

# Bhagwat Geeta, Class 163 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 17 to 20

In the second part of the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> verse, Lord Krishna talked about the highest bhakta who has gone through all the five levels of bhakti yoga. This bhakta will necessarily be jñāni. This Jñāni is sthira pragya. Jñāni's source of love is himself. He is efficient in all situations and takes appropriate actions in every situation. Generally, a samsari takes two extremes. The first extreme is when there is a problem, impulsively takes action and often unjust or inappropriate actions, because discriminative power is not used when making this action. The other extreme is whatever is the situation, he puts up with all the problems and allows other people to be exploited. Inaction and passivity is the other extreme. One is reaction and the other is inaction. Vedanta says both are wrong and what is required is appropriate action. Punishment should be given only after proper inquiry.

## Verse 17

*That devotee who neither rejoices nor grieves, neither desires nor hates, and gives up good and evil is dear to Me.*

The one who is free from extreme emotional reactions to situations is dear to Krishna. The reactions to favorable and unfavorable situations should not be extreme. It is this discriminating power is what distinguishes humans from animals. Emotional upheaval clouds discriminating power. We should have enough discriminating power to know that our discriminating power is getting clouded and postpone any response. We should have mental balance to know that the mental balance is out of balance. We must be free from binding

raga dwesha and binding expectations. Have expectations but be prepared for their fulfillment as well as their non-fulfillment. You can contribute to your future, but you can't control your future.

From vedantic angle, both punya and pava are bondage. Since punya is finite in nature, it is also bondage. Punya is golden shackle and pava is iron shackle. A jñāni does punya karma for jñāna nishta.

### *Verse 18*

*He is the same towards friend and foe, as well as honor and dishonor. He is the same in cold and heat as well as comfort and discomfort and is free from attachment.*

The one who has the same attitude towards friend and foe is jñāni. jñāni does not develop raga or dwesha towards friend or foe. A Jñāni's goal always is to correct the other person and not to punish the other person. Compassion does not mean putting up with wrong actions. With compassion we can take appropriate steps. Honor and dishonor are not totally under our control. We have to be mentally prepared to treat honor and dishonor with equanimous.

Life nothing but a series of opposing events. If there is birth, there is death. If there is health, there is illness. We can only prepare to accept all opposing events. Until jñānam comes only option is bhakti towards ishta devata. We should strengthen our bhakti until we get jñānam. When a favorable situation comes, don't expect it to be permanent.

### *Verse 19*

*That devotee, who is the same towards censure and praise, who is a person of limited speech, who is content with anything, who is homeless, and who has firm knowledge of the Self is dear to Me.*

Whatever you do, there will be somebody to criticize because criticism does not involve any expenditure. If there are people willing to advise you, they will tell you directly. The uniqueness of Jñāni's mind is easy to please. Self-knowledge gives him this strength and it is the most powerful knowledge.

*Verse 20*

*Those devotees who keep Me as the primary goal and who faithfully pursue this righteous and immortal teaching as mentioned are very dear to Me.*

How can I attain such a state of mind? One must go through the five stages of bhakti yoga:

1. Sakama Karama yoga.
2. Nishkama karma yoga.
3. Eka roopa bhakti.
4. Aneka roopa bhakti.
5. Nirguna eeswara jñānam.

Krishna says that this teaching is based on veda and not contrary to the revelation given in vedas.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 162 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 15 and 16**

After talking about the five stages of bhakti yoga, Lord Krishna is talking about a person who has successfully gone

through all five stages and therefore he is the highest bhakta who is para bhakta or advaida bhakta or jñāni bhakta or one who has jivan mukthi.

Moksha is not a benefit which we get after death, but it is a benefit here and now. This benefit is at mental level and not mystical or miraculous powers. Jivan mukthi is freedom from samsara or free from kama, krōdha, moha and permanent disturbances we endure during waking stage.

Four fundamental disturbances are:

1. Harsha: We saw this in last class.
2. Amarshaha: Intolerant at many levels. Intolerance is that I can't accept the success of other party. We look for something to criticize of others and find something to put the other party down. This envy or jealousy is Amarsha. It is very difficult to find remedy to jealousy. To free from that and admire another person's superiority in my field, is very difficult. Moksha is freedom from this envy or jealousy.
3. Bayam: Innate fear that starts from birth to the end. Fear is because we hold on to wrong things. Most of the things we hold on to cause fear. Whatever we like usually creates a variety of problems. If I am very proud of my family, but there is a fear that our children protect the name of the family. Our biggest fear is what others will think. When we have money, we are afraid of tax. If I become famous, I am worried about my dishonor. For a person who is honored, losing that honor is worse than death. Fear of competition and rivalry is common in any field. If I love my body and its beauty, then I am afraid losing that beauty in old age. When I am committed to various sciences and theories, I am afraid of others challenging my theories. If I am dharmic person, other adharmic people start putting me down. If I am attached to physical

body, I am afraid of death. Learning to depend on yourself is the only solution.

#### 4. Uthevga: Mental disturbances and sorrow.

All these disturbances are happening without my control, and these are called samsara. Our travel out of all these mental disturbances is gradual – world dependence to god dependence to self-dependence. Self-dependence is independence.

#### Verse 16

*The devotee of Mime who is independent, pure, resourceful, impartial, undisturbed of all action is dear to Me.*

The one who is not emotionally dependent on any external factors to be happy, does not have any expectations. Freedom from dependence is freedom from expectations. Freedom from frustrations is possible only when there are no expectations. If at all you want to have expectations, let them be non-binding expectations. If it is fulfilled, great; if it is not fulfilled, be willing to accept it. This resilience of mind is required to come out of frustrations.

One must be pure both internally and externally. One must be indifferent, meaning the one who is not partial and must not belong to any groups; one who belongs to everyone. The one who is free from sorrow. We do not have control over our experiences. Experiences are controlled by desa (space), kala (time) and praraptha. After jñānam all experiences do not become favorable, but jñānam makes me endure those experiences. We all require different experiences for spiritual growth. Every experience is specially chosen by an eeswara. Let me not judge what experiences given by eeswara; my spiritual lesson should be to learn from those experiences. From tragic experiences we learn more. That is why sorry is a spiritual lesson or sadhana, if I am willing to learn from a tragic experience. So, a jñāni welcomes all experiences. Any action you do, thinking that once that

action is successful, my life will be complete, that action is a binding karma. Because no karma or karma phalāḥṃ gives poornatvam.. Action is finite, result is finite. Finite plus finite cannot become infinite. If I am expecting poornatvam, that will not happen with more and more action; life becomes a struggle or bondage. Jñāni has understood this fact; and therefore, he does not do anything for poornatvam, but he does everything from poornatvam. Poornatvam becomes a way of life, and it is not destination. Poornatvam as a destination makes life miserable, poornatvam as a way of life is liberation.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 159 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 12 and 13**

In this chapter, Lord Krishna discusses five stages of bhakti yoga:

1. Sakama karma bhakta, using religion for worldly benefits, not necessarily for spiritual benefits. But we should follow two rules:
  1. Do not use immoral or unrighteous methods; in other words, use only dharmic methods.
  1. Use the enjoyment and benefits as a gift from the lord. Change your attitude also and take is eeswara prasadam. This will refine the mind and prepare for the next step of bhakti yoga.
2. Nişkāma karma: Desires becomes selfless desire. My actions benefit more number of people. Karma is done

for the benefit of others.

3. Ishta devata upasana: Mind is refined sufficiently to withdraw external world.
4. Eka or viśvarūpa upasana
5. Nirguna Eeswara upasana or advaida jñānam is the highest level of bhakti yoga.

If one passes through all five stages of bhakti yoga, one becomes sthira pragra.

## Verse 12

*Knowledge is indeed superior to meditation without knowledge, meditation with knowledge is superior to mere knowledge. Renunciation of the results of actions is superior to meditation. There is peace after renunciation.*

In this verse, Lord Krishna talks about four types of sadhanas, in the order of superiority:

1. Abyāsaḥ: Meditation without knowledge; Meditation upon God in one form or another; a meditation not backed by knowledge; without understanding what god is.
2. jñānam: Knowledge without meditation; By the thorough study of scriptures one person may know what god is; knowledge without practicing meditation.
3. Dhyānam: Knowledge with meditation or meditation with knowledge. A mixture of knowledge and meditation. Dhyānam is practiced after understanding god.
4. Karma pala thyagam: Dedicating all the karma palam to the lord and taking them as a gift from the Lord.

In the previous verse a list of five sadhanas are given, where karma pala thyagam is the highest. Here karma pala thyagam is elevated by Krishna to encourage sadhanas. Unfortunately, the majority of the people are ready only for the lowest study of sakama karma. To encourage people, Lord Krishna glorifies and

elevates sakama karma from the lowest to highest.

Krishna says the lowest one in this list mechanical sadhana is abyāsaḥ. But we must notice that even the lowest one is better than not doing any sadhana.

Most people, even the people who are not familiar with scripture, offer anything new to the Lord by placing it in front of the lord, doing puja and taking that item back. This is practicing sakama karma.

With this verse, the first part of Chapter 12 is over.

Verse 13

*My devotee is a non-hater of all beings, is friendly compassionate, free from 'mine' notion, free from 'I' notion, same in comfort as well as discomfort, and forbearing.*

A person goes through all five stages of bhakti yoga, he becomes a jñāni. The knowledge is aham brahma asmi or I am Brahman, or the Lord is not different than me. Paramatma and Jivatma are not two entities; they are two words for one and the same. Similar to wave and ocean are not two different things, but they are two different for the substance water.

How does such a bhakta conduct himself in the world? What are the characteristics or behaviors of this advaida jñāni?

First benefit of this knowledge is that a person having this knowledge, will follow this sadhana. The second benefit is that whatever is a natural trait of a realized person, it should be taken as a sadhana as natural trait. When a person practices spiritual sadhana, he obtains a state of mind which will be useful in enjoying this world.

The first trait of a jivan muktha or jñāni is freedom from hate: He or she does not hate any person in the world. Any form of hatred is not justifiable, because all people are



divine and innately good. If we are not allowed to hate a person, are we allowed to hate the wrong action of a person? This also does not deserve hatred, because by hating the behavior, you are not changing the character of the person. The appropriate actions in this instance are sāma (educating), dhana (charity), beda (change), and dhanda (punishment). Note that the longer the list of hated items and people, the further away I am from mokśa.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 158 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 10 and 11**

Bagawan Krishna presents the important teaching of bhakti yoga. Bakti yoga is not a particular sadhana, but it is the name of the entire range of sadhana everyone should go through. Bagawan Krishna starts with the highest level, he starts with the fifth and final step is jñāna yoga sadhana, which is closer to moksha. This is nirguna savanna manana nidhithyasanam. jñāna yoga is the name of bhakti yoga at the highest level. This form of bhakti yoga is difficult for many, then they should practice the fourth level, which is saguna eeswara upasana. Saguna eeswara is viśvarūpa eeswara, which is ashta murti eeswara. Ashta Moorthi of virad or viswa roopa Eeswara represented by:

- Five elements are panca bootha are five Moorthy.
- Surya stands for all stars and is the sixth.
- The moon stands for all planets and is the seventh.
- All the living beings are the eighth.

Ishta roopa upasana itself uplifts you to viśvarūpa upasana which will lift you to nirguna brahma upsana.

If mind is not subtle enough to conceive viśvarūpa eeswara, then practice eka roopa. Chose a personal god and practice eka rūpa upsana which Krishna calls abyāsaḥ yoga. A person with raga dwesha will find it difficult to visualize viśvarūpa eeswara, then that person can practice abyāsaḥ yoga or ishta devata upasana. By ishta devata upasana one can not directly achieve moksha, but one can indirectly attain moksha, ishta devata upasana will lift devotee to nirguna eeswara upasana and bringing to liberation. Ishta devata upasana is paramparā karanam, that is indirect means of achieving liberation.

Upsana is mental activity and implies withdrawing all sense organ and a mental activity. Upsana is a introverted activity and is possible only when a person is ready to withdraw from mental activity. If a person is extrovert or rājo guna pradhāna that person will find it difficult to practice upsana.

Verse 10

*If you are incapable of abyāsaḥ yoga also, be devoted to My works. Even by doing works for My sake, you will attain liberation.*

If a person is not ready for eka rūpa upsana, then commit to karma yoga or activities. The activities can be classified as:

1. Niṣkāma karma: Activities dedicated to the service of the society; this will purify spiritually and qualify you for ishta devata upasana. For example, trees produce fruits for themselves but for others also. River flows through the plains for the benefit of other living beings, not for itself. Niṣkāma karma will lead to liberation indirectly by making the mind ready for

eka rūpa to aneka rūpa to arupa or nirguna brahman.

2. Sakama karma: But many of us have many worldly desires and not ready for niṣkāma kara, then practice sakama karma. Sakama karma is fulfilling legitimate worldly desires but dedicate that karma also to lord and enjoy the results as a prasadam from the lord. Don't call the results of sakama karma palam your accomplishment. After this, you can start practicing niṣkāma karma.

## Verse 11

*If you are not able to do this also, then, taking to My worship, renounce the results of all actions with self-restraint.*

Niṣiddha Karma like himsa (killing insects) etc. Some of these are inevitable.

In rare cases, niṣiddha karma is also ok, says Sankarachariyar. That is why some tamasic activities are mentioned in shastras. That is why some tamasic rituals are mentioned in scriptures.

When a person does sakama karma, he expects a worldly benefit out of it. You dedicate that result to eeswara, do not take it as the result of your efforts. Then selfish actions will have the capacity to purify the mind. Dedicate the results of all the karmas – kama karmas and niṣiddha karma to the lord.

If we practice sakama karma for a length of time, then we can transcend to niṣkāma karma. We will grow out of petty desires and life will become niṣkāma karma pradhāna karma yoga.

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# Bhagwat Geeta, Class 157 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 6 to 9

Lord Krishna presents bhakti yoga in five levels. The fifth level is jñāna yoga and that is the highest level of bhakti yoga. The lord in jñāna is nirguna eeswara. The worship of nirguna eeswara is unique, and it is not a physical worship because nirguna eeswara does not have a physical form. So the worship is in the form study and inquiry of nirguna eeswara. The inquiry consisting of sravanam, mananam nidhithyasanam.

jñāna yoga form of worship is presented in verses 3, 4 and 5. The technical word for jñāna yoga aksharobasanam. Lord Krishna admits jñāna yoga is difficult because:

1. Nirguna brahman is not available unobjectifiable and inconceivable. It can be only received in one form only and that is in the form of myself.
2. Requires lot of qualifications like viveka, vairāgyam etc.

Since jñāna yoga is very difficult, people follow simpler yoga like bhakti yoga, karma yoga etc. For moksha, many paths are not available, and scriptures clearly says jñānam is the only path. If darkness is the problem, the only solution is to bring light. All other acts like sweeping the floor, chanting slokas etc. will not remove darkness. Ignorance goes away only by jñānam or knowledge. You can get knowledge in any field only by inquiry and the relevant study. That should be extended to jñānam. If jñāna yoga is difficult, make it is easy, by preparing and qualifying for jñāna yoga. Jñāna yoga is difficult for unprepared person and easy for a prepared person.

## Verses 6 and 7

*Keeping Me as the primary goal and dedicating all actions unto Me, some devotees worship, mediating upon Me with undivided attention. For them, whose minds are set on Me, I shall soon become the savior from the ocean of samsara, which is best with death, Oh Arjuna.*

Those who find jñāna yoga to be difficult can practice saguna brahma upasana, meditating up on eeswara with attributes. Saguna brahman can be:

1. Viśvarūpa saguna brahman, as described in the 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter. Dedicate all actions to the Lord. Dedication is the attitude that after I complete my action, I will get a karma palam as per the laws of karma. I will accept the resulting karma palam, committing to the goal of nirguna eeswara. This will make them qualified for the fifth step of nirguna eeswara bhakti.
2. Ishta devata brahman

## Verse 8

*Fix the mind on Me alone. Fix the intellect on Me alone. Thereafter you will dwell in Me alone. There is no doubt.*

In this stage, fix the emotional mind in viśvarūpa lord and the intellectual mind should be convinced of viśvarūpa eeswara as the world. Akasha, vayu, agni all are eeswara. The glory of viśvarūpa bhakti is I am never away from eeswara. This should be the conviction born out of scriptural study. If not convinced, continue the study until you are convinced of viśvarūpa eeswara.

## Verse 9

*If you are not able to fix the mind firmly on Me, then seek to attain Me by means of abyāsaḥ yoga, Oh Arjuna!*

If you are not able to come to viśvarūpa eeswara, come to eka roopa eeswara or Ishta devata upasana. Choose any particular form or any particular form of relationship – like a father, mother or friend. Ishta devata bhakti can be formed by dwelling on purana paryanām. Krishna calls this abyāsaḥ yoga.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 156 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 3 to 5**



The 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna. Arjuna asks whether saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam is superior. Saguna dhyānam means meditation up on the Lord with various features. Nirguna dhyānam means meditation up on the lord with no features. This question is wrong because the idea of superior comes only when you can choose. According to Krishna, there is no choice between saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam as everyone has to go through both. Everyone needs to do both. What saguna dhyānam can give, nirguna dhyānam cannot give, so both are compulsory. They cannot be simultaneously practiced. Everyone should start with saguna dhyānam, purify the mind, go to nirguna dhyānam and get moksha. Krishna says that saguna dhyānam is superior, but nirguna dhyana devotees will reach him. The benefits of saguna dhyānam is not material wealth, but transformation of inner personality.

## Verses 3 and 4

*Having restrained the sense organs, being even-minded towards all, and being interested in the welfare of all beings, some (devotees) meditate upon the imperishable (Brahman) which is indefinable, unmanifest, all-pervading, incomprehensible, immutable, immoveable, and eternal. They attain Me alone.*

There are people who follow nirguna dhyānam as part of jñāna yoga. In these three verses, Krishna is elaborating jñāna yoga, which is nirguna dhyānam nidhithyasanam. Nirguna eeswara is:

- Avyaktam: Not perceptible to any sense organs. The universe is made up of five element and our five sense organs recognize each one of them. When we close the five sense organs, and then meditate upon nirguna Brahman. Brahman or nirguna brahman is inconceivable, imperceptible, incomprehensible and indescribable or in one word unobjectifiable or Aprameya. Nirguna Brahman is everywhere. Saguna Brahman is finite and can move from one place to another. But nirguna Brahman is infinite and formless and all-pervading and cannot move from one place to another. Nirguna Brahman is free from spatial limitation.
- kūṭastham: Brahman is free from sixfold modifications caused by kala tattvam – time. kūṭa is also the anvil, the base used by iron smith for hammering iron. Up on the anvil, the smith places the hot metal and shapes the metal. The metal undergoes change, but the anvil remains changeless. Nirguna brahman is like kūṭa or anvil that does not change. Changeless substratum is required for all changes. All lifestyle event shape our personality, but the witness principle, the Brahman remains changeless.

How can we meditate up on a featureless Brahman. Krishna says

one must qualify oneself for such mediation.

The preparation for nirguna eeswara dhyānam is fourfold qualifications are sādhana catuṣṭaya saṃpatti or:

- Discrimination
- Dispassion
- Discipline
- Desire

Sādhana catuṣṭaya Saṃpatti is described in these verses.

Krishna has said that nirguna eeswara is not objectifiable, that eeswara can exist in only one way. The un-experienceable principles is experienter alone. Therefore, nirguna dhyānam is mediating up on myself, the atma or meditating up on the meditator. Therefore, the mediator must be non-extrovert at the time of nirguna dhyānam.

- Mastering indriya grama or group of five sense organ
- Maintaining equanimity under all circumstances. The mind must be free from raga dwesha – likes and dislikes.
- Being committed to the well beings of all creatures; universal love; Expanded mind; Mind must be sensitized to feel the difficulties of others and interested in their wellbeing.

Verse 5

*Difficulties are more for those people whose minds are committed to the pursuit of the unmanifest Brahman, for the goal of unmanifest Brahman is attained with difficulty by the people of bodily attachment. jñāna yoga is difficult because the destination of the formless one is difficult to reach; a highly refined mind is required. jñāna yoga requires sravanam, mananam and nidhithyasanam and nidhithyasanam is jñāna yoga. The difficulties of people committed to jñāna*



yoga is many. Because the destination of the formless Brahman, is difficult to reach. The common obstacle is deha abimana or strong attachment to one's own physical body and we are busy maintaining and improving the body. Stronger the body attachment, the more difficult jñāna yoga.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 154 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 1 to 2**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Chapter gives a comprehensive essence of Vedas. The first part (the first 12 verses) of this chapter deals with Bhakti Yoga as a means of moksha. This chapter removes many confusions regarding bhakti yoga. Second part (13 to 20<sup>th</sup>) Bhakti Yoga palam or moksha is discussed in the second part – 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> verses.

Bhakti yoga is not a particular sadhana, but the range of spiritual sadhana culminating in Moksha. There are three sadhanas of bhakti yoga:

1. Karma Yogaha. Krishna divides this into sakama and niṣkāma karma. In both of these, a person is extroverted, dependent on the world. This is an obstacle to jñāna yoga.
2. Upasana Yogaha
3. Jani Yogaha

These three sadhanas should be practiced only in the atmosphere of eeswara bhakti, therefore these three yogas are

called bhakti yoga.

Krishna subdivides these three into five levels; karma yoga is subdivided into level one and level two; and upasana yoga is also divided into level one and level two. jñāna yoga is the fifth level.

In Karma yoga level one Krishna wants to accommodate all materialistic people.

- In the first level of karma yoga, we practice karma yoga for selfish activities, but accept the results as prasadam from the lord. This attitude will purify the mind. In this level, karma yoga is pursuing worldly pleasures but with two conditions.
  - First condition is you pursue worldly pleasures only by legitimate means.
  - The second condition is attributing these acquisitions as eeswara parasadam. Claim everything as eeswara prasadam.

This first level of karma yoga is sakama karma yoga, where we have desire only for taking.

- In the second level, the karma yoga practiced for sharing. This is niṣkāma karma yoga. This will give purity at a faster rate. In sakama karma, we measure our success based on how much we have taken, in niṣkāma karma, we measure success based on how much we have given. This will give purity at a faster rate.
- In the third level, or first level of upasana yoga, Eka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This Krishna calls this as abyāsaḥ yoga.
- In the fourth level or the second level of upasana yoga is aneka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This helps in

expanding the mind. Both third and fourth levels come under saguna Eeswara dhyānam.

- Once a person has completed the four level, that person is eligible for jñāna yoga. jñāna yoga consists of three levels:
  - Sravanam, systematic study of scriptures for a period of time under a competent guru.
  - Mananam, resolving all doubts.
  - Nidhithyasanam: Converting the intellectual knowledge to strengthen emotional personality; dwelling on the teachings of scriptures.

Karma yoga is important for the purity of mind, but it has the disadvantage of extroverted, which is an obstacle for jñāna yoga. In upasana yoga, I invoke the Lord inside and therefore upasana yoga is invertedness. All these five levels put together is Bhakti yoga.

In the last eight verses, Krishna discusses the character of a person who has successfully completed these five levels. Krishna calls him para bhakta, and there is no difference between him and the Lord.

Verse 1

*Arjuna asked: Who are the best yogis among them – the ever-steadfast devotees who meditates up on You as described before and those who meditate upon the imperishable unmanifest Brahman?*

This Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna, based on the previous chapters. Arjuna asks who is superior – saguna bhakta or nirguna bhakta?

Saguna eeswara can be eka roopa eeswara or aneka roopa eeswara. Nirguna eeswara is not perceptible to anybody. There is only way to meditate to nirguna eeswara that is to

see as the subject itself as there is no subject object division in nirguna brahman.

Arjuna is asking indirectly who is superior – saguna eeswara or nirguna eeswara?

Verse 2

*Lord Krishna said – Fixing the mind upon me with great faith, those ever-steadfast devotees who meditate upon Me are considered to be the best yogis by Me.*

The real answer to Arjuna's question is that the question is wrong; for a wrong question, there is no right answer. Comparison is possible only between two similar items. There is no question of choice between two dissimilar items. Saguna eeswara and nirguna eeswara are not comparable.

Saguna bhakti is the means and nirguna bhakti is the end. Saguna bhakti is the steppingstone and nirguna bhakti is the goal. There is no choice between the two. Without saguna bhakti, nirguna bhakti is impossible, without nirguna bhakti saguna bhakti is incomplete.

Krishna does not want to tell Arjuna that the question is wrong. But he says saguna bhaktas are superior and nirguna bhaktas attain me. There is no question of choice.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 152 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana**

# Yogaha, Verses 51 to 55

Viśvarūpam is a mixture of positive and negative; As long as we are in the relative world, everything has an opposite. If Lord is Srishti kariyam, the same lord will also be laya karanam. Lord will give both punyam and pavam. We should see them as complementary and accept or reject them both. But immature mind only accepts positive aspect of creation. Mind is interested in accepting birth but not willing to reject negatives like death.

Arjuna was able to see everything in creation, but not able to accept the death of his friends and relatives. So he requests the Lord to withdraw dhivya chakshu. Krishna obliges and removes the dhivya chakshu from Arjuna. All of these are reported by Sanjaya.

Withdrawal of viśvarūpa means removal of dhivya chakshu. Dhivya chakshu is freedom from ahankara and mamakara. Ahankara and mamakara are obstacles to dhivya chakshu or divine vision. Withdrawal of dhivya chakshu is getting back ahankara and mamakara.

## Verse 51

*Arjuna said – Oh Krishna! Seeing this pleasing human form of Yours, I have now become peaceful. I have come to normalcy.*

Arjuna looks upon Krishna as eka roopa bhakti. When aneka roopa bhakti is frightening, Aroopa Brahman will not appeal at all. It doesn't matter, we can confine to eka roopa bhakti.

## Verse 52

*The Lord said – This form of Mine which you have seen is very difficult to see Even gods are always craving for the vision of this form.*

Lord Krishna glorifies viśvarūpa darshanam. He says this

darshanam is extremely difficult, and it is a glorious vision. Even gods regularly pray for this darshanam.

#### Verse 53

*Neither by the study of the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by charity, nor by worship can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me.*

If viśvarūpa darshanam is a rare thing, what are the means of getting viśvarūpa darshanam. Lord Krishna gives the means in verses 53 and 54. The means given by Krishna is intense bhakti. Other sadhanas are important but will not lead to viśvarūpa darshanam, only bhakti alone will lead you to viśvarūpa darshanam. Other sadhanas mentioned are vedic scholarship, intense tapas or austerity and charity. These sadhanas will not give viśvarūpa darshanam. But this doesn't mean we should drop these sadhanas, only that they will not give viśvarūpa darshanam.

#### Verse 54

*Oh Arjuna! However, by undivided devotion I can be seen in this form known truly and merged into Oh Arjuna!*

Lord Krishna gives the means of viśvarūpa darshanam which is bhakti or intense love for the Lord.

Three levels of bhakti:

1. Arthaha and Artha: Devotion to lord for the benefit of worldly goals; Sakama bhakti. We use this sadhana as a means for worldly benefit. Purely commercial bhakti. Here god is a means to worldly benefit. This bhakti is better than no bhakti and this bhakti makes mind purer. Worldly benefits have three defects:

1. They are mixed with painAthrupthi, we seek more and more

1. Bandha tatvam; binding nature.

- Mumukshu or Ananya bhakti where god is an end itself; god is both sadhana and sadhanam.
- jñāni: Look upon God as myself; god is neither the means nor destination but the god is the traveler; God is not sought but god is the very seeker himself. Lord is neither sadhanam or sathyam, but I myself. With this knowledge, the devotee becomes one with the Lord. The notion of division between jivatma and paramatta is removed and this is merger with Lord.

## Verse 55

*He who does works for me, who is My devotee, who keeps Me as the supreme goal, who is free from attachment, and who is free from hatred towards all reaches Me. Oh Arjuna;*

This is a seed verse, which will be expanded in the next chapter. Bhakti is not a particular sadhana but it is the entire range of spiritual sadhana which will take one to moksha.

This is divided into three and Lord Krishna will divide them into five. The three levels of sadhana are:

1. Karma lakshana bhakti: Bhakti expressed in the form of karma yoga; Karma Yoga is impossible without devotion. Karma yoga involves two stages. In the first stage of karma yoga I am a kartha doing various actions which are converted to karma palam making me to karma boktha. Karma palam can be favorable and unfavorable. As a kartha, I am dedicating all karma palam to the lord accepting them as Eeswara prasadam. Every experience in life is karma palam. Because of this, karma yoga becomes a form of bhakti.
2. Upasana roopa bhakti: Bhakti in the form of meditation or dhyānam. This is required because karma yoga is always an extroverted act. An extroverted mind can

never realize God. The real god is not outside, is inside so an extroverted mind can never realize God. Here we visualize lord within ourselves.

3. jñāna lakshana bhakti: Study of scripture to discover the real nature of God. Study of scriptures is also a form of bhakti.

A person must practice these three forms or stages of bhakti. Lord Krishna elaborates the bhakti in the next chapter.

Krishna state first become a karma yogi. Accepting all results in life is karma yoga. Slowly convert goal as God himself. Don't lean on the world, lean on God. Graduate from world dependence to God dependence. Train saying all the time that my support is God. Gradually become a theevarya mumukshu where moksha is the only goal. As you lean more and more on higher things, the attachment to other things will diminish. Freedom from raga dwesha means presence or absence of anything will not impact me. Developing Sādhana Catuṣṭaya Saṃpatti is our goal, Bhagavan will give other means like Guru etc. Develop viveka, develop vairāgyam and develop mumukshu and become a bhakta.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 152 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 47 to 50**

Arjuna was not mature enough to withstand the viśvarūpa darshanam, because viśvarūpa darshanam is seeing the whole universe as the lord. This means having a reverential attitude towards every event in creation. If birth is an



integral part of Bagawan, death is also an integral part of Bagawan. So, accepting viśvarūpa darshanam means accepting the death of anyone at any time. This means we should have a mature mind to accept any and all situations. How do we make our minds mature? We start with ishta devata or eka roopa appreciation. Ishta devata bhakti can relieve our pain, and eventually develop viśvarūpa bhakti or aneka roopa bhakti.

#### Verse 47

*The lord said – Oh Arjuna! By my power this supreme has been shown to you by Me who am pleased with you. Such a form of Mine which is radiant, universal, limitless and primal has not been seen by anyone other than you.*

Krishna says I chose to show the viśvarūpa darshanam with the power of Maya Sakthi. This viśvarūpa darshanam can be frightening for some and can be wonderful for others.

Yoga in this context refers to Maya Sakthi.

#### Verse 48

*Neither by the study of vedas and yajnas nor by charity nor by rituals nor by severe austerities can I been seen in this form in the world of mortals by anyone other than you, Oh Arjuna!*

Krishna highlights the bhakti as an important sadhana to appreciate viśvarūpa darshanam. All sadhanas are equally important, but in some context to highlight a particular sadhana, scriptures will bring down other sadhanas. In those instances, we should focus on the highlighted sadhana and not on the other sadhanas which may be criticized in those instances. Bhakti or devotion alone will help in viśvarūpa darshanam.

#### Verse 49

*Seeing such a frightening from of Mine, may you have neither fear nor delusion. With a pleased mind free from fear, see*

*again that very same form of Mine.*

Appreciating the value of moksha itself requires tremendous maturity. Scriptures do not force moksha but allow for us to work for artha and kama, but by following dharma. Whatever the result, accept it as a blessing from the Lord.

Verse 50

*Sanjaya said – Having said thus to Arjuna, Lord Krishna showed again His own form. And, having assumed the pleasing form once again, the great Lord consoled that frightened Arjuna.*

Arjuna requested to change the form and Krishna change the form from aneka roopa to eka roopa. But Arjuna's fear continues and Krishna consoles Arjuna by taking the original form.

Withdrawing viśvarūpa means withdrawing dhivya chakshu (a mind which is not over powered by ahankara and mamakara). As long as one has ahankara and mamakara one will not be able to see totality or viśvarūpa.

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## **Bhagwat Geeta, Class 151 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 44 to 46**

Lord Krishna pointed out that he is kala tattvam – time principle. Time and space are inseparable; when you appreciate lord as kalaha you also appreciate the lord as desaha. Then everything existing in time must also be Eeswara. We won't be able to answer questions like when the time was created or where was the space created or what was

the object with which space created. Bagawan is time, space and objects. Then Bagawan includes events. And lord is the order or laws which govern all the events. Desa, kala, vasthu, sambavaha (events) and niyamaha (laws) are all Bagawan. Whenever I experience any one of these, I am experiencing Bagawan, but we are not aware of experiencing eeswara darshanam.

Madhyama bhakta asks for viśva roopa darśana not realizing that he is already experiencing visa roopa darśana when he looks at the universe or nature. Madhyama bhakta looks at the universe and appreciates it as Bagawan. Uthama bhakta looks at the universe as himself. At this point, Arjuna feels a deep guilt because he did not look at Lord Krishna as viśva roopa Eeswara.

Stages of appreciation of eeswara:

Stage 1: Bagawan creates the world. Nimitha kāraṇa eeswara or eka roopa eeswara.

Stage 2: Bagawan appears ass the world – Upadana kāraṇa eeswara or aneka roopa eeswara.

stage 3: Bagawan is the world. niverta kāraṇa eeswara or Aroopa eeswara.

Verse 44

*Therefore, saluting and prostrating the body, I propitiate You, the adorable Lord. You should forgive my offences just as a father forgives those of the son, just as a friend forgives those of the friend, and just as a husband forgives those of the wife.*

Arjuna feels that it is a great insult as a friend; in fact treating the Lord as friend is a form of bhakti and he offers prāyaścitta namaskara. He requests the Lord to forgive and forget the offenses just as:

1. The parents forgive offenses of children.
2. A husband forgiving the offenses of wife.
3. A friend forgiving the insults and offenses of a friend.

#### Verse 45

*Seeing the universal form which has not been seen before. I am delighted. At the same time, my mind is afflicted with fear. Oh Lord! Show me that familiar form itself. Oh God of gods! Oh Lord, who is the abode of the universe! Be gracious.*

One part of Arjuna's mind says he is one of the few luckiest persons as he received Dhivya Chakshu and this part makes him happy. At the same time, he is also seeing the Lord as a destroyer and that part makes him distressed with fear. Between these two, bhayam or fear is more. Because Dhivya Chakshu was an artificial one given by the Lord. We must get Dhivya Chakshu by practicing karma yoga. When it is naturally developed by the practice of karma yoga, then it won't be fearful. If we want to go from eka roopa bhakti to aneka roopa bhakti, we have to reduce raga dwesha tremendously; ahankāra and mamakara must be reduced. Then viśva roopa will be enjoyable.

#### Verse 46

*I wish to see you in the same form as before with crown, with mace and with disc in your hand. Oh Lord, with a thousand arms! Oh Lord with universal form! Appear with that very same four-armed form.*

The three stages Arjuna goes through are:

1. Acharya – Wonderment
2. Bhayam – Fear
3. Bakti – Reverence

How does Arjuna say four hands? There had been many

explanations. We can conclude that either Krishan had four hands or Arjuna is confused. There is no need for deep thinking. It just that Arjuna wants Krishna to appear as his friend.