation. The present is also choiceless, because it has already arrived. So, we can only prepare our mind to accept the situations of past and present. This acceptance can be healthy or unhealthy. Unhealthy acceptance is with bitterness and self pity and frustration and anger towards world and God. This is not titikṣā, because our mind and other resource are not available for any constructive activities. Healthy acceptance is where I don't allow the choice less situation to overwhelm me, I ignore the situation and allow my resources to function in a constructive manner. It appears very difficult, but it is possible to ignore unfavorable situations. An example is Stephen Hawkins.

1. The second aspect of shanti is shama. The future is not choiceless, but the future can be changed with free will and resources. With regard to the future, we do not need acceptance, because the future is not choiceless and can be transformed. But any such transformation or change requires time and patience. We require the capacity to

wait. This second aspect of Shanthi is shama which is capacity to wait; everything takes its own time. The future has to unfold in its own time. Develop patience in the present. Shanti is required to develop ahimsa.

5. Aarjavam: Alignment of threefold personality – physical, verbal and mental. If thought, word and deed are in alignment, that person is a integrated, harmonized, healthy personality. When there is no alignment, it results in a split personality and there is a strain taking place in the personality. Without alignment, there is a gradual buildup of stress, resulting in disintegrated personality. The first exercise in aarjavam is punctuality. Truthfulness is a sub division of aarjavam.
6. Acharya upasanam: Reverence towards teacher. When we worship a guru, the worship goes to the sastra as acharya represents the sastras in him. Why should we worship sastras and vedas? Sastras and vedas are like the sixth sense organ; it gives knowledge that the other sense organs cannot give. Other sense organs cannot verify or contradict the knowledge given by sastras. This accepting capacity is shraddha. This shraddha is difficult to develop and should be done through acharya upasanam. You accept the knowledge from Vedas as fact. Without this shraddha we will never be able to assimilate vedanta.
7. Souham: Purity; cleanliness at personal level and surrounding levels; cleanliness at verbal and thought levels. Developing all the virtues (amānitvam, ahimsa and shanti) that keep our mind calm and healthy.
8. Sthyriyam; Will power; commitment; perseverance. When we start any pursuit, there will be obstacles and setbacks. Sthyriyam is continuing the pursuit despite obstacles and setbacks.

9. Atma vinigraha: Self-mastery; self-management; Being the master of my own instruments. We have 17 indriyam or organs; Through these instruments alone we accomplish any goals. Before using any of these instruments, we have to make sure the instrument is healthy and under our control. This is atma vinigraha. In this context, atma stands for sthūla, sukshma śarīram. Ashtanga yoga is one way to get atma vinigraha and prepare for vedanta sravanam.
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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 168 – Chapter 13 Verses 8 to 12**

In verses 2 to 7, Lord Krishna elaborates kṣetram and kṣetrajña. These topics are also discussed in Chapter 2 as consciousness and matter principles.

Verses 8 through 12

*Humility, simplicity, non-violence, forbearance, uprightness, service to the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, detachment from sense objects, absence of egoism, constantly seeing the defect of identification with son, wife, house, etc., always being Equanimeous in desirable and undesirable situations, unswerving devotion to Me with constant self-inquiry and not losing sight of the fruit of self-knowledge – all this is said to be gyanam. That which is opposed to this jñānam.*

In verses 8 to 12, Lord Krishna deals with jñānam. In this context jñānam means group of mental virtues required to enjoy a fit mind for gaining spiritual knowledge. In the presence

of these virtues mind will be jñāna yoga. An unfit mind will resist jñānam and it will receive the jñānam and even it receives the knowledge it will not be unassimilated. This can be counterproductive. So, one should focus more on the values required for moksha/ jñānam. These values are otherwise known as dharma. Dharma is the steppingstone for moksha purusārtha. Without going through dharma, a person can't hope to obtain jñānam or moksha.

In these verses, about twenty virtues are given by Krishna.

1. Amānitvam: Mānitvam is self-glory, looking upon oneself as a great person. Amānitvam is freedom from self-admiration or self-conceit or humility.

1. Self-admiration is a big obstacle for jñānam, because it is addictive, and we will need it all the time. Deprivation of admiration by society causes problems like any other addiction. While it is the duty of society to admire accomplishments, we ourselves should not join that admiration.

1. Self-discriminative power is lost by self-glorification and excitement. Once the discriminatory power is lost, I lose sight of important facts:

1. Whatever the accomplishment, there are enumerable other factors and people involved. My contribution is only one of the factors, but in excitement I take full credit for the accomplishment. Whatever the name and fame, most of the credit goes to other factors.

1. Whatever the accomplishment, it is because of the talent I was born with which is a gift from God; I forget God's contribution. Self-conceit and bhakti cannot co-exist.

1. However great I am, I can never claim myself

to be the greatest one, because I live in a world where there are people, there were people and there will be people who are greater than me. Because I forget this fact, I can never admire another person who is greater than me. A self-conceited person can't admire another person. When this self-conceit is replaced by anger and jealousy. Once self-conceit sets in the door of devotion is gone.

In our purna there are many stories illustrating amānitvam.

- Adhambithvam: Dhambithvam is physical expression of mānitvam. Adhmbithvam is not requiring admiration at physical level. Not seeking attention; simplicity; inconspicuous in a crowd.
- Ahimsa: Nonviolence; not hurting other beings. We have three weapons for hurting others:
  - Body – kayikam or action
  - Speech (animals don't have this weapon). Humans have this weapon which can be used wisely or abused.
  - Mental. Mentally cursing others, hurting others through thoughts.

In ashtanga yoga, the first vow to be followed by a spiritual seeker is ahimsa. The significance of ahimsa:

1. I do not want to do anything to others that I don't want other to do to me. This is our instinctive feeling, so this is also instinctive feeling for others. This is

the universal law and anytime we violate universal law, we are violating dharma. When we violate dharma, nothing happens to dharma, but we hurt ourselves.

2. Whatever I contribute to the world now that alone I can withdraw later. If I contribute himsa, I only get himsa back. If I don't want to be injured by the world, then we should follow ahimsa.
3. The tendency to hurt others is impulsive and natural. When expectations are not fulfilled then I am hurt. Then the immediate reaction is to hurt that object which is the cause of my hurt. An injured person injures others and there is no gap between my injury and causing injury to others. If this natural reaction can stop only when my mind becomes sensitive, that when I hurt someone else, the sensitive mind should feel the pain of others. For a sensitive person, hurting another person is like causing self-injury. Sensitized mind and empathy are required to follow ahimsa. A sensitive mind is required to understand sensitive topics of vedanta. Crime itself becomes punishment for a sensitive mind.
4. Shanti: One meaning of shanti is mental resistance or immunity so mind is not disturbed when expectations are not fulfilled. Shanti is developing that mental immunity so that I am not vulnerable to external fluctuations.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 167 – Chapter 13 Verses 5 to 8**

In the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, Arjuna asked for the clarification of six technical terms: Of these six terms,



Lord Krishna defines Kṣetram as the body which includes any object of experience in the creation and Kṣetrajña as the experiencer or the subject.

Now Krishna gives simple elaboration of these two words. What is kṣetram, what is the cause of kṣetram and what is the effect of kṣetram. All the causes come under kṣetram, and the effects also come under kṣetram. The entire kāriya kāraṇa prabañca comes under kṣetram. The corollary of this statement is kṣetrajña should be other than cause and effect. The knowledge of these two alone is real knowledge.

#### Verse 5

*This has been taught by the sages variously. This has been revealed distinctly through various Vedic hymns. This has been taught through logical and well ascertained upaniṣadic statements which reveal Brahman.*

Kṣetram includes the entire material world; kṣetrajña is consciousness. The entire creation is the mixture of these two, that is consciousness and matter. All the rishis and vedic mantras distinctly explain these two. Consciousness is sathyam or reality and matter is mithya, and I am the consciousness principle.

#### Verses 6 and 7

*The five subtle elements ahankara, mahat, prakriti, the ten sense organs, the mind, the five gross elements, desire hatred, pleasure, pain, the body mind complex, sentiency, fortitude – all this enumerated above briefly, is kṣetram, together with its modification.*

The vedic philosophers have categorized the universe into various tattvas. Here the universe is categorized into 24 tatvam.

1. The first basic matter principle is prakriti; potential

form of universe; this prakriti is basic matter and does not have origination. In scientific language it is the condition before big bang.

2. Mahat is the total matter in the first stage of evolution.
3. Next is Ahankara. Ahankara is the name of total matter and not individual ego, cosmic ego.
4. 16 tatvam originate from ahankara:
  1. Cosmic mind.
  1. Ten indriyam; ten sense organs or powers of perceptions.
  1. Panca sukshma budhani; five subtle elements.

5. From the subtle elements five sthūla budhani originate

These 24 are matter or kṣetram, the inert material objects. All these tatvam undergo constant change. Due to the constant changes gunas are created.

Our physical body and the mind are modification of the subtle elements so they both are matter. The mind is an inert matter, but it has the ability to reflect the consciousness and appear to be sentient. Reflected consciousness makes the mind appear to be sentient; this borrowed sentiency is chethana. This reflection can exist wherever there is a reflecting medium, which is kṣetram. So, the reflected consciousness is also kṣetram or the material universe. The objective world created by the Lord is replaced by the subjective world created by me. Raga and dwesha, desirable and undesirable worlds, are the result of this creation. This results in sugam and duḥkam. No object in the public world does produce sugam and duḥkam, however every object in my private world produces sugam and duḥkam. Every object produces joy by arrival, and it produces sorrow by departure. So, every object produces sugam and duḥkam. Every undesirable object produces sugam when it departs from me and produces

duḥkam when it arrives. This capacity of this world is not intrinsic, but only because of my classification of the world as desirable and undesirable. So, every object is not capable of producing joy and sorrow; world produces sorrow or joy only after we classify them desirable and undesirable by attaching raga and dwesha. This list constantly changes, and lifelong struggle is to take care of this list.

## Verse 8

With verse 7, Krishna concludes the analysis of kṣetram, but he does not elaborate kṣetrājña. He will elaborate the discussion of jñānam and puruṣa later. Now Krishna comes to the third topic, jñānam from verse 8 to 12. In these verses, jñānam means spiritual knowledge in these verse and it represents sat guna or virtue. If these virtues are there, self-knowledge is automatically obtained.

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# Bhagwat Geeta, Class 166 – Chapter 13 Verses 3 and 4

Arjuna asked for the clarification of six technical terms. The six terms are:

1. Prakriti
2. Puruṣa,
3. kṣetram,
4. *kṣetrājña*
5. jñeyam.
6. jñānam

Lord Krishna takes up the two words kṣetram and kṣetrājña.

The word kṣetram means the entire objective universe experienced by us. It includes the world, the body and mind. Among these three, the world is away from us and the body/mind is intimately associated with me the observer. So, the body and mind appear to be integral part of me.

An object which serves as an instrument is integrally connected to the subject and we include that with the observer. Similar to how we include spectacles as part of us. Similarly, body and mind are instruments, but they appear to be an integral part of the observer. But both of them should be included in kṣetram, the objective universe consists of three: Body, mind and universe. Kṣetrājña is different than the body but makes the body an enliven body. The principle behind kṣetram is kṣetrājña. We should understand that an individual is a mixture of body and consciousness or dheha and dhehi or atma and anatma. Generally, we tend to identify with the body only. After the study of vedanta, we say that we are body and behind the body there is an eternal consciousness or atma. That is not the right approach. The right approach is saying that I am the consciousness and body is only an incidental medium through which we transact with the world. We are using the body temporarily and should be willing to give it back to the world. This shift of identification from kṣetram to kṣetrājña called aparoksha jñānam.

Verse 3

*Oh Arjuna! Moreover, know the kṣetrājña to be Myself, obtaining in all bodies. The knowledge which deals with kṣetram and kṣetrājña is true knowledge. This is My teaching.*

The steps in understanding ourselves:

1. First, we identify ourselves with body and say I am the body.
2. Then we say that I am the body backed by consciousness.

3. Then we say I am not the body with consciousness, but I am the consciousness with an incidental body.
4. Finally, we say I am the consciousness not only behind my body but also the consciousness behind every body. The consciousness is also there in between the bodies. The consciousness in between the bodies is not recognizable because there is no medium to transact the consciousness. Consciousness pervades everywhere. Wherever body is there, consciousness manifests itself and wherever body is not there, consciousness does not manifest itself.

Consciousness has two names. From the standpoint of a single body or individual body, it is called jivatma. The very same consciousness from the standpoint of all the body or totality, it is called paramatma. From a micro standpoint it is jivatma and from the macro standpoint it is paramatma. If you negate micro and macro, it is atma. Jivatma is atma, paramatma is atma, both are essentially the same. This recognition is jivatma paramatma aikya Jñānam. This is similar to wave and ocean; they both are water only and the wave and ocean are different names and forms given to water. The containers (different bodies) are different, but the content is only one atma. This is the real knowledge that must be acquired by everyone. This is para vidya and all other knowledge are apara vidya. Shankaracharya boldly says apara vidya is ignorance.

How does this knowledge change our lives? Consider two waves; one wave knows that I am the wave; the other wave knows that it is water. The first wave keeps growing as it approaches the shores, but it knows that it will be no more when it reaches the shore. As long as it thinks itself as wave, it can't evade this insecurity. But the second wave knows that the wave is only a name and form but in reality, it is water and therefore does not have the same insecurity. Similarly, as long as we consider ourselves as the mortal body, there

will be insecurity. When we see ourselves as atma, that knowledge will give security. All other knowledge only will give only a false sense of security.

But we must note that vedanta does not give security; Vedanta removes the sense of insecurity by revealing that you don't need any support from outside to be secure.

Verse 4

*What is kṣetram? Of what nature is it? Of what effects is it? Which effect comes out of which cause? What is that kṣetrajña. And of what glory is it? Hear that from me briefly.*

In the previous two verses, Krishna briefly described kṣetram and kṣetrajña. In this verse, he elaborates the following:

What is kṣetram?

What is the nature of kṣetram?

What are the causes of kṣetram?

What are the effects of kṣetram?

Krishna also elaborates kṣetrajña.

What is kṣetrajña or consciousness?

What are the glories or features of kṣetrajña?

A scientist says consciousness is that which is not subject to the laws of creation and it does not have a physical location; it is beyond time and space.

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# Bhagwat Geeta, Class 165 – Chapter 13 Verses 1 and 2

In the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter makes the end of madhyama śatakam of Bhagavat Gita. Each śatakam consists of six chapters. The three śatakam and the topics highlighted are:

Prathama śatakam: First part of Gita (First to 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter);  
Topics:

1. Jiva swaroopam,
2. Karma yoga,
3. Importance of individual effort or prayarthana.  
Everything is not pre-determined; we also have free will. Fate alone does not determine our future and we should not embrace fatalism. Vedic approach is fate is only one of the contributors to our future. In addition to fate, the other important factor is our free will or purusārtha or parayarthana. Only when you work for your own upliftment, God will come to your help.

Madhyama śatakam: Seventh to 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter Topics:

1. Eeswara swaroopam.
2. Eeswara upasana yoga. Meditation up on eeswara. This can be in the form of ishta devata upasanam or in the form of viśvarūpa upasanam, meditating up on the lord as the very universe itself.
3. Importance of Eeswara anugraha or the help from the Lord. Even the greatest advaidin should value the role of eeswara anugraha.

Charama śatakam (13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>)

1. Eeswara jiva swaroopa aikyam. The essential oneness of eeswara swaroopam and jiva swaroopam. We indirectly convey there is superficial difference between jiva and eeswara, similar to wave and ocean. The difference between the two (like size, length of time etc..) are only superficial. The essential nature of ocean and wave is water. There are no waves without water and there is no ocean without water. If you shift your focus to water, then waves and ocean are essentially one and the same. Similarly, jivatma is essentially atma; paramatma is essentially also atma.
2. jñāna Yoga as a sadhana, meant to discover the essential oneness. Once the wave discovers that it is water, then there is no end for the wave. jñāna yoga is understanding the equation that jivatma equals paramatma. When you look at eeswara and when you look at jiva, they are very different. paramatma is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresence. Jivatma is exactly the opposite of this. But the differences are only superficial. When you arrive at the essence of jivatma and paramatma, you discover that they are essentially one and the same. The inquiry you make to arrive at this conclusion is jñāna yoga or vedanta sravana, manana nidhithyasanam.
3. Importance of values; developing sat guna, noble virtues. Just like we prepare the ground, before sowing the seeds, we should develop noble virtues to understand vedanta; these values are also known as sadhana catuṣṭaya sampatti.

Verse 1:

*Arjuna asked – Oh Lord! I desire to know the following: prakriti, purusha, kṣetram, kṣetrajña, jñānam and jñeyam.*

Arjuna gives six technical words of vedanta and asks for clarification. The words are:



1. Prakriti
2. Purusha,
3. kṣetram,
4. kṣetrajña
5. jñeyam.
6. jñānam

Some of these words are synonymous. The words prakriti and kṣetram, are synonymous, both of them are products of material world and are the objects of our experience. According to vedanta, it includes the world, energy, body, and mind.

Purusha, kṣetram and jñeyam are all synonymous, they all stand for chaithanyam or consciousness.

jñānam is the only word left out. In this chapter, jñānam means virtues or values or sat guna.

So, the six technical words are condensed into three concepts:

1. Prakriti and kṣetram. These two words stand for material aspects.
2. Purusha, kṣetram and jñeyam; they all stand for consciousness.
3. Jñānam, meaning sat guna in this context.

Verse 2

*Lord Krishan said Oh Arjuna! This body is known as kṣetra (There is a conscious principle) which knows this (body). Wise men declare that knower principle to be kṣetrajña.*

Krishna rearranges the questions, Krishna starts with the third item, kṣetram. This body you are experiences is kṣetram. Meanings of kṣetra as told by Sankarachariyar:

- One that is subject to decay; disintegrates and dies.

The word śarīram also means the same thing. The word śarīram or dehaha refers to suffering from threefold factors:

- Internal, (body getting old, getting decease, etc.).
  - External.
  - Nature or dharma
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- Any agricultural field is called kṣetram and our physical body is comparable to a field. Just like the seeds grow at different times, our karma also fructifies at different times. Just like seeds require land to grow into plants, we require body to convert pavam into suffering and punyam into sugam. We also should include the mind and external world as kṣetram. Body, mind, and external world are all called kṣetram; whatever you experience is kṣetram. All the three are objects of experience and made up of matter. All the three are subject to constant change. World, body, and mind are all subject to change and savikaram. Krishna focusses on the body because we are focused mostly on body.

The second topic is whatever illumines the kṣetram. An experience presupposes a sentient experiencer or perceiver or conscious principle and that is called *kṣetrajña*. In short, *kṣetrajña* means consciousness principle. kṣetram means material principle.

What is the nature of this consciousness is a fundamental question. According to vedanta, consciousness has the following principles:

1. It is not a part, product, or property of the body.
2. It is an independent entity that pervades the inert body and makes it sentient.
3. It is not limited by the boundaries of the body; it

extends beyond the periphery of the body.

4. It will continue to exist even after the body perishes; it is eternal.
5. The surviving consciousness is not recognizable because there is no body for it to manifest or express.

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## **Bagawad Gita Class 180; Chapter 13 Summary**

Continuing his teachings

Swamiji said today,

I will give you a summary of chapter 13. This chapter is the beginning of the third

shatakam of the Gita. The first shatakam highlighted Karma Yoga; the second

shatakam, from chapter 7-12, highlighted Upasana Yoga. Now in the third

shatakam from Ch.13-18 we are in Gyana Yoga. Specifically Chapters 13,14 and 15

provide us the essence of Gyana Yoga as well as essence of Upanishads. Even among

them, Chapter 13 is very important from a philosophical point of view. This

chapter begins with a question from Arjuna; some books show this question,

while others do not. In first shloka Arjuna asked for clarification on six

technical terms used, namely: Prakrti, Purusha, Kshetra, Kshetragnya, Gyanam and Gneyam. On scrutiny we

find these six terms can be reduced to three, as some are repetitive. Thus

Kshetragnya, Purusha and Gneyam all three words are really discussing the One Atma. Similarly, Kshetram and Prakriti imply Anatma. So, Atma is one topic and Anatma the other; finally Gyanam is the third topic; so we have reduced six topics to three. These three topics were discussed from shlokas # 2 to # 24.

**Anatma:** is also known as Kshetram and Prakriti. Sri Krishna says, whatever I experience in front of me will come under Anatma; so, anything experienced is anatma. Even heaven falls under anatma as it can be experienced or it is objectifiable. So, the world is anatma. Our body is also an object of experience; as I experience it very closely including intellectual condition. Thus, World+ Body + Mind+ All other conditions=Anatma.

What  
is nature of Anatma?

1. Anatma is Achetana swarupam. It is jadam in nature. It is inert matter. Even body's sentiency is non-intrinsic; it is borrowed; hence, at death, the body becomes insentient; hence it is not sentient. Extending this idea, mind is also material, made up of subtle matter.
2. Sagunam: Anatma is full of attributes.
3. Savikaram: Anatma changes from moment to moment.

And because of its changing nature, it will not remain in this visible condition all the time. Because of its changing nature, it will

broadly go through two conditions; one is called the manifest visible condition; in Sanskrit called karya-avastha or vyaktha avastha; vyaktha means manifest or visible condition and very same thing will at the time of destruction it will go back to karana avastha or avyaktha avastha.

**Just as when you boil the water, the visible water is gone but you know the water is not destroyed; but what has happened to water? The visible vyaktha-jalam has become avyaktha. Similarly, this cosmos also has got vyaktha avastha called prapancha and it has got an avyaktha avastha, also known as maya. Therefore, maya is also an unmanifest form of matter only. So manifest matter is called universe; unmanifest matter is called maya. So, therefore, maya or the universe, including the body, including the mind, all of them come under anatma; which is achetanam, sagunam, and savikara tatvam. So this is the description of anatma.**

### **Atma:**

The next topic is Atma. Kshetragnya, Purusha and Gneyam all three mean Atma.

What is Atma? If whole universe is an object of experience, it presupposes presence of an experiencer (subject). Without subject, no object is possible. The subject can never become an object. An object is never possible without a subject. Subject cannot be objectified.

If I am seeing different colors and forms in front of me, the perception of every form, the perception of every color,

presupposes the existence of the eyes, but the unfortunate fact is that the eyes themselves are not Perceivable. But even though the eyes are not perceivable, I can never doubt the existence of the eyes, because the very perception is possible because of the perceiver alone. Thus, extending this principle, we can say, **the entire experienced object proves the existence of the experiencer; but the experiencer himself cannot become an object of experience. And this unobjectifiable experiencer principle is called Atma.** The unobjectifiable experiencer is called Atma. And since Atma is the unobjectifiable-experiencing-principle, it will be necessarily a chetana tatvam. – If every object is achetanam, the subject has to be Consciousness principle only. And who is that experiencer principle? Who is experiencing the world?

You

will say. I myself am experiencing. **And**

**therefore Atma is I, the consciousness principle, which objectifies**

**everything but which itself is not available for objectification. This is the atma.**

The

five features of Atma:

1. I, the observer consciousness principle, am not a part, product nor property of the body.
2. I, the consciousness, am an independent entity that pervades and enlivens the body. It is like the electricity that pervades and enlivens the fan.
3. I, the consciousness principle, am not limited by boundaries of body. It is like electricity which is not located in fan alone; I am the all pervading Atma. The Sanskrit root word for Atma is Aap (to pervade) like in Apnoti.
4. Then what is the next point, we had seen. That I the consciousness principle, will continue to exist even when the body, the manifesting medium collapses or dies;

I will survive and therefore, mortality is a feature of the body; but not of me, the consciousness, pervading the body. So I am sarvagatah, I am nityaha; Atma sarvagataha, Atma Nityaha.

5. And fifth and finally, we have to remember that if the body medium dies, I, the consciousness will continue to survive, but that I will not be available for transaction; not because I am absent but because the medium for transaction is not there. It is exactly as it happens in deep sleep state; the body is not functioning, resting, the mind is not functioning, resting; transactions have ended; but I have not ended. While sleeping, are the transactions ending or am I ending? Thank God, only the transactions are ending and not I; the transactor continues to survive.

And that I is the atma, the chetana tatvam and to conceive of this consciousness principle, Sri Krishna gives two beautiful examples later, which we can remember in this context. What are the two examples; consciousness is comparable to akasha, the space-principle, and to the Prakasha-tatvam. So, if you want to conceive of consciousness, we have to see the features of these two examples then we will get a better picture. And what are the features in these two. Both are ekam. Akasha is one. Surya Prakasha is one. Sri Krishna says consciousness is also one, Ekatvam.

And then, Akasha is  
achalam; Akasha cannot move from place to place; everything moves in Akasha but  
Akasha itself  
does not move; similarly, Surya Prakasha also does not move. Even this Prakasha in the hall, the light, does not move. My hand moves in light,  
but the light itself does not move. Exactly like that, the consciousness  
principle itself is achalam.

Like Akasha and  
Prakasha, Atma is achalam.

Next feature is akandha. Space is indivisible. You cannot apportion space. The earth can be divided. Water can be divided and we have quarrels also between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, but the space itself cannot be divided. Similarly, Prakasha also cannot be cut and therefore both of them are akhandam; Similarly atma the chaitanyam is akhandam. So Achalam, it is akhandam, it is Ekam.

Next, akasha is assangam. Space is everywhere but it is never contaminated by anything. Space is uncontaminable. It is unpollutable. Water can be polluted; earth can be polluted; everything else can be polluted; vayu can be polluted, but not space. Similarly Prakasha, the light is also asanga. It cannot be contaminated by anything. Shankaracharya says whether the light falls on dirty coovam water or Ganga water, the dirty water cannot pollute the light. And therefore asangatvam is the next feature.

And Akasha is sarvadharam. It is the support of everything and similarly, consciousness is the support of matter. Not vice versa. We think matter is supporting consciousness but Sri Krishna says, it is not so. Consciousness is not located in brain rather all the brains are located in one all-pervading consciousness. And if it becomes a dead brain, Einstein's brain is preserved it seems; not because consciousness has departed or gone away; what has happened is that the capacity of the brain to manifest the consciousness is lost. The medium has lost the capacity like a fused bulb; power is very much there; but the bulb has become fused. So, therefore, it is not the absence of electricity but absence of a functioning medium, which can manifest. And therefore consciousness is sarva adhara, like Akasha and finally, consciousness like the Surya Prakasha, the light of the Sun, it illumines everything, because of the presence of consciousness alone; things are known; and therefore, sarva adharaha and sarva Prakasha, is



that atma and that atma I am.

So this is called atma-anatma viveka Gyanam, discriminating between consciousness and matter and claiming that I am the consciousness principle who is functioning through the body but I myself am not the body. So the medium comes, the medium goes, but I never come and go. So these are the features of atma.

Anatma and atma, two topics are over. And now we go to Gyanam.

**Gyanam:** has a unique meaning in Ch.13 and it is not knowledge. All the virtues required to gain gyanam are called Gyanam; or a Dharmic way of life. Thus, ethics and morality enter Vedanta. **Only an ethical and moral mind can receive gyanam.**

Twenty values are enumerated. They are required to transform us. Thus Study+Value=Transformation; while Study-Value=Information. Sadhana Chatustaya  
Sampathi: The Four Ds. Discrimination, Dispassion, Discipline and Desire.

### **Discrimination:**

Discrimination means the understanding that God alone can give Purnatvam and security in life. Fullness or peace or security can come only from one source and that is nitya vastu, the Ishvara tatvam. And the world; however wonderful, beautiful it might be, you can experience it, enjoy it, you can possess it, you can handle it, but the world cannot give peace, security and Purnatvam. This understanding is called Discrimination.

**Dispassion:**

God

as priority is called spiritual desire, world being lesser than that is dispassion.

Dispassion

is, after this understanding, changing the priorities of life; between God and

World; which one is primary and which one is subservient. With regard to this,

I have to do some reshuffling and in that reshuffling, when world becomes

subservient and secondary, that attitude is called dispassion,

**Desire:**

And

when God or Brahman or Nitya vastu becomes the top priority, it is called spiritual

Desire. God as priority is called spiritual desire with world being lesser than

that; this state is called dispassion.

**Discipline:** is the

integration of the entire personality. Physical body, the 10 sense organs,

organs of action and organs of knowledge, the mind, the intellect, all of them

when they are disciplined and organized and instead of I, becoming their slave,

I become their master. Then I am the master of my sense organs; when I master my

mind, self-mastery; self-integration it is called discipline.

Discrimination,

Dispassion; Desire and Discipline; these four are called sadhana chathushtayam. Sri

Krishna has expanded these four alone, into 20 values.

So

20 condensed is four. Four diluted is twenty. So in the summary, we will see four.

The expansion we will see 20.

So

sadhana chathushtaya sampathi is

here called Gyanam. With this, Sri Krishna has covered all the six topics from

shloka No.2 to 24.

In

shlokas 25-35 Sri Krishna concludes the chapter with Gyana Sadhanani and Gyana

Phalam, the stages to obtain knowledge and the benefits of knowledge.

Five

stages to knowledge are:

1. Practice of Karma yoga to remove impurities of mind.
2. Practice of Upasana meditation on a God with attributes to remove extroverted-ness and bring tranquility; and focus to the mind.
3. Sravanam: consistent systematic study of Vednatic scriptures under a competent Acharya for a length of time. It removes ignorance.
4. Mananam: After study of vedantic scriptures I raise my doubts. During Sravanam doubts are not raised. So, removal of all doubts is mananam.
5. Nidhidhysanam: is dwelling upon the teaching because I have to change my perspective of how I see myself. Because all the time I have been looking upon myself as the body. The body orientation is the most powerful vasana. And therefore, whatever happens to the body, I take it as happening to myself and therefore, the

response is different; that is called samsara and therefore I have to spend some time and tell myself, I am not the body; but I am functioning through the medium of the body. In sleep, I have dropped all the transactions but I continue to exist. Similarly in death also, the body may end, but I continue to survive. And therefore, I am not a mortal one is the shift of self-perspective. **And when I change my opinion about myself, my opinion about the world also will change. And this process is called Nidhidhyasanam or meditation to remove old orientation. Otherwise we can also call it deconditioning.**

Thus after completion of five levels of sadhana's: karma, upasana, sravanam, mananam, and nidhidhyasanam, I own up to the fact that Aham Nithyah Chaitanya Rupa Atma Asmi. So these are the sadhanas.

### **Benefits or Phalam:**

1. Sarvatra Samadarshanam: Perspective changes from Anatma to one underlying Atma. In and through all transactions I am aware of Atma. Practical benefit is freedom from Raga( attachment), Dvesha (aversion); the cause of Samsara.
2. **Amrtatva prapthihi**: When I took myself as the anatma-body, I concluded I am mortal. When I know I am the atma, now I claim I am immortal. When the wave thought that it is a wave; it was afraid of its mortality. But the moment wave shifted the vision, and claims I am the water, the wave is not afraid of mortality; because as water, it does not die. Therefore, amritatva prapti, immortality is the second benefit.
3. Akartvityam and Abhoktvyam: I am neither Karta nor Bhokta, but in my presence, illumine everything but I am not tainted by anything.

#### 4. Brahmatvam: Aham

Brahma Asmi or limitlessness. Once I know I am water, I can claim I am everywhere. This is Jivan mukti.

Sri

Krishna says, so gain this knowledge, Arjuna, to make a difference in your life from bondage to liberation.

Sri

Krishna concluded Chapter 13, named as Kshetra, Kshetragnya Vibhaga Yoga.

#### **Take Away:**

**Maya:** Just as when

you boil the water, the visible water is gone but you know the water is not destroyed; but what has happened to water? The visible vyaktha-jalam has become avyaktha. Similarly, this cosmos also has got vyaktha avastha called prapancha and it has got an avyaktha avastha, also known as maya. Therefore, maya is also an unmanifest form of matter only.

The experienced objects proves the existence of the experiencer; but the experiencer himself cannot become an object of experience. And this unobjectifiable experiencer principle is called Atma.

And

therefore Atma is I, the consciousness principle, which objectifies everything but which itself is not available for objectification. This is the atma.

Only  
an ethical and moral mind can receive gyanam.

And  
when I change my opinion about myself, my opinion about the  
world also will change.  
And this process is called Nidhidhyasanam to remove the old  
orientation. Otherwise, we can also  
call it deconditioning.

**With Best  
Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Bagawat Gita, Class 179: Chapter 13, Verses 30 to 34**

**Shloka**

**13. 30: When one realizes that the state of diversity  
of living things is rooted in the One, and that their  
manifestation is also  
from That, then one becomes identified  
with Brahman.**

**Continuing**

his teachings Swamiji said up to the 24th shloka of this  
chapter, Sri Krishna dealt  
with the six topics that Arjuna wanted to know  
and from shloka No.25 up to the end, now, Sri Krishna winds up  
the present discourse by talking about Gyana sadhanani and  
Gyana  
phalam. In three shlokas, 25, 26 and 27, the sadhanas were

talked

about in the form of karma yoga, upasana, vedanta vichara, etc.

And now from the 28th shloka onwards, the Gyana phalam is being talked about. Of that, we have seen up to shloka No.30 the first phalam that was mentioned by Sri Krishna was sarvatra sama darshanam. Even though superficially, the sense organs continue to see the differences, the eye of wisdom sees the inherent non-duality. The inherent oneness behind this superficial duality, the Gyani sees and this very sama darshanam, saves him from strong raga dvesha. **Powerful raga dvesha alone is the cause of samsara. Raga dvesha gets weakened because of the sama darshanam.** This is benefit No.1.

Then the second benefit mentioned was amrtatva prapthi. When a person sees plurality and limitation, finitude and mortality are inevitable. When I see the variety of waves, certainly I will see the birth and death of the wave, mortality is my vision; but

when I see the water behind the waves, from the standpoint of the water, there is

neither birth nor death and therefore, ekatva darshanam or sama darshanam leads to

amrtatva prapthi that is the second phalam mentioned.

And

the third phalam mentioned in the 30th shloka is akartva darshanam. This is recognition

of the fact that all the actions belong to the Prakrti, the matter principle only

and I the Purusha who is the sakshi behind the Prakrti, who is the kshetragnya

behind the Kshetram that I do not

perform any action. In my presence actions take place but I, myself, am akarta. This

akartva prapthi, freedom

from the notion of doership is the third phalam. So Sama darshanam, amrtatva prapthithi, akarttva prapthi are all benefits.

And then the fourth phalam, which I introduced in the last class, in shloka No.30 is brahmathva prapthi. I recognize I am Brahman, the jagat karanam; The jagat adhishtanam. And to assimilate this idea, in the scriptures, self-knowledge is compared to waking up from a dream. Imagine I am transacting in dream, when I am in dream identified with the dream body; I feel I am a small creature, located within dream-time and dream space. And within the dream itself I see varieties of things and beings who are all capable of frightening me, giving me Raga, dvesha, and even I run away from some of the dream objects. And I run towards some of the other dream objects; pravrtti, nivrtti, all of them are there. Therefore, when I am in dream, I feel that I am located within the dream world. I am a creature in the dream-world. But the moment I wake up, I discover I am not a member within the dream-world; on the other hand, the whole dream-world, including the Dreamtime; dream-space, dream-objects; dream-mountains, stars, my pravrtti, my nivrtti, everything is existing within me, the waker. **As a dreamer, I am a creature within the dream, whereas as a waker, I am the creator of the dream.**

A big reversal, the creature becomes the creator. And this conversion did not require any change at all; it only required waking up, which is nothing but dis-identifying with the dream body and claiming my waker nature. And therefore this reversal is not an impossible thing. What reversal? Reversal from creature to creator; or reversal from creature within the dream, to a creator of the dream. Not only I am the creator of the dream, I am the one who sustains the dream. Not only srshti karanam, sthithi karanam and at the time of waking up, the whole dream world resolves within my own mind. Not only



dream world, even dreamtime and space are followed. I am not within the dreamtime; On the other hand, dreamtime is within me. I am not within the dream space; but the dream-space is within me. I am not a product within the dream world; the dream world itself is a product of my mind.

What does Vedanta say: This universe is also another channel of the dream and just as I convert myself from dream-creature to dream-creator, I can convert myself from the waking-world-creature to waking-world-creator and this conversion is accomplished by dis-identification from the body. Dis-identification from the dream body made me waker No.1. Dis-identification from this body will make me a higher waker. And as a higher waker, what do I claim? I am the consciousness principle from whom, this world, this time, this space, including this body is born. Just as I create a special dream-body for myself for transacting in the dream world, this body is also created by me who am the original waker, who is called the consciousness principle and therefore, I create this world along with time and space. I sustain this world along with time and space; and ultimately I resolve this world into Myself. This is revealed in the well-known Kaivalya upanishad mantra: that says, that everything is born out of Me. The waker is able to make this statement with regard to the dream creation. Gyani is able to make this same statement with regard to this creation. **What is this creation? Everything is born out of me; the Me being the creator, the conscious principle.**

And the day I am able to claim this glory that I am not a creature, but the creator himself; that I am not a karyam, but I am karanam; then Sri Krishna says, then and then alone, you can claim aham brahma asmi.

These are all wonderful verses giving you the essence of the Upanishads. The shloka says, the wise person sees this following fact and how does he

recognize this

fact. Who helps him wake up, just as for waking up from this dream, some parent mother or father has to wake him up? Similarly, the guru and the shastram shake me.

**So, supported**

**by the teaching of Guru and shastra, this wise person sees the existence of this manifold**

**universe in one atma, which is himself.** So when the wise person recognizes the fact that this

pluralistic universe of things and beings is resting in me, the non-dual self. **So in me alone the world rests, from me**

**alone the world emerges; just as we can say that the dream world rests in me,**

**and the entire dream world emerges out of me.** But the tragedy is that the

dream that comes out of me; the very same dream, which I create, becomes a

nightmarish experience for myself. So it also becomes in real life as well.

Thus, I am srshti karanam as well. I am also, thus, the Laya karanam. When I can make this statement, not merely

verbally, but I can make this statement from my own inner heart only then can I

claim Aham brahma asmi. Sri Krishna says then and then alone, Gyani

has become one with his higher nature, just as the dreamer on waking up, has become one with his own higher waker

nature. Thus, I have become one with Brahman, my own higher waker nature. After

waking up, dream is not a problem. It is in dream that dream is a problem. So, the

fourth benefit is Brahmathva prapthi.

**Shloka**

**13:31:**

**Being without beginning**

**and without alities, O son of Kunti, this immutable, supreme Self does not act.**

**nor is It affected [Also translated as tainted.-Tr.], although existing in the body.**

I said that self-knowledge could be

compared to waking up from dream. Even though there are many similarities

between self-knowledge and waking up from dream, there is one major dissimilarity that we have to remember. So

whenever we give an example, the example and the original will have many

similarities; but we should remember the example and original will have

dissimilarities as well. If there is no dissimilarity at all, it will not be an

example it will be an original. So Gyanam is comparable to waking, but there is

a small difference. What is the difference? When I wake up from dream, the dream totally disappears from my experience.

When I wake up from dream, the dream-world physically disappears. But in the case

of Self-knowledge, I do wake up from this dream; but **even after waking up, for some time, this world continues to appear in**

**front of me. In this respect, there is a difference between waking from the**

**dream and waking up from ignorance.** And therefore Gyani knows I am the karanam and the

world is my projection alone but the world continues to appear and this state

is called jivan-mukthi; if

you can imagine, it is like a person who wakes up from dream and continues to

have the dream. We only say, imagine.

Imagine the dream world continues. What will happen? You will enjoy the glory of the dream, but you will not be frightened; because of the dream-ness of the dream is known to you. Similarly, the Gyani continues to live in the world, continues to be in the body as well, but he has the knowledge that the body is like dream and I am like the waker. So, gain or loss in this world will not make any difference for me, who am the waker, who has the higher nature.

And therefore, Sri Krishna says here, ayam paramatma avyayaha. I the atma, my own higher nature of consciousness, is avyayaha, is not subject to any change. Atma is Nirvikaraha. Just as the waker is not wet by the dream rain; not burned by the dream fire, not wounded by the dream tiger biting; whatever happens in the dream world, the waker is not affected; similarly, I, the paramatma, avyayaha. And what is the reason, because the atma is without a beginning or Janma rahitvat. And you should remember what Tatva Bodha says; Janma is one of the six modifications; asthi, jayathe, vardhathe, viparinamathe, apakshiyathe, vinashyathe. Birth is one of the six modifications. If birth modification is not there, all the other modifications are also not there. And therefore, atma is avyaya or nirvikara. It also means it is attribute less or without any modifications. Now, modifications are of two types. When milk becomes curd, the modification is known as substance modification;

substantial modification,  
the milk substance itself has undergone a change. So this is  
called **substantial change**.

When you are making ornaments out of  
gold, when gold becomes a bangle, there is no change in the  
substance. So when  
gold becomes ornaments, the change is only in the superficial  
form or an  
attribute. Thus change is two-fold;  
substantial and **attribute change**. Atma does not  
have both changes. Being birthless, it does not have  
substantial change; being  
attributeless, it does not have attribute-change. Therefore,  
it is absolutely changeless.  
Thus, even after waking up and knowing that I am the atma,  
I continue  
to be in the body, however, the atma  
remains akarta; free from  
actions and continues to be abhokta, without the phalam. The  
Shariram and mind alone have action and results, but atma does  
not  
have karma or phalam. And therefore, the next benefit of atma  
Gyanam is  
that it is an abhokta.  
Thus, I have akartvam  
and abhoktva.

And remember, samsara is defined  
as akartva and bhoktva only; thus doership and  
enjoyership belong to samsara alone; atma is free  
from both.

**Shloka 13.32:**

**As the all-pervading  
space is not defiled, because of its subtlety, similarly the  
Self, present**

**everywhere in the body [The singular number is used to denote a class, i.e. all bodies. See S.-Tr.], is not defiled.**

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna said, atma is associated with everything; but not affected by anything. This is also called immanence and transcendence. Immanence means it is associated with everything and transcendence means it is not affected by anything. Just as the screen of the movie is associated with every object in the movies; thus on screen it is intimately associated with fire, but it is not burned. Similarly, in the movie Titanic, water is all over; screen is intimately associated with the water, but it not wet by water. This pervasion is called immanence but remaining untainted is called transcendence. Similarly, atma is associated with all but not affected by any; in this context Sri Krishna wants to give two examples that he borrows from the Upanishads, one example is akasha, another example is prakasha. Akasha means space and remember space is not emptiness, but it is the subtlest form of matter. Space is not nothingness or emptiness; it is the subtlest form of matter. Space is one example, and prakasha, the light, is another example.

Space and atma have got several common features. That is why it is an ideal example. What are some of the common features?

Ekathvam. Both are only one.

Sarva vyapakathvyam. Atma is all-pervading.

Achalatvam – Being all pervading, atma cannot move from one place to another, akasha cannot also move. Your body can go. You cannot go. akasha remains the same. It does not get older or younger. it does not get out of shape; akasha is Nirvikara (changeless) atma is also nirvikara. Akhandatvam. atma is part-less. Khanda means part. akasha also does not have part.

Akashah is indivisible and akasha and atma are asangaha.

This is the main thing Sri Krishna is going to talk about. akasha is

associated with everything but it is not polluted; is not tainted by either the good qualities or the bad qualities; it does not become turbid. it does not become fragrant or foul smelling, asangatvam.

And finally akashah is sarva adharatvam. It accommodates, supports everything. The whole cosmos is located in it, therefore akasha is vishvadharam, and atma is also vishvadharam.

And therefore, atma is like akashaah; but

Atma

is not akasha. Akasha is jadam, achetana tatvam; whereas atma is chetana tatvam; therefore it is only comparable to akasham.

And one more quality is , Sukshmatvam.

Akasha cannot

be easily comprehended, intellectually. That is why scientists had confusion in

determining the nature of akasha. Sometime they thought that it is emptiness; for some time, they thought that it is ether; I

do not know whether Scientists clearly know what space is: Therefore it is not

easily comprehensible, you cannot see; you cannot hear it; you cannot touch it,

see it, but somehow  
you conceive of akashaha.

Therefore Sukshmatvam is another common feature between akashaha and atma And therefore Sri Krishna gives this example that All pervading space is not affected by anything.

Because

of its extremely subtle nature; Fine nature; minute nature, it is not affected

by anything. Similarly, the  
atman also is

not tainted or polluted by anything, Even though it is associated with everybody. Body may be fat; but atma is not fat;

you need not slim the atma.

atma is not

lean; mind may have raga

dvesha kama krodha, but atma does not

have these qualities. So thus atma

is comparable to akashaha. Then the next  
example.

**Shloka # 13.33:**

**As the single sun**

**illuminates this whole world, similarly, O descendant of the  
Bharata dynasty, the**

**Knower of the field illuminates the whole field.**

The second example is surya prakashaha. We are not talking about the source of the light; but we are talking about the sunlight, the formless light, which pervades the entire earth during daytime. And atma is comparable to the sunlight. And here also you can find several common features, many of them similar to the akasha example. So here also Ekathvam, Sunlight is only One, because there is only one Sun. and here also Sarvagatatvam; the sunlight pervades the entire earth, at



least relatively, and achalatvam; sunlight does not move because it is already everywhere; Nirvikaratvam, the light does not undergo any change at all when I move the hand; light is not moving or changing. And similarly, asangatvam, the light does not get polluted, even when it falls on my hand. Light falls on my hand but light does not get dirty.

Similarly, akhandavtham, light is partless; it cannot be cut; and finally, the light illumines everything and like the light atma also illumines. Illumines means makes everything known, because of consciousness alone, things are known or illumined; without consciousness, if matter alone is there; in the universe, there will be nobody to know anything. Imagine, without us being present, things like, light fan, etc. are there, Who is conscious of whom?

There is no subject object relationship at all. Subject can come only when consciousness comes and therefore consciousness is the illuminator of everything like the Sun.

And

therefore Sri Krishna says one sun or sunlight, illumines this entire universe  
but without getting  
polluted by it.

And similarly sukshmathvam, the light also cannot be touched by me; light is here; I cannot touch it; you cannot taste it; light cannot be smelled; you cannot hear the light; in fact you cannot even see the light here. I have often told you when the light is there; without a reflecting medium, the light by itself is incomprehensible. So therefore light is sookshmam. Similarly, atma also cannot be touched, cannot be smelled; cannot be heard; cannot be seen; Therefore you cannot say that it is not there; since I cannot touch the atma, therefore atma is not there; one cannot tell that way; since I cannot touch the light, you cannot say that light is not there; you cannot say that: light is there; even though intangibly.

This  
is the definition of atma  
given by Kathopanishad. Where atma is compared  
to akashaha and prakashaha.

And that atma I am. I am like akashaha and I am like  
prakashaha. So two brilliant examples were given by Sri  
Krishna. They are not original examples but borrowed one's  
from the Upanishads.

#### **Shloka # 34:**

**Those who know thus through the eye of wisdom  
the distinction between the field and the Knower of the field,  
and the  
annihilation of the Matrix of beings,-they reach the Supreme.**

So the final benefit of this knowledge is given here in the  
form of moksha itself. The one who has got the discrimination  
between Kshetra and Kshetragna or to put in another language,  
the difference between Purusha and Prakrti; Or, to put in  
English, the difference between consciousness and matter; How  
do they see the difference; with Gyana chakshu; with the  
penetrating discerning eye of wisdom. So the sense organs  
cannot differentiate. Just as I cannot differentiate the  
electricity and fan by this eye, but the differentiation is in  
terms of my understanding. The light and hand are not  
physically separated, but intellectually you know the  
difference between the light and hand. Similarly, brain and  
consciousness; they are not one and the same; brain is matter;  
consciousness is a separate principle. The one who knows the  
difference and what are the differences?

We  
saw four differences:

One  
is chetanam, another  
is achetanam;

sentient; and insentient; one is nirgunam another is sagunam; one is attributeless; the other is attributed. Consciousness is attributeless; matter is attributed. Nirvikaram-Savikaram, Consciousness is changeless; matter is ever changing.

And

Sri Krishna wants to emphasize the fourth difference in this sloka, which is the most important and technical difference. Do you remember the fourth difference?

It

is Sathyam and mithya. Consciousness alone exists independently; matter cannot exist independently. So consciousness has got intrinsic existence; matter has got only borrowed existence. Just as the screen exists independent of the movie; but movie characters cannot exist, independent of the screen. If Screen goes, movie characters cannot be there; but if movie characters go, screen will still be there.

Similarly

**I the consciousness exist independently;  
the whole world is like a movie running in me and just as  
movie cannot taint  
the screen, the mithya prapancha cannot  
affect I, the sathya Purusha.**

So

here moksham refers to mithyathvam.

Very careful. Here moksha means the absence of real existence. That means it has got

only borrowed existence; like the dream or movie. So

mithyathvam of what? Purusha or Prakrti?

The mithyathvam here is of Prakrti as well as the other inert things, and beings. The mithyathvam of matter, indirectly also includes the satyathvam of consciousness.

So,

those

who recognize aham sathyam jagan mithya and therefore world cannot touch me; they alone attain freedom from the fear of the world. That is called jivan mukthi that they attain.

This

is the final benefit of self-knowledge.

With

this Sri Krishna concludes Gyana phalam topic as well.

Thus

ends the thirteenth chapter called kshetra kshetragnya vibhaga yoga or Prakrti Purusha yoga.

### **Take away:**

Powerful raga dvesha alone is the cause of samsara. Raga dvesha gets weakened because of the Sama darshanam.

As a dreamer, I am a creature within

the dream, whereas as a waker, I am the creator of the dream.

I am not within the dream time; On the other hand, dream time is within me. I am not within the dream space; but the dream-space is within me. I am not a product within the dream world; the dream world itself is a product of my mind.

Just as I convert myself from

dream-creature to dream-creator, I can convert myself from the waking-world-creature to waking-world-creator and this

conversion is  
accomplished by dis-identification from the body.

Even after waking up, for some time,  
this world continues to appear in front of me. In this  
respect, there is a  
difference between waking from the dream and waking up from  
ignorance.

Similarly I the consciousness exists  
independently; the whole world is like a movie running in me  
and just as movie  
cannot taint the screen, the methya prapancha cannot affect I,  
the sathya Purusha.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Baghawad Gita, Class 178: Chapter 13, Verses 27 to 30**

**Shloka 13. 27:He sees who sees the supreme Lord as existing  
really  
in all beings, and as the Imperishable among the perishable.**

Continuing  
his teachings Swamiji said up to the 24th shloka, Sri Krishna  
dealt with all the six  
topics that Arjuna wanted to know: Prakrti,  
Purusha, Kshetram, kshetragnya, Gyanam  
and Gneyam. And thereafter, from shloka No.25 up to 27 in  
three shlokas, Sri

Krishna talked about the sadhanas or preparatory disciplines required to gain this knowledge; Knowledge given in the first 24 shlokas. And he talked about all the levels of sadhanas, starting from Karma Yoga, and then passing through Upasana, then Shravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam and that the culmination of the sadhana should be only in knowledge.

And also Sri Krishna pointed out why he is insisting on knowledge, the reason is that the problem of samsara is because of an error with regard to our perception of ourselves. So self-error, or error with regard to self-understanding is the problem and any error is caused by ignorance alone and therefore without the removal of ignorance, self-delusion cannot go away. And therefore, knowledge is compulsory and through the knowledge self-delusion goes away and through that the samsara also goes away. Thus the sadhanas were talked about in three shlokas from shloka #25 to 27 and then from 28 onwards Sri Krishna is talking about the phalam, the benefit of this knowledge. In shloka # 28, one gets the right vision of the world, a complete understanding of world, and a proper perspective. Proper perspective is that the whole universe is a mixture of Prakriti and Purusha. Just as a child has features of both father and mother, our vision will be right and balanced only if we are aware of Prakriti and Purusha.. If we are preoccupied with just anyone of them alone it can be a

problem. Every living being is a mixture of Prakriti and Purusha. The Prakriti part is solidly visible; it is Saguna, Savikara, Mithya and Achetana Tatvam. While Purusha is Nirguna, Nirvikara, Satyam and Chetana Tatvam that is not visible to physical eyes and one has to appreciate it through our understanding. Just as in an electric fan there is the physical fan and the electricity principle. Fan we can see but electricity we have to appreciate it through our knowledge of physics. So, the Shastra Gyana Chakshu (understanding) helps us see the Purusha. Our two eyes will see Prakriti and the third eye will see Purusha. Here we should note that Prakriti changes while Purusha does not change. Prakriti is variable from individual to individual; varna bheda is there; ashrama bheda is there; linga bheda is there; it is vishamam, whereas Purusha is samam in all the people.

Therefore Sri Krishna says parameshvaram is Purusha. Do not imagine a personal God is sitting in everyone. Here, the word parameshvara represents Nirguna, Nirvikara, Sathya, and Chetana Tatvam Parameshvaram. And that does not mean in his preoccupation with Purusha darshanam, he loses sight of Prakriti; he sees the Prakriti also, he is also aware of the Purusha; Just as I

appreciate both the fan aspect, as well as the electricity aspect. And according to the context, he emphasizes Prakrti or Purusha. But there are occasions when Prakrti creates problems. Mortality frightens. Actions become a burden. Life becomes a bore. And when a person troubled by life, when it appears noisy, constant activity and becomes a drag, then a person requires a different channel. Then change the channel. When you look for stability, when you look for permanence, when you for purnathvam, then the Prakrti will not be able to provide; in fact all the higher needs of human beings, Prakrti will not provide. It is very useful and entertaining in all transactions; but whenever there is a higher need Purusha alone helps. One lady was telling me; Swamiji I have everything but I am missing something. I do not have anything to complain, because I have wonderful husband, wonderful children, beautiful house, no water problem; and the business is going well; I do not have any complaint at all; but there is something missing. This is called higher spiritual need; when such a need arises, I should be able to withdraw from Prakrti and own up the Purusha tatvam which alone gives peace, purnathvam, security, immortality, stability, etc. And once you are rejuvenated and fresh, you are ready for all the activities. Like getting up after sleep. Therefore, that balanced vision of Purusha and Prakrti; not losing sight of Purusha in and through the transaction, is called atma nishta. They call it



sahaja samadhi. Sahaja samadhi means in and through all the transactions, not losing sight of the Purusha tatvam. Up to this we saw in the last class.

## **Shloka**

**# 13:28: Since by seeing eally God who is present alike everywhere he does not injure the Self by the Self, therefore he attains the supreme Goal.**

So the previous shloka gave the first phalam as right vision. Then in this shloka, Sri Krishna gives the second benefit of this knowledge, which is amruthathva prapthi; Transcending mortality; or immortality, is the second benefit. This wise person learns to have the sama darshanam, in and through the vishama darshanam, which is required for transaction. Though transaction requires vishama darshanam the moment you lose sight of the sama darshanam, Prakrti will frighten you. It is like the dream. The moment you lose sight of the fact that you are lying down on the bed comfortably; that is forgotten, the dream is capable of frightening You. The moment you lose sight of the screen in a movie, the characters become more real than they actually are, and the movie can terribly frighten you; not only at that time, afterwards when you go home also. Similarly, the moment Purusha is lost sight of, Prakrti becomes a nightmare; and, therefore, samam pashyan sarvathra; in all the states, all the conditions he see Arupa Ishvaram, free

from all attributes. Samam means which is same in everyone.

And sama vasistitham is very present as the adhishtanam, the support of Prakrti. Because Purusha is sathyam, while Prakrti is Mithya, without any support.

The wise person sees all the time, in all the places appreciating through Gyana chakshu the Purusha. And what is the benefit he attains? He attains the highest goal of immortality. He attains immortality. He, thereafter, does not subject himself to mortality. And here Sri Krishna says, presents that this Gyani does not destroy himself thereafter. So according to Sri Krishna, every Agyani samsari is destroying himself. Even though he puts the blame on the world and the people, according to Vedanta, world does not create any problems, rather because of ignorance, we are killing ourselves. We are all self-destructive people. This is based on the Ishavasya Upanishad, which says everyone is committing a suicide. How is everyone committing a suicide? Shankaracharya explains this in two different ways:

How does a person destroy himself?

Because of the self-ignorance, ignorance of the fact that I am atma, he identifies with the body, the anatma. So ignorance leads to body identification. And once I identify with the body I become a karta. As atma, I am not a karta, but once Dehabhimana comes, I become a karta. And as a Karta, means Doer of actions, I perform varieties of actions and earn punya papa karmas. And therefore

what are my earnings? So we have a very huge deposit of punyapapa karmas. And according to vedanta, it is these punya papa karmas that are responsible for the creation of the body. And therefore, I create a body for myself by my own karma. If in the next janma, I am going to acquire a body who is responsible? Not the next janma parents. Not God. Not anything else. If I acquire a body in the next janma, I am responsible for the arrival of that body through my own karma. So therefore, according to the Shastra, I create a body and then after the body hangs around for sometime, when the body perishes, the end of the body is also caused, by our own karmas.

Therefore, body's arrival and departure is all caused by my own karmas, and once that body is gone I then acquire another body. This process of acquiring and departing from bodies continues. Therefore I alone am responsible for the repeated birth and death of myself; through the arrival and departure of the body. Therefore I am creating myself and I am destroying myself from the standpoint of the body. And therefore, I am self-destructive. I kill myself. And how long this will continue? As long as Karmas continue. Punarapi Jananam, punarapi maranam. I am responsible for my death. So therefore I am a atmaha; atmaha means killer of myself, from the standpoint of my body.

And then Shankaracharya gives another meaning as well. From

the standpoint of my  
higher nature, that is my atma  
svarupam nature  
also, because of self-ignorance, I am killing, (as though), my  
own higher  
nature. I am destroying myself; myself means not the  
body; my own higher nature. Then Shankaracharya raises the  
question: how can a self-ignorant person kill  
his own higher nature, the atma,  
because, after all, the atma  
is indestructible? Shankaracharya says ignorant  
person kills the atma  
in a figurative sense. What do you mean  
figuratively killing the atma?  
When I am not aware of my higher nature, I disown my higher  
nature. Just as a  
person who does not know the treasure, which is lying  
underneath the ground;  
his own land; is not going to claim it, he is going to disown  
it because of his  
ignorance; Similarly, an ignorant person disowns his higher  
nature and  
therefore the benefit that he can derive from his higher  
nature is denied to  
him. Since I am not enjoying the benefit of my higher nature,  
it is as though  
the higher nature is absent. While the higher nature is  
present, it is as  
though absent, because I do not derive the benefit of my  
higher nature; because  
of my sheer ignorance; and since the higher nature is as  
though absent; Shankaracharya says: we have  
killed or destroyed the higher nature as though. If something  
is destroyed, you  
do not derive the benefit of that. Similarly, atma is as  
though destroyed because I do  
not derive the benefit of it. And therefore, a self-ignorant

person has “destroyed”

his own higher nature, because he does not enjoy the benefit of purnatvam, abhayathvam, etc. And therefore from that standpoint also, he is a committing suicide; he is destroying himself. And therefore every aGyani destroys himself from the standpoint of the body as well as from the standpoint of atma as well.

And if every aGyani is self-destroyer, what is the definition of a Gyani? Its opposite. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, a Gyani does not destroy himself; he is not a self-destroyer. Unlike an Agyani, a Gyani does not destroy himself, either by the standpoint of the body or from the standpoint of the atma. And therefore he is not a self-destroyer; he has discovered immortality.

## **Shloka**

**13.29: And he who sees actions as being done in various ways by Nature itself, and also the Self as the non-agent, -he sees.**

The third benefit of the knowledge is given here. We have seen two: first one is sama darshanam; the second one is amruthathva prapthi. The third benefit is akartvaprapthi.

Discovering the fact that I am akarta. I am not a doer of any action. And

this is a very important thing because kartvavam alone is the cause of all the

problems. Because as long as I am a karta, I can never avoid karmas and therefore

Karta

will

be eternally associated with karma. And karmas will never remain the same, they will gradually ripen. The karmas will gradually ripen and get converted into favourable and unfavourable

conditions. Even now our prarabdha karmas are ripening. When the karmas ripen, the ripened karma phalam in the form of favourable and unfavourable situations, they will come back to me alone. When the karma phalas comes

to me and I have to face the music, I become a bhokta. If I am a karta, I can never

escape from being a bhokta and that bhokta status is a choiceless, helpless

situation. So therefore, you can never escape from being a bhokta. To get out of bhoktrtvam, there is only

one way; you should get out of kartrtvam. You will definitely have kartrtvam as long as you

have deha abhimana, because deha means karma will be there, because there are Gyanendriyani, karmendriyani; and

therefore, Prakrti abhimana makes me a karta. And the

moment you drop the Prakrti abhimana, and claim that aham Purusha, that Purusha-owning up

alone will take you out of both kartrtvam and bhoktrtvam.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says: All the karmas, good

and bad actions, they are all done by Prakrti alone, Prakrti alone can do karmas,

because doing karma requires modification. Any karma, change is required. If I have to talk, my mouth has to undergo change. Even

if I have to do a thinking action, there should be thought change. So karma

means vikaram. Prakrti

alone can do karma, because it is subject to modification. Whereas Purusha means he is Nirguna, Nirvikara, Satya, Chetana Tatvam; that Purusha is incapable of doing action and therefore Sri Krishna says all the actions by all means, whether it is kayikam, vachikam, or manasam, whether it is dharmikam, or adharmikam, all of them are performed by Prakrti. Prakrti means the body mind complex. And this wise person is very much aware of that. But he does not identify with the body mind complex rather he identifies with Atmanam. He does not say I am doing. He says in my presence Prakrti does everything. In my presence, Prakrti does everything or body mind complex does everything. Then who am I? I am akarta and therefore I do not have sanchitam; I do not have agami; I do not have prarabdham. Or else how is it possible to experience and finish off the karmas? It is impossible for you to exhaust all the karmas as even as we are exhausting karmas we are also adding many more. So it is impossible to put an end to the cyclic arrival and departure of karmas. The only way out of is you do not stop the cycle, but you get away from the cycle. Similarly, Prakrti cannot be stopped; I have to transcend Prakrti, like waking up from dream. Prakrti will continue. Let me now identify with that. Of course this verse should be carefully understood. It should not be misunderstood and abused. Suppose a person argues after performing all the akramams and says that the body does everything. Imagine a

criminal who is tried in the court and the judge passes a verdict and therefore 7 years RI. He tells, Oh Judge, the body does all the karmas, I the atma did not do any karma at all, and why are you giving me RI. What will judge the say: My dear, I am not imprisoning you. In fact, I cannot imprison you because you are the all-pervading atma, which cannot be accommodated in any prison. In fact, all prisons are existing in you; I am not imprisoning you, because you are akarta and abhokta, you said body only did all the crimes and therefore I am only imprisoning the body. So therefore: Remember Vedanta should never be used for promoting adharma. Whenever we feel like supporting adharma through Vedanta, it means we have not assimilated vedanta properly. If vedanta is correctly assimilated, it will promote dharma. In fact Vedanta is the best method of promoting dharma. So whether I have assimilated vedanta properly or not, how do I know? If vedanta promotes dharma in my life, it should promote ethical life, if it is supporting adharma, the best thing is keep aside the vedanta for sometime; follow dharma shastra after studying it properly and therefore vedanta is not for abuse. This should not be misinterpreted. Thus the third benefit of atma Gyanam is Akartrtva prapthi. Discovering the fact that I am akarta.

## **Shloka**

**13. 30: When one realizes that the state of diversity of living things is rooted in the One, and that their**



**manifestation is also  
from That, then one becomes identified with Brahman.**

So this is a deeper and significant  
verse wherein several steps of vedantic understanding are  
hidden. The  
understanding of atma has to grow through several stages.  
And to understand those several stages, we will first take the  
example of akasha or space.  
Initially, I do not understand space at all, because it is too  
intangible, invisible.  
Generally we think space is emptiness and nothingness and  
therefore we take  
space for granted. So first I should learn, this hall, for  
example, or any enclosure for that matter, has got space  
within.  
So when I am looking into a hall, there are two things. Not  
hall alone, but the  
hall with space inside. When space alone is  
there, generally we think, we say there is nothing. It is not  
nothing, space is  
not nothingness but it is a positive substance. Even  
scientifically space is  
not emptiness or nothingness, it is a positive  
substance; a subtle substance.

What I understand first. There is space  
inside. Then later I understand that space is not only within  
this hall, but  
the space is inside all the enclosures; big halls, small  
halls, or even a  
vessel or our own stomach, in all space is there. That is the  
next stage. Space  
is not only within one hall, but also in all enclosures, next  
stage. The next stage I understand is that even though  
halls are many and varied, the space within is not many and  
varied; space is

one and the same within every hall. The halls are different but space is not different. This is the next stage. Then the next stage I go through is not only there is one space inside all the halls, but there is space outside the halls also. Space is not only within every hall, but the space is outside, both inside and outside. Thereafter the next stage is, space is not inside and outside the hall, that is not the right expression, there is only one space, in which all the halls are resting. So space is not in the hall; but it is the reverse; halls are within spaces (you should not say 'spaces'). I will say that there is space within. Therefore space is only one. Within one space, all the halls exist. So space is the stithi karanam of all the halls. And then the final stage is; Space is not only the stithi karanam, (means the support for the existence of all the hall), according to Shastra, Taittiriya Upanishad, all the things in the creation are even born out of space alone. From the so called empty space alone, everything is born, and in the space alone, all of them survive and into that space alone, all of them resolve. See how many stages we have seen. First we said that there is the hall and space. Then space is in every hall. Then space is the same in every hall; thereafter space is not only inside the hall but outside also. Then really speaking space is not inside; all the halls are in the space; And finally what we said; Space is the one which holds all the halls and space is the one from which all of them are born and into all of them resolve. If you

understand this in space, you have to extend it to the consciousness. So space should be equated to consciousness and hall should be equated to the body.

Thus, within the body there is consciousness.

Then what is the next stage? Consciousness is not only in my body but also in

every body. Then what is the next stage. Even though the bodies are many and

varied, consciousness behind all the bodies is one and the same. Then what is

the next stage. Consciousness is not only within the body, but consciousness is

outside the body also. Then what is the next stage? Really speaking, consciousness is not inside the body; then all the bodies are resting in one consciousness. And then the final stage is not only

all the bodies are resting in that consciousness, they are all born out of that consciousness; rest in that consciousness,

resolve in that consciousness and that consciousness I am. If you can tell this, you can say, Aham Brahma asmi. This is the essence of this verse.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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**Baghawad Gita, Class 177:**

# Chapter 13, Verses 24 to 27

**Shloka # 24:**Through

meditation some realize the Self in (their) intellect with the help of the internal organ; others through Sankhya-yoga, and others through Karma-yoga.

Continuing

his teachings Swamiji said, with the 23<sup>rd</sup> shloka Sri Krishna has completed the topic of Purusha and Prakriti. He discussed this topic from shlokas 20-24. While concluding, he said this is a liberating knowledge.

A person who knows that the body-mind complex is Prakrti and also knows that I am the Purusha, that very wisdom releases him from the cycles of janma-maranam; because birth and deaths are only incidents happening in the plane of Prakrti. The physical body is Prakrti; the mind is also Prakrti, the mind and the body coming together is called birth and the mind and body separating is death. So when an individual dies, the mind, which was occupying the body, quits the physical body and the body becomes an evacuated house as it were and therefore the body perishes. The separated mind goes in search of another physical body and gets the body at the right time according to the Karma and the association with the new body is called janma. So sharira-mana samyogha janma; sharira-mana viyoga maranam.

Shariram

is also Prakrti, manas is also Prakrti and therefore their

samyogaviyoga;

Samyogam means association, viyogam means dissociation, all are happening at the level of Prakrti. And the Gyani is one who has recognized the fact that I am the Purusha, in which there is neither samyoga nor viyoga and therefore where is the question of even one birth itself? And when one birth itself is not possible, where is the question of re-birth, the second birth? And therefore Sri Krishna concluded he gets mukthi or freedom from this cycle. And with this Sri Krishna has completed all the six topics that Arjuna wanted to know: Kshetra, Kshetragnya, Gyanam, Gneyam, Prakrti and Purusha.

And therefore Sri Krishna's task is over now. And he now wants to wind-up the discussion in the following shlokas from 25 up to the 35.

In these 11 shlokas, 25 to 35, Sri Krishna deals with Gyana sadhanani and Gyana phalam. So what are the preparatory disciplines that will lead a person to self-knowledge and what are the benefits that this person will enjoy?

First, Sri Krishna emphasis the ultimate goal of all spiritual sadhanas is self-knowledge alone. Let there not be any doubt in that. Because the all-pervading atma is available within one's own body-mind complex and therefore I need not identify the atma elsewhere. I have to discover the atma in myself. Therefore, atmani

means within oneself.

So the first atmani refers to the hrdaya akasham; the second atmanam refers to satchidananda

atmanam. Thus, a

seeker has to recognize the atma,

in his own hrdayam. And with what

instrument should a person gain the knowledge? The instrument of knowledge is atmana. So 3 atma's are referred

to; atmani, atmanam, atmana; 7th case

atma, 2nd case atma, 3rd case atma. 7th case atma means

within one's own hrdayam; 2nd case atma means satchidananda

atma and now we have to see the 3rd case atma, what is

the instrument? The instrument is one's own buddhi. Atmana

here means

buddhya. Because only through the instrument of buddhi is

every knowledge is acquired. There is no other instrument,

which can gain

knowledge. So body cannot get knowledge; Of course atma by itself

cannot get knowledge; any knowledge has to be through the instrumentality of

buddhi; But what type of buddhi? A refined buddhi; aided by,

supported by guru-shastra-upadesha. Such a

refined buddhi has to gain the knowledge. Shankaracharya says:

With

the help of the mind, which is supported by

gurushastrupadesha. So with that mind, one has to gain atma-

Gynam. And

if this atma Gyanam is

the culmination, the ultimate sadhana, the question

is how many preparatory

stages are there for reaching this climax?

So

what are the preparatory steps a person has to go through for

the climax of

self-recognition through the

mind within oneself. And here five fold stages are presented. A person has to go through five stages to reach this culmination. In each stage one gets rid of one obstacle for self-knowledge. Each stage helps in removing one, one obstacle. What are the five stages and what are the obstacles

removed? I have dealt with this in the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter as well as in

some other context; I will remind you of those five stages.

1. The **first stage** is called Karma yoga stage, wherein the mental impurities are removed. In Sanskrit it is called mala-nivriithi. Malam means dirt; so, what are the impurities? Raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, lobha, moha, madha and matsaryam. Thus Karma yoga helps in the removal of malam and it refines the mind.

## 2. **Second**

**stage:** Then the next stage of sadhana is called Upasana or meditation upon saguna

Ishvara; the Lord with attributes or glories. And this upasana helps in

the removal of the next obstacle called Vikshepa; otherwise called bahirmukhatvam.

The restlessness of the mind, the extrovertedness of the mind is the 2nd obstacle and upasana helps in the mind's focusing capacity. It integrates

the mind. It harmonizes the

mind. It gives the focusing power; and thus the extrovertedness, the outgoing

mind, is withdrawn. So therefore the 2nd sadhana is

called upasana. What is the obstacle removed? Therefore Vikshepa nivrtti, means

removal.

### 3. Third

**Stage:** And the third stage is called Vedanta Shravanam. Systematically and consistently studying the upanishadic or Vedantic scriptures under the guidance of a competent Acharya, which is called Shravanam, which will help in the elimination of agyanam or self-ignorance. So the third obstacle is aGyanam, which is removed through shravanam.

**4. Fourth Stage:** Then the fourth stage is called mananam. Asking myself whether I am convinced of the teaching given by the teacher and the scriptures. Am I intellectually satisfied, because any knowledge should convince the intellect? As long as there are doubts or reservation, that doubt is an obstacle. A doubtful knowledge is as good as ignorance and it needs to be cleared by raising all questions and finding out the answer, either by my own enquiry or with the help of the Acharya. Therefore, the 4th stage is mananam and its benefit is Samshaya Nivrtti. It is converting knowledge into conviction. It is removal of the intellectual obstacle.

5.

**Fifth Stage:** And then comes fifth and final stage of sadhana called nidhidhyasanam, which is meant to remove my habitual reaction; the removal of vasana, because of my regular unhealthy responses in life, I have developed a habit. And habit is developed in-time and habit can go, only in time. This is a deliberate



invocation  
of the Vedanta so that I  
can get rid of unvedantic reactions  
in life. Every disturbing reaction is unvedantic  
reaction. So anxiety, frustration, self-pity, sense of  
insecurity, fear,  
attachment; all of them are unhealthy vasanas.  
This vasana nivrtti or  
viparitha bhavana nivrtti is  
the fifth and final stage and is called nidhidhyasanam.

And  
every body has to go through all the five stages. These are  
not optional  
stages. They are compulsory for all. But suppose, a person has  
gone through the  
first two or three stages in this life, and then without  
completing the journey  
he dies. Each stage takes a long time. And if a person dies  
without the  
completion, the advantage is in the next janma, the journey  
need not begin with  
Karma yoga; and  
therefore, depending upon a person's spiritual evaluation, a  
person should  
start either from karma yoga,  
or from upasana or any  
other one of the five stages.

And in the case of spiritual prodigy, he is one who has gone  
through the first four stages in the purva janma. So in this  
janma, the prodigy has to go through only the fifth stage.  
Even from early stage, they feel that they have gone through  
these stages. But seeing those people I should not argue that  
I would start doing like them. Everybody is a spiritual  
prodigy.

In this context, Aithareya Upanishad talks about a Rshi

Vamadeva, who declared, Aham Brahmasmi while still in his mother's womb. How come the mother herself does not know Aham Brahmasmi? And in the mother's womb itself; how can Vamadeva declare when he cannot do shravanam in the mother's womb, how does it happen, if you ask, 95% of the job is over in purva janma.

Here,  
what ever little was left out and the spiritual prodigy, gets it through nidhidyasanam. So, depending upon my level, I have to take to five, four, three, two or one of the levels of sadhana.

### **Shloka 13.25:**

**Others, again, who do not know thus, take to thinking after hearing from others; they, too, who are devoted to hearing, certainly overcome death.**

So here Sri Krishna points out that **Vedanta Shravanam need not necessarily have to be the study of the original scriptures themselves.** We do not insist that one should study Upanishad only; Gita only; Brahmasutra only; we do not insist upon the text; we insist upon the teaching part only. Therefore if there is a guru who does not teach the Gita or Upanishad or Brahma sutra or Panchadashi etc. but he takes the essence of all these books and presents in a different language; without touching any of these books, in his own language, maybe English, may be vernacular, may be Russian, may be Chinese, Vedanta does not refer to the actual language, Vedanta refers to the content of teaching. As Dayananda swami says,

You are the Whole,  
this teaching is Vedanta, whatever be the  
language. You are the Whole.

Sri Krishna says there are some people who do not have access to the originals but still they gather the teaching from other people; from the Gurus, the Gurus themselves have the knowledge of the originals. Even if I do not know the original, it does not matter; I can gain moksha, even if I am taught in any language.

So they go to some acharya, who has studied the original and who is capable of paraphrasing, arranging and systematically communicating, in any language that the student can grasp. That is why in India you can find that in every State, Vedantic wisdom is there in vernacular language.

Even in the folk songs there is Vedanta.

Whether you take Malayalam, one lady sang a lullaby, to put the baby to sleep

in some traditional song. And she sang those songs, in which the avastha thraya

sakshi,

etc. are described. And the lady also did not know what it was and of course

the baby also. And after attending the class, she says I never knew that even

in the songs to put the babies to sleep, there is Vedanta.

Similarly in Hindi and all other languages. Similarly take Abhangas

of Tukaram, Namadev, etc. and you will see Vedanta

is there. You gain the knowledge through any source. **Source is not important, the content is important.**

If a person knows the content without studying the Upanishad, he is liberated; on the other hand, fill up the blanks. Another person, who has gone through all the Upanishad, but does not know the content,

he is not  
liberated. Therefore, Sri Krishna says: Even those people who  
are not exposed  
to the words of the scriptures; they do not know; but they are  
committed to the  
words of the guru; means guru vakya  
shravana parayanah. Here shruti  
does not only mean Veda. Here shruti  
means the Guru vakya Shravanam.

Such committed students also certainly cross Mortality;  
Finitude; otherwise called samsarah. That means that they will  
also attain moksha. And therefore even if in the olden days  
Veda was not accessible to all people. They kept some of the  
scriptures secret for some reasons but even though the  
originals were not accessible to all; the content of the  
scriptures were accessible to all people at all the times.  
Whether a person is Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra,  
Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha, Sanyasi, male, female,  
Hindu, Christian, or Muslim, anyone, whether the originals  
were accessible or not; the contents in one form or the other  
was accessible. What liberates is not the veda, but the  
content-the teaching in the Veda. **Even if one does not study  
Vedas, one can get liberation, Sri Krishna declares.**

**Shloka # 13.26:**

**O scion of the Bharata dynasty, whatever  
object, moving or non-moving, comes into being, know that to  
be from the  
association of the field and the Knower of the field!**

In the previous two verses, Lord Krishna pointed out that  
everybody has to go through all the stages of sadhana and  
also he said all the sadhanas should culminate in atma  
Gyanam.

The purification of the mind through karma yogah

can be accomplished through different types of activities; we have choice; may be japa, may be puja, may be social service; one has a choice here; but everybody ultimately

has to go through the door of Gyanam. That is why Swami Dayananda beautiful says, a temple might have four doors, but the grabha griham has got only one door; thus there is only one door to the Lord.

Similarly, for preparation many doors are there, but for moksha, there is only one door, Gyanam. This Sri Krishna mentioned in the previous two shlokas. Naturally we may raise a question, why do we insist on Gyanam. It looks as though we are adamant, as though we are fanatic; why are we so insistent? Sri Krishna says, it is not fanaticism or adamancy, but it happens to be the fact. If I say darkness can be removed only by light; it is not fanaticism; I do not to comprise or consider that you can remove darkness by broomstick; it is not possible; I cannot afford to accept many paths, not because I am narrow-minded, but the fact is that the darkness goes only by light. So if still you charge me with fanaticism, Dayananda Swamiji says: Better I be a fanatic rather than a lunatic.

And why do we say that it is a fact. Sri Krishna says, because samsara is caused by ignorance and error. What is the ignorance and what is the error? I am the Purusha, I am ignorant of this fact. Purusha, the one who is Chetana, nirguna, nirvikara, sathya, chetana tatvam, Purna Purusha Aham; this fact I am ignorant of. This is called the ignorance problem.

And this ignorance has led to an error; and what is that error?

Since I do not know I am the Purusha, I have chosen to identify myself with Prakrti. When I do not know I am atma; I mistake myself to be anatma. This is what is happening in

dream also. When  
I forget this body of mine during sleep, the ignorance of this  
body leads to my  
identification with the svapna shariram.

Why do I identify with the dream body; Because, I am ignorant  
of  
this body which is lying on the bed. And that is why the  
moment I wake up to  
this physical body, automatically, I decide to dis-identify  
from the dream  
body. And thus, Purusha Agyanam has led to Prakrti abhimanam.  
Similarly,  
KshetraGna  
abhimanam has led to kshetra abhimana. Abhimana  
means identification. Atma agyanam has led to anatma  
abhimana. Or in English self-ignorance has led to body  
identification.

And therefore Sri Krishna says, because of this  
misidentification  
we miss the original.

I miss the Purusha  
and take the Prakrti as myself.

Shankaracharya, in his famous introduction to Brahma Sutra,  
writes a bhashyam called adhyasa bhashyam that is just half a  
page long. But others have commented upon this Bhashyam  
extensively. The Bhashyam briefly says that I, the Chetana  
tatvam, take myself to be the material body; I, the  
consciousness, take myself to be the matter. But we  
successfully manage; not only we manage, we successfully  
perpetuate also; I am the body; i am the body because of the  
deha abhimana. Thus, there are two problems; the first problem  
is: I, the immortal Purusha, mistake myself to be the mortal  
body. Therefore, mortality, I take to myself. Finitude I take  
to myself. And once finitude comes, I cannot withstand the

limitations in life and therefore start the grabbing project. Bring to me, Bring to me, give me; I grab, so that I, the finite can become, the desire is to get rid of finitude. And therefore apurnathvam leads to kama; Kama leads to karma, karma leads to punya papam, punya papa leads to sukha dukha, and later to punar janma. In fact entire cycle of birth and death is due to deha abhimana.

And therefore Sri Krishna says, every living being is born; goes through the cycles of births and death; sthavarajangamam, whether it is a non-moving living being; like the trees; the trees are called sthavara prani; and all the other animals humans are all called jangama satvam. So all these go through birth and death because of the fundamental mistake they make of identification with the body.

Arjuna you must understand that this body identification is a mistake and every mistake is born of ignorance. Every error is a product of ignorance. And therefore if an error has to be eliminated, you can never attack the error directly, you have to attack the cause of the error. And what is the cause? Sri Krishna says, it is Agyanam. If you have to destroy a tree, cutting the branches would not accomplish that; you need to cut the root out.

And that is what is indicated through Ravana vadham also. Rama destroys the heads of Ravana. The heads indicate the errors. And Rama keeps on cutting the heads, the head keeps coming back. And then Rama is frustrated. Then Sage Agasthya comes and gives the upadesha of Aditya Hridayam, which is the essence of Vedanta. And the brahmastra is meant to strike the Hridayam desh. Do not cut the head which is an error; but in the Hridayam, ignorance is there; by tatvamasmi brahmasmi, destroy the agyanam here. Then the heads will not come again and again. And therefore Gyanam destroys agyanam and agyanam destroys error or adhyasa. With that problems are solved.

And therefore Arjuna in all yogas Gyanam alone destroys

Agyanam.Thus;  
there is only one remedy, Gyanam.

## Shloka

13. 27:

**He sees who sees the supreme Lord as existing  
eally in all beings, and as the Imperishable among the  
perishable.**

So from this shloka onwards, Sri Krishna talks about the  
benefit  
of this knowledge gyana phalam. There are several benefits and  
Sri Krishna enumerates  
a few of them:

1. First benefit is Seeing one atma, seeing means not with the  
physical eye rather through the eye of wisdom or Gyana  
chakshu. **Being aware of the changeless atma which is in and  
through all the changing anatma. Body changes; mind changes;  
thoughts change; all these change; but in and through all of  
them, the caitanya tatvam, the consciousness does not undergo  
a change.** Just as there is one water permanent water; in and  
through the changing impermanent waves and bubbles; in and  
through the changing bodies and mind; there is the changeless  
atma; this, the wise person does not lose sight.

Therefore, he says: While the  
body mind complex are innumerable. Just as waves are  
innumerable, there are  
innumerable and different (physically,  
mentally,intellectually), thus there are  
difference all through; and amidst the different innumerable  
perishable bodies,  
there is one imperishable thing. You  
call it either Sat principle, the existence, or you call it  
Chit principle, the  
consciousness, that Sat Chit atma is called parameshvara.



Here Sri Krishna says that parameshvaram is not somebody sitting above

the clouds. If so, who is this parameshvaram; He is the very changeless atma, in everyone. The Wise person is one who does not lose sight of the Lord while transacting. So at the level of the conscious mind, I am aware of the impermanent and changing bodies and mind, but in the background, the wise person does not lose sight of the atma, the permanent one.

And if I am aware of the permanent one, I will not depend upon the impermanent for security. If I am aware of the permanent one, I will handle the impermanent but I will not depend on the impermanent one. One who does not lose sight of this atma; that is one who has got sama darshanam, advaita darshanam, abheda darshanam and he alone has got the right vision and he is called a seer.

**A sage is called a seer because he is one who sees that thing that is to be seen.**

**Take away:**

Vedanta

Shravanam

need not necessarily have to be the study of the original scriptures

themselves. We do not insist that one should study Upanishad only; Gita only; Brahmasutra only; we do not insist upon the text; we

insist upon the teaching part only. Source is not important, the content is important.

What liberates is not the veda, but the content-the teaching in the Veda. Even if one does not study Vedas, one can get liberation, Sri Krishna declares.

Being aware of the  
changeless atma which is in and through all the changing  
anatma.

Body changes; mind changes; thoughts change; all these change;  
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through all of them, the chaitanya tatvam, the consciousness  
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change.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**