

Baghawat Geeta, Class 125: Chapter, Verses 23 – 27

Shloka # 23:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १२५ ॥ २३ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १२५ ॥ २३ ॥

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities, who worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but not according to Vedic injunctions.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, from shloka # 21 to # 29 Sri Krishna is classifying bhakti into two broad types based on motive of bhakti. A Gyani's motiveless bhakti is not taken into account in this classification. He does not have anything to accomplish. He has moksha; he does not have any desire for finite things including dharma, artha, kama or moha. Therefore Gyani's bhakti is motiveless and it is not considered here. Here we are talking of motive driven bhakti. This includes **Sakama bhakti**, which is worship of God for everything else other than God. God is in heaven and everything is fine is their view. It is motivated by Preyas or interested in materialistic desires. **Nishkama bhakti** of an Agyani is also a motivated bhakti; if so, why is it nishkama? The reason is that the bhakti here is not interested in anything other than God. Therefore it is Nishkama bhakti. Here motive is desire for God.

When a bhakti says I am interested in you alone, God, remember that in Vedanta, "you" does not mean a personal God; because personal God is as finite as any other thing; So there "you" means a finite form which represents satyam, gyanam, anantham, brahma. Thus when I seek nothing but God; who represents infinite Brahman; when I become a theevra mumukshu, it is called nishkama bhakthi; of a Gyani. So this sakama, nishkama

bhakthi of Agyani's are differentiated in this portion and Sri Krishna's indirect advice is: May you graduate from sakama bhakthi to nishkama bhakthi.

And this is indicated in a symbolic language; that symbolic language you should understand to interpret these verses properly. What is that symbolic language? In the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna represents the infinite Lord; the infinite one or moksha while all the other Gods represent the finite devathas; representing all the finite goals of life, like money; thus Lakshmi devi is a finite devatha representing only money aspect; similarly Surya devatha is a finite devatha representing only the power of vision; thus all the other devathas represent limited goals of life; whereas Sri Krishna represents the limitless.

Citing example of checkbook, which leaf within it is important? All leafs are equal until you write a sum on one. So leafs are same, what you write makes it important. Similarly, all rupams are finite but what you invoke is important. If you invoke Satyam, Brahman in Sri Krishna Shariram then he is infinite.

And, therefore, Sri Krishna says, instead of worshipping other finite devathas; you can worship me, myself because all the devathas are included in me. What is the reason? By the simple logic that infinite includes all finite. And therefore Krishna says any devatha, a person worships, all that worship will not go to that particular devatha; but through that devatha, it comes to me alone; Similarly, In Shivapurana it says: any worship goes to Shiva; In Devi bhagavatham it says any worship will go to devi; which one is correct; everything is correct, if you understand the principle behind it.

Any worship goes to Sri Krishna and any blessing also comes from him alone through the Devata. Next principle is also in symbolic language.

Since all Devatas represent finite powers their worship will get you the blessing of that special finite power. Thus Laxmi will give you money; Saraswati will give you knowledge etc. Therefore people go to those Devatas for their powers; hence it is considered Sakama Bhakti.

If so, to whom should one go to for infinite result? One has to go to Sri Krishna for infinite result. Per Gita, Sri Krishna bhakti is Nishkama bhakti. Other Devata Bhakti represents Sakama Bhakti. Similarly one can say the same about about Shiva Bhakti as well as Devi Bhakti.

Shloka # 23:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२३ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२३ ॥

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities who worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but not according to Vedic injunctions.

There are people who worship other Gods but they do not know that their worship is finally coming to Me alone.

Avadhi in shloka means agyanam; in this context it means they are ignorant of the fact that all the finite devathas are included in Me and by worshipping Me, they have also worshipped all the other devathas.

Shloka # 24:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२४ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२४ ॥

I indeed am enjoyer and master of all sacrifices; but they do not recognize Me in truth. Therefore they lapse.

The same idea is further clarified. I am receiver of all forms of worship offered to Devatas. I am also providing the blessing to the devotee through the Devatas.

So I alone give the power to the finite devathas with which they bless their devotee. Seeing my physical form, people think I am the finite form; such people are deluded.

So by saying that they do not know My real nature; Sri Krishna indirectly conveys I have got two natures; what are those natures? He has two natures; one is the superficial unnatural nature and the other is essential real nature. What is the superficial unreal nature? The physical form, the finite form, is the superficial unreal nature because the Lord temporarily takes it on an ashtami day. It was not there before; and it will not be there after svargarohanam and therefore manushya vesham is unreal.

Seeing my physical human form; the deluded

people think that I am a particular finite person; but my real nature is formless; without attributes; sat chit ananda svarupam; These people do not understand that real nature. So instead of knowing my purna svarupam they take my apurna svarupam only.

Even if they worship Me they don't ask for Me. They only ask for their personal desires. Going to Bhagavan we can ask for infinite; but still our daridra buddhi comes in. Even when the Lord is willing to give the infinite, free of cost; we still only ask for perishable and ephemeral things; Bhagavan says; My hands are in both pockets; one pocket is in infinite and the other in finite; ready to give both; but people do namaskara and ask for finite things only; only one hand of mine is active; the other hand is almost paralyzed, because I have been never able to use that hand to distribute from the moksha pocket; nobody asks even by mistake; therefore Sri Krishna is disappointed; Having come to Me; having got an opportunity for asking the infinite; they do not ask out of sheer indiscrimination; sheer foolishness; They do not ask; therefore they fall into Samsara.

Shloka # 25:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२५ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२५ ॥

To gods repair their devotees; to the manes go those devoted to manes. The worshippers of the elementals go to these elementals. My worshippers come to Me.

So, people don't ask for moksha. But the question comes up as to why God does not give me Moksha anyway? Sri Krishna says that would not work; because of two reasons.

One reason is, in human birth, the Lord has given us free will; unlike animal birth; animals cannot choose their goals; they are instinctively programmed to pursue certain basic things; they will pursue them, and they will die; whereas human being has got a freewill that means he can choose his goal and he should choose his goal. God will not interfere in our choice; god's role is only giving us the information of what are the goals available and which goal can be reached and by which path. And if you refuse to use your choice, it indirectly means that you do not want to utilize the privilege of human birth. And if you refuse to utilize the privilege of human birth; indirectly you are declaring: Oh Lord; it is my mistake that I have come to human birth; please put me back to animal birth; that is the declaration, if you refuse to choose; therefore you can never refuse to choose whether you want moksha or not. This choice is yours alone. Bhagavan says I can assist you; but you have to choose. And therefore Moksha has to be your choice; this is one reason that God does not give moksha.

Another reason: suppose you don't desire moksha and god gives it to you; you may refuse it. So even God is helpless; he can't force moksha on you. So you have to ask for whatever you want. Worshippers of Devatas will get what they ask for. Thus, a money worshipper will get money; an ancestor worshipper will

go to Pitr Loka. “Whatever you worship, unknowingly you will become”. Then worshippers of bhutha ganas; bhuta, preta, pisacha, yaksha, etc., will end up becoming such; worshipping tamasic deities; attaining tamasic goals; worshipping rajasic deities; attaining rajasic goals.

Whereas, Sri Krishna says, those who worship Me, representing brahman, satyam gyannam anatham; representing moksha; purnatvam; shanti; they will come to Me only; Me representing Moksha itself.

Shloka # 26:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 9.26 ॥

Whoso with devotion offers Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, I enjoy what has been thus offered with devotion by that pure-hearted worshipper.

In the scriptures, sakama bhakthi is also talked about; nishkama bhakthi is also talked about; sakama rituals are also talked about; nishkama rituals are also talked about.

For example, sandhya vandhanam is a nishkama ritual; it is purely meant for spiritual progress; chitta shuddhi; guru prapthi; gyana prapthi; moksha prapthi. Whereas

puthrakamesti yaga is meant for puthra prapthi, a sakama ritual.

Depending on result one wants there are rules to be followed during a ritual including: time, date, deity, meditation, dress, priest, dakshina etc. If you will violate a rule prayaschittam has to be performed. The higher the result expected, more complex the ritual. In this context when you want infinite result you would expect the puja should to be more complex. However, Sri Krishna says, the puja for infinite is very simple and no rules are required.

Thus, Sakama puja has many rules. In Nishkama puja, performed with motive of God alone, as a mumukshu, one who wants God as his goal; he can offer a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water as his offering with Nishkama bhakti. He maybe an Agyani and a Samsari but he is a mumukshu. Such a person is one with a pure mind (one without desire of finite goals); when he prays, I receive his offering, although it is a simple offering, offered to me with love.

So since he has got such a nishkama bhakthi,

I receive that offering, even though it is a very inferior offering. I receive that offering, because it is offered with bhakti; it is offered with a love for myself;

So when God is the means in sakama bhakti; your love is a fake love; but nishkama bhaktha is doing puja for the sake of Lord. Therefore his love for me is the real love, and therefore I receive that love; Sri Krishna says I do not bother whether the medium that you use for offering love is flower or leaf; I do not care because through the medium, you are giving me the pure love. Therefore, I accept that.

Shloka # 27:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२७ ॥

Whatever you do, eat, sacrifice, offer as gift, perform as austerity, O Arjuna! do all this as a dedication to Me.

Suppose a person says I do not have pathram, pushpam; phalam; thoyam; then what shall I offer? Sri Krishna says, even if you do not have any special thing for offering to Me, it does not matter; you will be consuming things; you will have food; you will drink water; you will do some work; therefore whatever you are associated with, may you offer that to Me as an arpanam; Therefore, he says, any karma that you do; any laukika karma that you perform; even working in the office;

any work, even most mundane work that you do, dedicate it to the Lord, and it can function as a puja.

So offer every action in your life, even the most mundane ones, as a puja with bhakti. This is the greatest puja one can offer, exhorts Swamiji.

Now a question can come up, how can I offer my work at office as a puja? Remember, God is everywhere. Close your eyes during any work and offer it to God. This is a practice unique to Vedic tradition. You can worship God anywhere. Close your eyes, imagine God in your stomach and offer him the food you are about to partake as an offering. Whatever your nitya karmas, offer it to God. This requires a change in attitude. If you are fasting on Eka Dashi day offer the fast as an offering to God. It is only an attitudinal change. This is Nishkama bhakti.

Take away:

So offer every action in your life, even the most mundane ones, as a puja with bhakti. This is the greatest puja one can offer, exhorts Swamiji.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Similarly when I love God for worldly benefits, it is an incidental love of God. Here God is only a means; hence it is Sakama Bhakti.

As he matures he realizes God as superior to all worldly things one can obtain and with this his attitude changes. Now I love God as an end itself. Now God is the end and world the means to the end. This radical change is Madhyama Bhakti or Nishkama Bhakti; here I don't ask for anything worldly.

Uttama Bhakti: In madhyama bhakti God is an end and love of god is superior to love of world because the world is means, God is the end; love for the end, is certainly superior to the love for the means.

But Vedanta goes one step further; it asks why do you love god; why not money or something else? Your answer is that goal of God makes me happy.

So why does a devotee desire to attain God?

Because I love the goal; not for the sake of the goal itself; I love the goal, for the sake of myself only; If the goal will not give me happiness; then what will I do; change the goal. So therefore, as long as you see Lord as the goal; certainly you love God; but that love of God is also lesser than the love for oneself.

So superior to love of a goal is love of him Self. I love goal for love of my own self. You do love God, but it is lesser than love for one's self. Thus, love for the end is greater than one for the means.

It is a beautiful approach; you have to meditate on this idea; love for the end is superior to the love for the means; and love for oneself is superior to the love for

the end, because I love the end for whose sake; not for the sake of the end; but for the sake of myself; **and therefore in**

the highest level of bhakthi; God is neither the means nor the end, I have to discover God as myself.

And when God and self becomes identical; the love or devotion has reached the climax, which is called advaita bhakthi; abheda bhakthi; para bhakthi; Gyana bhakthi.

This Sri Krishna talked about in the 7th chapter as well.

Arjuna! all types of all kinds of devotees are certainly great; but the greatest devotee is that Gyani who is none other than myself.

So therefore, what are the three levels that we have to go through; first God is the means called sakama bhakthi; then God is the end, which is called nishkama bhakthi; and thereafter God is myself; which is advaita bhakthi.

Sri Krishna says the greatest Bhakti is I myself.

All three are great bhaktas. They have performed yagnas and had soma as a part of prasada and are thus free from papam and acquire a lot of punyam. To them God is willing to give anything. But these people pray for swarga phalam and God has no choice. What you get in life is not due to God. He does not choose what he should give. What ever you want, you ask. So, you choose your own desires. You are responsible for your own lot. Thus, these people, instead of seeking God seek swarga. Citing an example:

It is like a baby whom when we offer a gold biscuit and a real biscuit; real biscuit meaning edible biscuit; now the baby will ask for the edible biscuit; it will ask

what can I do with the gold biscuit; poor child does not know that gold biscuit can buy millions of edible biscuits; this is called nithya anitya vasthu vivekah nasthi.

derive

But the mind is such that having enjoyed something, it cannot settle for anything lesser than that, and therefore the withdrawal symptom as it is called is extremely painful. Therefore they come back to the dukha lokam.

Sri Krishna says, every Samsari is like an addict; does karma; enjoys; loses everything; again does karma; enjoys; loses everything; karma, phalam, janma, again karma, phalam, janma; karma phalam janma. Thus, bhaktas continue their cycle of life and death.

Therefore, in this manner; those people who follow the ritualistic portion of the vedas; the karma kanda portion of the vedas and with an aim of pure enjoyment, sensory enjoyment, worldly pleasures, such people do all the pooja, etc. but use punyam earned for the sake of the perishable pleasures.

Consequence is that they go to Swarga Loka and come back to Bhu Loka and this goes on, back and forth. **All earnings of punyam and papam are possible only in Bhu Loka. All other 13 Lokas are meant only for exhausting them, the lower lokas for papam and higher lokas for punyam.** This is the autobiography of a Samsari.

Shloka # 22:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय । ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥१.२२॥

To men who exclusively meditate on Me and elaborately worship Me, who apply themselves incessantly (to meditation), I bring prosperity and security.

In last two shlokas Sri Krishna talked about Manda Bhakti as Sakama Bhakti. In this important shloka now, Nishkama bhakti is being described. Here God is end of all endeavors.

When God is the end, love for God is superior. Our mind is always obsessed with the end rather than the means. It is like travelling to Delhi. While you buy the rail ticket, you travel in train for several days, you go through all experiences; your goal of reaching Delhi remains unchanged. Or like building a house, you go through a whole process of buying the land, hiring a contractor and going through the process of building the house, all the time keeping the end goal of house in mind.

Similarly here also; in the case of madhyama bhaktha; he does all the worldly transactions; but he is absorbed in the ultimate goal of his life; that is called Bhagavan in puranic language; that is called moksha in vedantic language; that is called theevra mumukshatvam in vedantic language; that is called Jignasu bhakthi in the 7th chapter language.

Transactions go on but goal is fixed. So for Nishkama bhakta his goal is God and it displaces all other objectives from my mind. While I perform all transactions, my mind is in God.

This is ananya bhakti. Here mind is absorbed in God. Other goals of life are not ignored. But they are at a subdued level; God alone predominates.

Absorption in God does not mean disregard to one's family duties. Their goal is moksha. What about worries of worldly life?

Earning, supporting or Yoga (acquiring) and Kshema (protection), or acquisitions and preservations, we continue to perform these two without thinking of anything else. Sri Krishna says no human can ever provide total Yoga Kshema as everything in universe is insecure.

Thinking I can provide perfect security is the biggest myth; so fill the gap by surrendering to God. It does not mean you have to give up responsibility. Where is the limit to security? One can take care as much as possible and leave rest

to God; this way mind is available to the beyond yoga and kshema. Is God reliable; is a question that may come up? We know humans are not. Sri Krishna says I am the real and only security. I will take care of your yoga and kshema under one condition. The condition is being committed to Me completely. They are called Jigyasu or Madhyama bhaktas. Normally a Grihastha should feel secure while Sanyasi should worry, as he has no one to help him. Security is not based upon external possessions; it is based upon internal mindset.

It is like I telling you that I will give you Rs.10 loan if you give me Rs.10 now; Then, we will happily live; remember two beggars cannot depend on each other; two insecure members can't give each other security. The ever-secure entity is God and he alone can give you security. Sri Krishna says if you trust Me, you will be secure.

Shloka # 23:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२३ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२३ ॥

Those also who are the devotees of other divinities, who worship them with faith, are worshipping Me only, Arjuna! but not according to Vedic injunctions.

In previous shlokas Sri Krishna said Nishkama bhakta's are those who worship Me. Does every seeker of moksha have to worship Sri Krishna alone? Can he worship other Gods? Sri Krishna clarifies this here. It was also clarified in chapter # 7 before.

Any form of god is finite. Form is finite. Thus Krishna form, Shiva form all are finite. In any form we can invoke infinite power. So, value of deity, depends on our invocation.

I gave you an example as to which check leaf is superior? Remember, the value of a check leaf; depends upon what you write on it, until then all leafs are of equal value; provided

the money is in the bank; of course; similarly here also all the devathas are equal;

But when I invoke infinite in the form, he becomes infinite. In Bhagawad Gita, Sri Krishna is the infinite.

Take away:

You do love God, but it is lesser than love for one's self.

And, therefore, in the highest level of bhakthi, God is neither the means nor the end; I have to discover God as myself.

And when God and self becomes identical; the love or devotion has reached the climax, which is called advaita bhakthi.

All earnings of punyam and papam are possible only in Bhu Loka. All other 13 Lokas are meant only for exhausting them; the lower lokas for papam and higher lokas for punyam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 4

Shloka # 1:

Om, the word, is all this. A clear explanation of it is (the following)- all that is past, present and future, verily, is

OM. That which is beyond the three periods of time is also indeed, OM.

Swamiji said, in last class I pointed out that the first mantra is introducing two types of analysis: Omkara Vichara in mantra #1 and Atma Vichara in mantra # 2.

We saw mantra # 1 where it said Omkara is everything. What is everything? Everything includes all that falls within time and falls outside of time. Thereafter the Upanishad explained what is within time? Everything belonging to past state, present state and future states are within time. What is beyond time? Brahman, Maya etc that are outside of time are also included in Sarvam. We can present this in an equation that says: Omkara =All.

Thus, by analyzing Omkara, you are also analyzing everything. It is also known as Sarva Vichara. Thus, again, when you arrive at the reality through Omkara Vichara you are also arriving at the reality of the Universe. This is the advantage of Omkara Vichara.

Citing a story supporting this, Lord Subramania and Lord Ganesha had a contest as to who could do a sarva pradakhsanam of the world fastest. Lord Subramanya jumped on his Peacock and started travelling. Lord Ganesha whose vehicle was the mouse and who was also fat could not travel as fast; but being wiser, he just decided to perform a pradakshanam of Shiva and Parvathy, who jointly represent the universe or sarva prapancha. Just like Lord Ganesha, we are also taking a short cut through Omkara Vichara to know about everything.

Explaining the meaning of words in mantra, swamiji said, Tasya means Omkara and Upakhyanam means exposition.

For Omkara Vichara, first is introduction and analysis in mantra # 1, but its implementation is described in mantras #8-# 12. Upto this we saw in last class.

Mantra # 2:

All this is verily Brahman. This Atman is Brahman. This Atman has four quarters.

This mantra deals with Atma Vichara or Atma Mimamsa. Here the second enquiry is introduced. The entire Universe is Brahman; this Universe includes things in time and things outside of time.

First mantra can be stated in an equation as:
Om-kara=Everything or Sarva Vichara.

The second Mantra can also be stated in an equation as:

Everything=Brahman.

Therefore, Brahma Vichara is same as Everything Vichara or Sarva Vichara. Vichara means enquiry or analysis.

What is the blessed Brahman? Brahman is Atma; or Self; or myself, or I. This "I", is the one who is intimately available all the time. This I, the ever-evident Atma, equals Brahman.

Thus: Everything =Brahman

Brahman=Atma

Therefore, Everything =Atma.

If Everything = Atma, the self; then enquiry into everything can be accomplished by enquiry into Atma or Atma Vichara. Enquiry into myself will reveal "Everything" in Creation. You just have to know the truth about yourself. So, we have Atma Vichara.

Thus, both Om-kara vichara and Atma vichara have same destination although they are different. They are just two methods to arrive at knowledge of everything. Thus, the second enquiry has been introduced.

In mantra # 2 the **statement “ Ayam Atma Brahma”** is considered a mahavakyam. The other maha vakyam's are:

Tat Tavam Asi: occurring in Sama Veda's Chandogya Upanishad.

Pragyam Brahma: Occurring in Rg Veda's Aithreya Upanishad.

Aham Brahma Asmi is from Yajur Veda's Briharadanyaka Upanishad.

Ayam Atma Brahma: Occurring in Atharvana Veda's Mandukya Upanishad.

Having introduced the two methods the Upanishad now elaborates on them but not necessarily in the same order. The Upanishad takes up Atma Vichara first. This begins in mantra #2 in “ Soyamatma Chatuspat” and continues until mantra # 7. It is all about Atma Vichara. Atma is introduced as Chatuspada Atma. It means Atma has four padas. Pada has many meanings including: legs, aspects, expressions, and facets. In context of our discussion the meaning facet is probably the best to use.

What is the four aspected Atma?

I will give a birds eye view of these four aspects. It is a unique presentation not found elsewhere in any Upanishad. This also makes Mandukya Upanishad famous but also makes it a difficult one to comprehend.

As per Vedanta if anything in creation has to be proven as existent it has to fulfill one condition; it should become an object of knowledge. If a thing is not an object of knowledge we can't talk of its existence or its Prameyatvam. Prameyatvam means being an object of knowledge, to prove it exists.

First of all, when a thing is an object of knowledge it means it must be an object of anyone of the following six pramanas: pratyaksha, anumana, upamana arthapatti, anupalabdhi and Shabda.

Secondly even if anything is not an object of knowledge now, the present, even if it was in the past or if it will be in the future, it should be an object of pramanam.

Even if the object does not become a part of my knowledge, if it should be an object of somebody's knowledge or an object of something's (living beings), knowledge, even then it exists.

Prameyatvam: can be based upon one of the pramanam's or knowledge of an identified object.

Prameyatvam can be based upon pramanam or knowledge of an object from a past, present or future state.

Prameyatvam can also be based upon Pramanam or knowledge of an object by a living being.

Only based on the three above can we talk of existence of that thing.

Imagine that there is such a thing but it does not have status of prameyatvam (not part of any pramana); it is not an object of past, present or future; and it is not known by any being. If so, how can we talk of existence of such a thing? If there is such a thing, an object without Pramanam, not known by any living being, at any time including past present and future, we have to conclude such a thing as non-existent.

Even if you can imagine the existence of such a thing in your wild imaginations, the existence has no relevance or purpose because it is not known to anyone or thing. Because, if such a thing is not known to anyone, at any time, it does not matter, if it exists. Since there is no limit to such a thing hence it is considered non-existent. Thus:

1. A thing exists only when it is an object of knowledge or Prameya. Prameyatvam is the only condition for existence.
2. If a thing has to be a Prameyam, an object of knowledge

that is known to exist, such a status is possible only when there is a Pramata or a Knower.

An object of knowledge can't be there unless there is a knower. So, existence of anything depends upon the Pramata. Without Pramata nothing can be Prameyam, meaning they can't exist. Therefore, existence depends on Pramata.

Mantra # 3:

The first quarter (pada) is "Vaisvanara" whose sphere is the waking state, who is conscious of the external world of objects, who has seven limbs and nineteen mouths and who enjoys the gross objects of the world.

A pramata, a Knower, is possible, only when "I" as consciousness principle, chooses to know something. By employing some pramanam; and only when I choose to know using the pramanam; the Knower comes into existence.

Thus, in jagrat avasta I choose to know things, hence I am a Knower (Pramata). In swapna avastha, I use pramanam and choose to know swapna objects; hence I am a Knower in swapna avastha.

In sushupti, I don't choose to know anything; so I am not a knower. Thus the knower is not an independent entity. The knower comes into existence only when "I" the consciousness wants to know.

Thus, the Pramata, Knower, is also a dependent entity on the "I" the consciousness principle. Now, "I" by himself, is not a knower. The Knower (Pramata) is also a dependent entity. It enjoys a dependent existence on Me, the conscious principle.

So, consolidating these ideas we have three points:

1. Prameyam, to be known, is dependent existence.
2. Pramata, Knower, is also dependent existence.
3. Thus Knower, Pramata, and Knowable, Prameyam, are both

dependent existence.

Prameya depends on Pramata.

Pramata depends on I the atma.

Thus both, Pramata and Prameya, depend upon Me. Prameyam depends indirectly on Me. Pramata depends on Me directly. Ultimately both, directly and indirectly, depend on Me.

Knower and knowable both depend on the Atma, the consciousness principle or Me. Once I say both have dependent existence we have to remember previous five Upanishads that we have studied. Thus, in Taittiriya Upanishad it says, whatever has a dependent existence, with no substantiality of its own, is considered Mithya.

The Upanishad's Pancha Kosha Viveka also brought this point out.

Pramata and Prameya are both Mithya, as they don't have an independent existence. Mithya is only a name and form without substance of its own.

Mithya nama rupa depends on the Satya Vastu, the atma, the consciousness principle or I.

Another way of saying it is: **I, satya atma, alone appear as pramata(knower) and prameyam (known) with mithya nama and rupa. I put on a vesham of Pramata and Prameyam.** This entire mithya nama rupa's fall in three categories:

1. Mithya nama rupas in jagrat avastha. This is known as Sthula nama rupa or gross names and forms.
2. Mithya nama rupa in svapna avastha is known as sukshma nama rupa.
3. All nama rupas are in potential form in sushupti avastha and it is called karana nama rupa.

In jagrit avastha, the "I", puts on sthula nama rupa and

appears as jagrit pramatha and jagrit prameyam. Hence, I am now sthula atma.

In svapna avstha, I put on sukshma nama and rupa and appear as swapna pramatha and svapna prameya. I am now called sukshma atma.

In sushupti avastha I put on karana nama rupa and appear as sushupti pramata and sushupti prameya. I am now called karana atma.

Sthula Atma: In Jagrat Avastha, with Jagrat nama rupa, the Jagrat Pramata (knower) with jagrat Prameya (known), I take on a new name and I am called Sthula Atma.

Sukshma Atma: In Svapna Avastha, with Svapna nama rupa, the Svapna Pramata (knower) with Svapna Prameya (known), I take on a new name and I am called Sukshma Atma.

Karana Atma: In Sushupti Avastha, with karana nama rupa, wherein Sushupti Pramata (knower) with Sushupti Prameya (known) are in a resolved condition, I take on a new name and I am called Karana Atma.

Thus, I have three appearances; three nama rupa's or three roles; but who am I really?

When I look at myself from my own standpoint; that I, from my own standpoint am called Turiya atma. It is not an "I" from sukshma, sthula and karana atma's respective standpoints of view.

Therefore, when I am not a Pramata from jagrat, svapna or sushupti standpoint; when I am not a Prameya from jagrat, svapna or sushupti standpoint, now I am called by the name Turiya atma.

So, I have four facets. They are: Sthula atma pada, Sukshma atma pada, Karana atma pada and Turiya atma pada, hence I am called chatushpada atma.

Of the four padas, which is satyam and which is mithya?

First, second and third are mithya as they have mithya nama rupas. Fourth is satyam. Thus "I" has three mithya padams and one Satya padam.

Now Upanishad will talk of first pada related to Sthula atma in mantra # 3; fourth mantra will discuss the second pada of Sukshma atma; fifth and sixth mantras will take up third pada related to Karana atma and seventh mantra will talk about Turiya atma or the fourth pada.

Since we talk of three avastha's they are brought into discussion. This avastha traya chatuspada vichara has now begun.

Take Away:

I, satya atma, alone appear as pramata(knower) and prameyam (known) with mithya nama and rupa. I put on a vesham of Pramata and Prameyam.

An object of knowledge can't be there unless there is a knower.

When I am not a Pramata from jagrat, svapna or sushupti avastha standpoint; when I am not a Prameya from jagrat, svapna or sushupti avastha standpoint, now I am called by the name Turiya atma.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

in the form of puja, not in the form of parayanam; not in the form of social service; the final level of bhakthi is in the form of enquiry; with the help of scriptures and Upanishads, I make an enquiry into the essential nature of the Lord.

Thus, we have to remember that bhakti without Gyanam can't give moksha. In Kaivalya Upanishad also it says there is no method other than Gyanam.

All the Upanishads are uniformly insistent that Gyana alone is Kaivalyam.

So bhakti's final stage is Gyana Yogam. Gyana Yogam, the systematic study of scriptures, is the subtlest form of Bhakti. It is also the highest form of bhakti. We can take solace that even our study here is, bhakti alone.

Thus Bhakti=Karma+ Upasana+ Gyanam. This topic will be elaborated upon later in the Chapter 12 titled Bhakti Yoga.

When we say Bhakti as a means of liberation it also means that the object of our Bhakti too evolves even as our Bhakti evolves.

So when I start my bhakthi; my appreciation of the Lord, the object of devotion is a very gross appreciation and my bhakthi should evolve, the culmination of which will be the ideal form of bhakthi and only when that bhakthi is evolved into that form; it will lead to liberation.

What is the evolution of bhakti? In initial stages Bhatkti is Eka Rupa Ishwara bhakti. It then evolves to Aneka or Vishwa rupa Ishwara bhakti; here lord is everything. Thus, in Rudram mantras, Shiva is described as everything. Thus: Lord Shiva who is in the form of tree; who is in the form of mud, who is in the form of green leaf; the one who is in the form of dry leaf; whatever ordinary materials are there in the whole world, everything is Shiva;

of each one of them described in the shloka.

Gati: means a destination; a goal, which is kept in mind by every person; we can say it is karma phalam. Every body does Karma not for enjoyment but to obtain a result or karma phalam. So, Karma phalam is always the goal and goal is called Gatihi.

And every karma phalam, I am; that means what; success is one type of karma phalam; and what is another; failure is another type of karma phalam.

So, every karma phalam has success and failure built into it. Therefore, never reject failure. **Work for success but be prepared to welcome failure. Rejection of failure is rejection of God.**

Therefore all good and bad, any experience you get, learn to accept it as God himself.

Bhartha: sustainer or karma phala dhata; one, who gives karma phalam. To perform this I have to take control of all laws of creation. To predict rain, they say, there are 160 variables that have to be taken into consideration. There are many unknown factors. So, Sri Krishna says, " I am the giver of karma phalam". So, don't reject any karma phalam. Don't ask why "Me"?

Prabhuhu: A master capable of doing the job; omniscient and omnipotent. I am Prabhu.

Sakshi: While doing all these karma phalams, from my own point of view I am just a witness or sakshi. Thus in an earthquake all do not feel the same effect as it varies according to their karmas.

Nivasaha: Abode of everything; Vishwadhara. I am the adhara of the world.

Thus in one shloka it says of Lord Padmanabha, " I am lying on

a snake. Snake is supporting God. In second line it says whole creation is resting on Lord.”

Sharanam: Refuge. When the world rejects me; when I am helpless; I am the ultimate refuge for everyone. I am protector of anyone who surrenders to Me. Such devotees included Dhruva, Prahlada, Draupadi and Gajendra.

All these stories indicate that Lord is a two-fold protector; the Lord protects from incidental problems that a person faces, like Draupadi or Gajendra; and also Lord is the ultimate protector from samsara. To protect from the samsara crocodile he sent, the “Tat Tam Asi” sudarshana chakram.

Sharanam means one in whose presence we are free from all problems.

Suhrit means well wisher. Chapter # 6 talks of two kinds of help. One is where you help somebody in return for a favor later. The other is where one helps even if a person is unknown. He helps without any expectations. The second is Suhrit. Lord is Suhrit.

Citing an example, a person promised a large house to God, thinking God will not solve his problem. But the problem got solved. Now he wanted to escape from his promise. He said house and cat are available for sale. House was for Rs 1 and cat for Rs 9 laks. The money from house I will give to Lord. Such is the human mind even then Lord helps as a Suhrit.

Prabhavaha: Srishti karanam.

Pralayaha: Laya Karanam.

Sthanam: Sthiti karanam.

These three words put together means srishti sthiti laya karanam; I am the substratum from whom the creation arises; in whom the creation rests; into whom the creation resolves.

Nidhanam: Repository of everything including knowledge, in creation. Our shastra says that even before invention of a knowledge that knowledge exists in the creation in God.

Therefore, knowledge is also a discovery. In fact, we do not produce knowledge we only remove ignorance. Every knowledge is a discovery; and where does it exist, in God. Therefore I am the storehouse of all things, all beings and all forms of knowledge.

Avyayam Bijam: Inexhaustible seed, out of which infinite things appear. Therefore, the difference between nidhanam and bijam, one can be taken to be the karma phalam, which are in potential form; sanchita rupam; and avyayam bijam can be taken as everything and being in the creation, I am the inexhaustible seed. In short, I am everything.

Shloka # 19:

उत्पद्यते श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः
उत्पद्यते श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः श्रेयसांशुः 9.19

I cause heat; I arrest and send forth rain; I am mortality and death; both being and non-being am I, O Arjuna.

Now Sri Krishna comes to something recognized by all people, the God Surya or Sun. What role does sun play? The sun energizes each being. We survive because of the sun. Sun helps with its many seasons. Sun is usually shown as manifestation of Ishwara. Thus in sandhyavandanam it is all about glorification of sun.

Sun is taken as a representative of God. It is the only source of inexhaustible energy. That Sun I am; Aham Tapami. As sun, I alone energize. I also heat oceanic waters and evaporate them producing tons of pure water. He also transports the water to land through Vayu Bhagawan. Then it rains. When these things happen seasonally, do not take it for granted, appreciate bhagawan.

“ I am creator of rain taking it to land and releasing it on land”. This shloka has two meanings attributed to it.

Relative meaning: I am the cause of survival. Through rain I produce food, so people escape death or survive through anna danam. Suppose I withdraw this blessing and then there will be draught and death. Thus I am responsible for draught and death as well.

Philosophical meaning: I am the cause for both mortality and immortality; So here mortality means Gyanam; so I am the cause of immortality; in the form of Gyanam; I give Gyanam; and give immortality to the seekers; and I am the cause of mortality also; when I do not bless the people or through Agyanam; so I am the cause of both, mortality and immortality.

Sat: Means manifest creation, visible creation, such as physical body.

Asat: unmanifest creation; includes subtle body.

Shloka # 20:

सर्वभूतानां कर्ता मम सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवसति ॥
सर्वभूतानां कर्ता मम सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवसति ॥
सर्वभूतानां कर्ता मम सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवसति ॥
सर्वभूतानां कर्ता मम सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवसति ॥

Conversant with the lore of the triple Vedic texts, drinkers of soma-juice, cleansed of sins, crave attainment after having sacrificed unto Me. They reach the meritorious world of Indra and enjoy there devine felicities.

With shloka # 19, bhakti as a means of moksha is over. In shlokas # 20-# 29 Sri Krishna wants to talk about types of bhakti: 1) Sakama bhakti and 2) Nishkama bhakti.

Sakama Bhakti: Here one seeks artha and kama used for material gains. Sri Krishna does not say which to use. He gives the means and the ends. Sakama bhakti will give worldly security

and entertainment.

Nishkama Bhakti: I am not interested in artha or kama. I want to use bhakti for moksha or related goals such as Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi. If I have all qualifications, I can go to shastra vichara under a qualified Guru.

Sri Krishna wants to compare both, Sakama and Nishkama bhakti's, in shlokas 20 and 21.

How to know who is a Sakama Bhakta? It is seen in motive of one's sankalpa. What is the purpose of your business? If money is secondary and my goal is Chitta shuddhi, then even my business is Nishkama Bhakti.

Sri Krishna says most people are interested in pleasure. Highest pleasure is heaven. Sri Krishna says even from heaven, one finally has to come back to earth.

Take away:

1. Work for success but be prepared to welcome failure. Rejection of failure is rejection of God.
2. All the Upanishads are uniformly insistent that Gyanam alone is Kaivalyam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 3

Greetings All,

Swamiji said, in last class we saw that in Vedanta when Shabda Pramanam is employed properly through Srvanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam; through a qualified Guru; it will produce Gyanam. Even though words normally don't reveal Brahman, the Upanishad still uses different methods to reveal Brahman through words. The Gyani parampara is proof of that.

People say Upanishadic words give only knowledge and that they don't give us experience of Brahman. Vedanta says, our problem is not lack of experience rather it is lack of knowledge. Thus, we experience Dvaita in jagrat and swapna avastha and advaita in sushupti avastha. While we do have these experiences, unfortunately our conclusion from them is faulty. It is here that the Upanishads come to our help. It wants us to enquire into our available anubhava to come to know that the Advaita Aham is my real nature and that the Jagrat and Swapna dvaita experience is mithya.

This is a new knowledge correcting my misconceptions and this knowledge is enough for moksha. Since this teaching is occurring at the end of Vedas, it is called Vedanta. Vedanta does not mean end of knowledge.

In this Vedantic part we are trying to gain knowledge of ourselves as such it is called Gyana Kandam; unlike Veda purva that is called Karma kandam.

Since this portion deals with nature of myself, my swarupam or atma and not the universe, it is also called atma viddhya. In this process it reveals that I the atma am the limitless entity, existence consciousness and hence called Brahman or the limitless one or Brihat Samatvat Brahma. Scriptures also call this means of obtaining knowledge of Brahman as Brahma Vidya, Atma vidya and even as Upanishad.

The word Upanishad can be broken-down as Upa Ni Sat.

Upa means Guru's knowledge.

Ni means Nischaya Gyanam; knowledge without any doubts.

Sat means vehicle or carrier. Sat also means destroyer of ignorance and Samsara. Another meaning of Sat is Sadhayati Gamayati Prapayati Iti Sat or one which carries the seeker to Brahman. It helps Jivatma merge with Paramatma. Shankaracharya also says, Brahma Sadhayati Gamayati Prapayati Iti Sat.

Upanishad means it is knowledge from Guru that takes Jivatma to Paramatma. It does not mean paramatma is sitting somewhere waiting for jivatma. Rather, here, merger means removal of the notion that I am different from Paramatma. Hence it is called Upanishad. In the end portion of the Vedas this knowledge is given as a dialogue. A group of dialogues or even one dialogue is called Upanishad. They say, at some time in the past there were 1080 Upanishads, but many have been lost. Now there are only 108 Upanishads available. Shankaracharya has commented on only ten of them. All ten of them are considered great only because Shankaracharya commented on them. Mandukya is one of the ten Upanishads. It is the smallest among them with only twelve shlokas. Mandukya Upanishad belongs to Atharvana Veda. A Rishi named Manduka revealed it. The word root Manda means to be happy. Therefore, one who is always happy is known as Manduka. Even though it is small, it is comprehensive and all glorify it. There is another Upanishad known as Muktika Upanishad that details the dialogue between Rama and Anjaneya. This Upanishad tells us about the many other Upanishads, how many are there; which Upanishad belongs to which Veda etc. Muktika Upanishad says study of Mandukya Upanishad alone can give Gyanam. It says, if you don't understand Mandukya Upanishad, study the other ten; if you still don't understand then study all 108 of them; if you still don't get it try it in the next birth. " Mandukya ekam eva alam."

Gaudapada wrote the commentary on the twelve shlokas of Mandukya Upanishad in verse form. He occupies a very important position in Advaita Tradition.

The following is an important mantra for advaitins:

Narayanam Padmanabhavam Vasishtam Shaktim cha tatputra
parashar cha vyasam shukam gaudapadam mahantam govind
yogindramathsya Shishyam Sri Shankaracharyamathsya Padmapadam
cha hastamalakam cha shishya tam totakam vartikkarmanyansmad
gurun santatmanosmi

Sadashiva samarambham Shankaracharya madhyamam

Asmad acharya paryantam vande Guru Paramparam.

The Adi Guru of all Guru's is Vishnu, then came Brahma then Vasishta, Shakti, Parashara, Vyasa, Shuka, then Gaudapada and then Shankara, all the way down to my Guru.

From Narayana to Shuka, the first part of the Guru parampara, are all from Puranas or mythology and not from history. Here each disciple is son of a father; thus Vishnu's son was Brahma and so on. It is also called Pitr-Putr parampara.

Then the parampara changed. While Shuka was a Rishi, Gaudapada was a Manushya. From Gaudapada onwards there is history available of this parampara. From Gaudapada onwards the parampara became different in that it started the Sanyasi paramapara as well. Hence Gaudapada is a very important acharya. Gaudapada was Shankaracharya's Guru's Guru. Hence Gaudapada's Karika is very important.

Gaudapada lived in Gauda Desha or Northern Bengal. His original name is not known. The suffix pada means reverence. So he was the honorable acharya from Gauda Desha. Among his works Mandukya Karika is most important one. He has written 215 shlokas. They help us understand the Upanishad comprehensively, when studied with the Karika. Shankaracharya

started the tradition of studying this Upanishad with its Karika. Shankara also has written a commentary on the Karikas. Following this tradition, we will also study the Upanishad and Karikas together. The 227 shlokas of the Upanishad are divided into four chapters. Each chapter is called a Prakaranam. The four prakaranams are:

1. Agama Prakaranam.
2. Vyatathya Prakaranam
3. Advaita prakaranam
4. Alata Prakaranam

These four prakaranams contain the mantras as well as Karikas.

Agama Prakaranam is a mixture of entire Upanishad with 29 Karikas, thus it has 41 shlokas.

Since it has the entire Upanishad, later Prakaranams have only the Karikas. Since Agama prakaranam is a mixture of Upanishad mantras as well as karikas, which is more prominent of the two? It is said that Chapter One is Upanishad pradhana. Other three chapters are Karika pradhana. The word Agama conveys that the Vedas and their Upanishads as coming from God himself.

Since Chapter One includes Upanishad it has a shanti patha as well. The shanti patha is from Atharvana Veda. Other Upanishads such as Mundaka, Prashna, and now Mandukya are all from Atharvana Veda and they all have the same common Shanti patha.

Shanti patha:

“Om. Shining Ones! May we hear through our ears what is auspicious; Ye, fit to be worshipped! May we see with our eyes what is auspicious; May we, endowed with body strong with limbs, offering praise, complete the full span of life bestowed upon us by the divine beings; May Indra, of enhanced fame, be auspicious unto us; May Pūshan, who is all-knowing,

be auspicious unto us; May Tārkshya, who is the destroyer of all evils, be auspicious unto us; May Brihaspati bestow upon us auspiciousness!

Om. Peace! Peace! Peace!

We have studied this Shanti patha before. Its essence is that through the shanti patha the seeker is asking for three boons; and they are:

1. Ayushyam: A long enough life to be able to complete the study of the Upanishad through Srvanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam.
2. Arogyam: Good health with a good physical body. It does not make sense to live long with a sick body. Sense organs should function well and should focus on good actions such as hearing good, seeing good and speaking good. Mind should be emotionally sound so that I can learn the teaching with a balanced mind. Intellectual health is also important and a sharp intellect is highly desirable so that I can pursue this Vichara.
3. Nirvignatvam: Freedom from obstacles. Prayers to various gods are offered for freedom from obstacles.

This prayer is specific to learning this Upanishad without any obstructions. The Shantipatha ends with Om Shanti chanted three times meaning it is seeking freedom from obstructions of Adhyatmika, Adhidavika and Adhi bhautika nature.

Shloka # 1:

Om, the word, is all this. A clear explanation of it is (the following)- all that is past, present and future, verily, is OM. That which is beyond the three periods of time is also indeed, OM.

First chapter is a mixture of Upanishad and karikas. Upanishad is in prose while karikas are in verse. In this chapter, mantra and karika are mixed.

The first six shlokas are Upanishadic mantras and their karikas. Then comes the seventh mantra.

The first two mantras are introductory ones. They talk of two types of enquiry.

1. Omkara Vichara mantra: this first mantra introduces us to the fact that through Omkara one can arrive at the ultimate reality.
2. Atma Vichara mantra: The second mantra introduces us to self-analysis.
3. Third to seventh mantras: elaborates on atma vichara.
4. Eighth to twelveth mantras: here Omkara vichara is elaborated upon.

All these twelve shlokas are expanded upon further by Gaudapada's commentaries.

Om is discussed in Taittiriya Upanishad as well. It says Brahmaji churned the Vedas and took out the pranava mantra or the Omkara mantra.

In Taittiriya Upanishad's Shikshavalli also the Omkara mantra is discussed.

Now the Upanishad says the monosyllable mantra is the entire creation. If you have to know about creation, just study of Omkara mantra gives you this knowledge.

This study includes all present, past and future creations. The three states are all in Omkara. Anything beyond time is also in Omkara. Omkara represents within time and outside of time as well or Vyavaharika loka as well as paramarthika loka. What is beyond time? Consciousness, Maya, Avidya etc., are all beyond time. In short Omkara is everything.

Truth of Omkara equals truth of creation. Hence this pursuit is important. So, we will study Omkara.

With Best Wishes,

Baghawat Geeta, Class 122: Chapter 9, Verses 15 to 17

Shloka # 15:

ಉಪಾಸಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ
ಉಪಾಸಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ ಕೌಠಿಕಃ9.15

And others, worshipping Me with the sacrifice of knowledge, wait on Me looking up to Me as one with themselves or as different, in manifold ways-Me with face turned everywhere.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, Sri Krishna has been describing Ishwara Swarupam from shloka # 4 to Shloka # 10, focusing on the higher nature of God which is Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam and Nirgunam. So, when we say goal of life is God we mean the Para prakriti (PP), the omniscient Brahman, the Nirguna Brahman.

When we are talking about God in the context of worship, then the worshipped God, the invited God, the God with different number of hands and legs, there in the context of worship, we are referring to the lower nature of God.

The word God is use loosely in scriptures. In Bhagawatham it means Apara Prakriti but when it is a goal of life it is Para Prakriti, the infinite. God cannot be a finite goal. The worshipped finite form can't be a destination.

Kenopanishad says, the worshipped, formed, finite-God should be used as an intermediary step, the destination God is invariably the formless one alone; and the

description of that destination God; the formless God, was given from shloka # 4 where Sri Krishna said I am avyaktam, meaning formless, colorless, smell-less; tasteless; and touch-less; therefore the destination God is avyaktam. And having described that God in these shlokas, 4th to 10th, in the 11th shloka Sri Krishna said **the ignorance of that God, the real destination of life, is the cause of all human problems.**

When I do not know PP, I keep everything else as my destination. Unfortunately all other destinations don't give permanent peace of mind or security. Any other goal also becomes boring after some time and then we seek fresh goals. So, not knowing the real destination is the problem.

Therefore, knowing the real destination is our solution. From Shloka # 12 onwards Sri Krishna is categorizing human being. He says, most don't know their destination. Swamiji says, "Life is like a blind man looking for a black cat in a dark room in which the cat is not there". They don't know what they want. They keep switching from goal to goal, rudderless.

In spite of our Vedic parampara they are still groping for this goal. Then, Sri Krishna says, some few and lucky one's have understood that god is the ultimate goal. Chapter seven also discussed this same topic. They also pursue worldly objectives yet their main goal is still God.

Thus, one gets married, has children etc., but his ultimate goal is very clear to him. Now the understanding of what God is varies according to maturity of the person. Thus three levels of understanding of God are identified. They are:

1. Initially God is seen as Eka rupa Ishwara or Ishta Devata.
2. As one matures, God is identified as Vishwa rupa. He

Sri Krishna assumes all of us are in the middle category of Madhyama. That is the reason we are willing to worship any deity. Shankaracharya says no deity is superior; so don't compare him or her. You can have an ishta devatha; but never look down upon the other devatas. This is called anekarupa bhakthi.

And Sri Krishna wants to explain or elaborate the vishva rupa bhakthi in the shlokas from #16 to #19. In these four shlokas it is the vishvarupa Ishvara varnanam. Even though eka rupa and arupa bhakthi also are there; however, Sri Krishna chooses to elaborate on the middle one, the vishva rupa bhakthi.

Here everything in creation is looked at as manifestation of God. Initially we look at beautiful, respectable, valuable things in which we see God. Thus we see god in Mata, Pita, Guru and Daivam. We also see God in a cow.

The cow, which had so many roles to play in those days, was respected. And since rituals were pre-dominant in those days everything connected with rituals was considered very sacred. Sri Krishna takes those ritual connected things and says I am all of them. In Karma Kanda people were soaked in daily rituals; therefore he takes them and says learn to look at them as God; aham kratuh; thus everything is vishvarupa varnanam.

This is the seed of vishvarupa varnana here; gradually Sri Krishna will expand on the topic and in the 11th chapter it will be the climax of vishvarupa darshanam; all these are like a preview.

I am kratuh; kratuh means shroutha karma, which means rituals and prayers prescribed by the Vedas which are the original scriptures; the primary scriptures.

In Shrauta karma, God is himself the ritual. In Yagna, Smartha karma, prescribed by secondary scriptures or Non-Vedic scriptures they also get sanctity from Vedas alone. Even Gita

is sacred because it follows Vedic teachings. Veda is considered superior even to God as we come to know God only through the Vedas. Thus, many festivals are based on Puranic stories.

Svadha Aham in the shloka means offering to ancestors while Svaha is an offering to devatas. And Sri Krishna says that, Svadha, also I am, the Tarparanam, pinda etc., the food for the forefathers.

Aushadham means food eaten by human beings. This food is derived from plant kingdom. Medicines were also plant-based such as herbs and hence called aushadham. Food properly consumed can prevent and cure diseases. Swamiji said, "In old days people ate medicines as food, now people eat medicines as food." This food is also God. So, don't gulp food immediately, pray to god first, before consuming food.

Annam is Brahman; and that Nourisher is Vishnu. Digestive juices that convert foods are considered Shiva, the consumer of food. Thus, everything is divine. So train your mind as soon as possible to this fact that everything is Brahman.

Therefore, I am food; **and mantrah aham**; Whether you are offering food to the devatas; through shroutha smartha karma; or whether you are offering food to the ancestors through pitru karma, or whether you are offering food to yourselves; in the form of eating; regular eating; all these are sacred rituals which should go along with mantra.

Mantra Aham: I am all offerings with the mantra. Chandogya Upanishad says food is an offering to Vaishwanara Tatvam or the Pranagni hotram to the digestive juices.

Agyam is ghee; I am Ghee. Agni is fire; I am Fire. Agni is a courier service to devatas. To whichever devata you make an offering through Agni, he will send the prayer to the right god. Agni is dutaha. Another name of Agni is Hutavaha. I am whatever Agni carries. The action of offering, hutam, also I

injustice in the creation. Whatever is the news-item you read, if the innocent people are suffering, again it is according to law of karma; that does not mean, I should let them suffer, I should not go to help; rather, I should do whatever to help them.

So, whatever happens is according to the law of karma. That is indicated here as karma phala dhata.

Vedhyam/ Gyenyam: I am the ultimate thing to be known. In the 13th chapter, Sri Krishna calls gneyam Vedyam. In Mandukya Upanishad it is called Vigneyam. I am the ultimate thing to be known. Knowing this our intellectual hunger will end. We all have physical hunger, emotional hunger and intellectual hunger. Emotional hunger is our quest for love, the desire for some one or some people to love me. We also have intellectual hunger. We want to know: Who am I? Who is God? We asked this of our parents and they said shut up and do your home work; because they did not know the answer; so having asked a few times; we just put the question away in our mind.

However, all ask these fundamental questions and all these intellectual hungers will be quenched only when you know that one thing; and therefore it is called Vedyam. Once we know this Vedyam, our curiosity will be quenched.

Pavitram, means purifier; he is the invisible purifier of sukhma shariram. He is the greatest purifier.

Omkara: I am essence of all Vedas. Vedas were condensed in the Gayathri mantra. Therefore Veda is called Brahma. Thus, Brahmachari means one who studies Vedas. Since Gayathri is considered Veda it is Brahma as well, hence it is called Brahma Upadesha. Gayathri is further condensed into Bhu, Bhuvaha and Suvaha, the Vyahriti mantra. Vyahriti mantra is further condensed into; A U M which when combined becomes OM. This is because of a sandhi between A and U makes it O. Hence Aum should always be pronounced as OM. Om is a condensation

of all Vedic literature. I am that Om.

Once Om is diluted, it becomes the Vedas, like a concentrate of orange becomes the juice when diluted with water. I am Om and Vedas as well. In Sikh religion they worship Guru Granth Sahib; hence Sikh means shisya.

So scriptures of Rg, Sama, Yajur and Atharvana are the law. Rg is a Veda in which Rg mantras are there. They are a metrical or poetic composition.

Yajur has Yajus mantras and they are in prose. Thus we have Yajur parayanam.

Sama means music and Sama mantras are set to music and are known as Sama Ganam.

Atharvarana is not mentioned here; Atharvarana primarily contains loukika or worldly activities; not much used in ritualistic activities; and therefore generally not mentioned; but I am all the four Vedas also.

Take away:

The ignorance of that God, the real destination of life, is the cause of all human problems.

Therefore, knowing the real destination is our solution.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Upanishadic Thoughts With References from Bhawad Geeta



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Mandukya Upanishad, Class 2

Introduction to the Upanishad, continued

Swamiji said, in last class we saw that Vedanta Pramanam is the only means of Brahma Gyanam; all others are extrovert and reveal only anatma. Vedanta Pramanam, in words, however, reveals Brahman. Scriptures however, say Brahman is beyond description of words. They say, words cannot describe Brahman; however, Upanishad itself is in words, if so, how does it reveal Brahman? Even logically words cannot reveal Brahman as the object of revelation must still fulfill the five conditions we saw in the last class. The five conditions were: Rudhi, Jatihi, Guna, Kriya and Sambandha. If an object is evidently available and clearly visible such as say the sun or water then we can have a common description and agreement on this experience. Then we can call it by a name, property, function, relationship or species.

If we don't know name of an object sitting on a table we can describe it through relationship called adhara adheyam sambandha. Through adhara, adheyam can be revealed; and through adheyam, adhara can also be revealed. Through relationship of table we can refer to an object.

These are the five conditions. But Brahman does not meet any of these five conditions.

Thus, Brahman does not have Rudhihi, because we don't have Brahman as a popular experience say like the sun or water. Thus Brahman is not popularly available. This phenomenon is

known as Pratyaksha Pratibhihi or popular availability.

Secondly, Jati is also not available to describe the Brahman. There is no Brahman species. Species is possible only when there are many members to compare with. Brahman is Ekam; as such it can't be compared with.

Guna: Brahman is nirgunam; as such it has no properties.

Kriya: Brahman does not have action. It is known as Nishkriya Brahman.

Sambandha: This also does not apply to Brahman as it requires at least two entities. But, Brahman is Ekam. It is non-dual.

Therefore, some people, raising an objection, say, Brahman can't be revealed through words, and as such Vedanta Pramanam can't function.

The answer to this is that even though normally words don't reveal Brahman, using abnormal or unusual methods, they can reveal the truth. Upanishad can do this by having a Guru use the words in a meaningful manner. Four methods are given by the Upanishads through which Brahman can be revealed by words.

They are:

- 1. Using unreal attributes:** Brahman is revealed through Mithya attributes. Citing some examples: Revealing sky via its blue color, although in reality the color of sky is not blue. Akasha does not have a color; it only has a mithya color of blue. Similarly the ocean is revealed through the blueness of ocean while in reality water is not blue. Sun can be revealed as the rising sun or setting sun while in reality we know sun does not rise or set. It appears so, as the earth revolves. Thus, words can reveal through apparent attributes. This is one method of revealing Brahman. The Sakshitvam of Brahman or consciousness is also an apparent attribute

used to reveal Brahman. In reality Sakshitvam is not a real attribute; it is only an apparent attribute. Shakshitvam means witnessing and it is an apparent attribute.

2. **Temporary or incidental attributes:** are also used to reveal objects. It is not a real or intrinsic attribute. Citing example a man is searching for a house among many similar houses. How to reveal the house of Mr. X? A crow sat on that house. Now, the crow becomes an incidental indicator of the house. The person showing the house shows the crow only as an incidental attribute. Similarly consciousness can't be revealed directly. So its direct association with body is used to reveal. Thus, consciousness is not a part, product, or property of body; rather it is something that makes the body sentient. The body will die and Consciousness is not permanently connected to the body; but we use the incidental body to reveal Brahman.
3. **Absence of attribute** is used to reveal Brahman. Citing an example: There are several drinking glasses with each containing coke, milk, water and even an empty one respectively. How to identify the empty glass? Emptiness is revealed through absence of things. Emptiness does not have any color. It is a negative attribute. Another example: Several people wore spectacles while there was one person without spectacles. So, here, absence of spectacle is an attribute. Similarly when we call a person a bald man it refers to absence of hair or a person without hair. Thus, Anantam Brahman or absence of limitation (nirakara, nirguna, etc) is all absence of attributes. Thus the three attributes we have seen are: Apparent, Incidental and Absence.
4. The fourth attribute is one where without talking of Brahman, he talks of something else and thus indirectly talks of Brahman. **Thus, it is talking without talking about it.** Citing an example: A Mother has two boys. She tells elder boy, you are very intelligent, making

younger son feel bad. Although mother did not say anything to younger boy, just praising elder son was enough of a signal. Another example: three men are in a room with a glass full of water. One left the room then came back and noted glass was empty. He asked, who drank the water? One of them said I did not drink the water. The implication, without saying it, was that the other person drank the water. This is known as communication without communicating and is also called **Maunam Vakhyanam**. Maunam does not always mean keeping the mouth shut. Another example: some one came to meet me just before I left for a class. He kept talking and finally I had to remind him that I had a class at 5:30 PM. He understood and took leave. Here again the communication was indirect. Another example: someone was leaving in his car. I asked where are you going? He says where can I drop you off? This is another non-verbal communication. Upanishad calls it Neti Neti method of communication. After negating everything whatever is left behind is called Neti, Neti method. It does not talk of subject positively rather it talks of other topics and thus communicates. Thus through Neti Neti method we discover that Atma is not the Known or the Unknown. So, whatever is left is only the knower alone. Known and unknown are all objects. This is the **fourth method known as Lakshanavrithi or the Implication method**.

These are the four methods used to reveal knowledge.

Lastly one more important topic needs to be discussed.

The general perception is that words can give knowledge. Knowledge is however complete only when it is intimately and directly experienced. Only then is knowledge complete. Thus beauty of Gangotri and Badrinath can be experienced in our direct viewing experience. Reading only gives me knowledge but it is incomplete unless I directly experience Badri or

Gangotri.

Vedanta is in words and it can only give knowledge; but it is incomplete, as one still needs the direct experience. If so, how, will Vedanta knowledge be considered complete?

For this a variety of sadhanas are discussed, to convert Gyanam to experience, such as meditation, sravanam, mananam etc. This is known as Gyana Anubhava Bheda. They consider Atma Gyanam is different from Atma anubhuti. Therefore, without Atma anubhuti, knowledge will be incomplete. How then to get Vedanta Anubhava? They say Vedanta Gyanam is Gyanam while anubhava is obtained through meditation.

Vedantic point of view:

They say Vedantic words can give only knowledge; we agree with this. They say, it can't give anubhava; we agree with this as well.

We, however, say, Vedanta does not give anubhava nor does it wish to give anubhava. Vedanta says we don't require any more new experiences at all. Our problem is not lack of new experiences. Our problem is lack of knowledge alone. What does this mean? All our self-experiences can be classified in two categories:

- Dvaita anubhava
- Advaita anubhava.

All of us have gone through both dvaita and advaita experiences. Every human being has gone through both. How do you say so?

In waking and dream states we go through dvaita anubhava. I am the subject (experiencer) different from the object. Subject object duality exists and is known as Savikalpa anubhava. In this dvaita anubhava, I experience myself as an individual, localization in time and space occurs separate from others,

and naturally I am a limited "I"; individual, localized and separate, I.

Another experience we have is during sleep. Here there is no division of subject and object. No subject object duality exists. I am not an individual entity. No localization occurs; thus I cannot say I am in Madras as I cannot locate myself. I have no limitation. This "I" experience in sushupti is the clean advaita anubhava.

Jagrat & Swapna: Dvaita anubhava.

Sushupti: Advaita anubhava.

Other than these two anubhavas there is no other anubhava.

Therefore, Vedanta does not want to give any new anubhavas; we have gone through all anubhavas in Avastha Trayam. Our problem is not lack of any anubhava; **our problem is in dvaita I experience myself as a limited "I" and in advaita I experience myself as a limitless "I".**

The question before us is, which is our real nature, the limited or limitless I? Both can't be our real nature as they are diagonally opposites. So, only, one of them is my real nature and the other is only an incidental nature; or Swabhavik dharma and Agantuka dharma. Unfortunately before studying Vedanta we concluded, erroneously, that the limited I is our real nature and limitless I is an incidental one or it is a Vesham (disguise).

So problem is not lack of experience rather it is our wrong conclusions from our experiences. Vedanta's aim is not to give me another experience rather it raises questions and rectifies our conclusions.

The rectified conclusion is that I am the limitless one, my real nature. Limited human experience is only an incidental Vesha. **"You are not a human being requiring spiritual**

experience; rather you are a spiritual being temporarily going through a human experience”, said somebody.

Therefore Vedanta does not give or want to give us a new experience. Therefore student should not expect a new experience. Mandukya Upanishad’s analysis of Avastha Trayam brings us the proper knowledge. Vedanta assists us in arriving at proper knowledge in the Jagrat Avastha. In the other two avasthas, sushupti and swapna, a teacher cannot teach us.

Thus, Vedanta gives us knowledge and it is enough for liberation.

Take Away:

1. Our problem is, in dvaita, I experience myself as a limited “I” and in advaita I experience myself as a limitless “I”. The question before us is, which is our real nature, the limited or limitless I?
2. “You are not a human being requiring spiritual experience; rather you are a spiritual being temporarily going through a human experience”.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class : Chapter 9, Verses 12 to 15

Shloka # 12:

course of life is; because clarity is there; I have to follow karma yoga; I have to follow upasana; I have to acquire necessary qualifications; I have to follow Gyana yoga; I have to attain Gyanam; and through Gyanam I have to remove ignorance and obtain mukthi.

Some people are very clear and they take the right path. Many others don't know and they take the wrong path. They do not know what exactly they want. They

go after a goal for some time and acquire it; and they find that they do not get what they wanted. And then they replace the goal with another one; again

acquire it and again no satisfaction is obtained. So these people are confused people, Sri Krishna talked about the confused people, unlucky and unfortunate ones, in shloka #12. And why they are confused, because their thinking is not clear. In Kathopanishad, we saw that the body is compared to a chariot; sense organs are compared to the horses, mind is compared to the reins; and intellect is compared to the driver; a journey will be in the right direction, if the driver is informed properly.

Arjuna had Sri Krishna to guide him. Scriptures also guide one in a proper manner. Unfortunately, most do not come to scriptures. Our life, generally, takes three courses. They are:

1. Janati: One who knows about his goal.
2. Ichati: One who desires to reach his goal.
3. Yatate: One who strives towards a goal.

If Gyanam is improper, desire will also be improper, resulting in improper effort as well. These people don't have viveka shakti. We are all aviveki's and scripture comes here to guide us.

Moghajanah, they all have the wrong understanding and

expectations; and what are the wrong expectations; everything impermanent is mistaken as permanent; they think power is permanent; position is permanent; people around will be permanent; above all, money they think is permanent. So this they do not know; therefore they have wrong expectation; of security from insecure; permanence from the impermanence.

So, they have vain desires. If desire is futile, their action will also be futile and they don't get what they expect.

In Chapter # 3 it says, when they have wrong desires, any amount of accomplishments will not satisfy them and rather it will lead them to greed.

Therefore Sri Krishna says, their actions will be kama pradhana actions; or krodhah pradhana actions; either their actions are born out of attachment; or their actions are born out of hatred; so rakshasim and asurim; the difference is: one is ragah, pradhana; another is dveshah pradhana.

Thus, they take to illegal methods of acquisition. With their greedy behavior they get into cutthroat competition and thus Dvesha enters them and their Kama then becomes Krodha.

What about pancha maha yagna; nothing like that exists in his life; everything will go away and therefore nitya naimithika karma also will drop; why because there is no time; I would like to use that time to earn more money. And therefore, rakshas asurim prakrti dominates.

They take to mohini, which will delude the people; which means they get into a vicious cycle. Because of non-discrimination; their kama nishiddha karmas increase; and with it the power of discrimination gets further stifled or overpowered. Their bhuddhi will get further spoiled and eventually they lose even their conscience and thus criminals are born. Their intellect now justifies compromised values.

When we compromise with the values initially, there is a

prick; Somehow you managed that, second time lying will not be pricking that much; third lie, still lesser; fourth lie, no prick at all; fifth lie, I begin to justify; sixth lie, I say it is required in kaliyuga. If one lives to this stage the person becomes incorrigible and can hope for a better luck only at next birth.

When fire is burning in forest, the wind becomes its friend. However, when the same fire was small the wind was its foe. If you cant defeat them, join them. Initially when our mind goes in wrong direction we can stop it. But later, it becomes difficult. Then the intellect cannot stop the compromise with values. And then the intellect will begin to join and justify the violation; and such people are called rakshasic people and asuric people.

Shloka # 13:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १३ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १३ ॥

But magnanimous persons, resorting to a nature that is divine, O Arjuna! adore Me single-mindedly knowing ME to be the imperishable source of beings.

In previous shloka Sri Krishna talked about misguided people bogged in Samsara. There are some fortunate people who, due to their past Karmas, are born in good families.

O Partha! People born in good families take to satvik nature practicing Pancha Maha Yagna's and leading a dharmic life. To them, due to the grace of God, they develop nithya anithya vastu viveka. They lead a religiously alert life.

Every experience teaches me a valid lesson that I should seek security only from God and not from Samsara. Seek peace only from God. This nithya anithya viveka they develop.

They have daivic prakriti. Mind purifying karmas are more in

their lives. They see Me as the ultimate shelter. They see Me as the ultimate causeless cause of all beings. They see God as beginning- less, without end or infinite. They see everything other than God as finite. **Intelligent people learn from other's suffering. Unintelligent learn from, their own suffering.**

Their journey begins without any distractions. In our tradition even married life is meant to be an Ashrama for Chitta Shudhi; it leads to dharma and moksha. Artha and Kama are only incidental goals.

Shloka # 14:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.१४ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.१४ ॥

Incessantly glorifying Me, striving with steadfast vows; prostrating; eternally united, they worship Me with devotion.

How do they pursue God?

They are people of firm resolve; “ I want to attain moksha”; they are tivra mumukshas. They refresh their resolves through Vratams. They talk of their goal as much as possible through Satsanga. The other people are also likeminded people and they will also remind you. So, they choose their friends carefully. They start preparing themselves (Yatante). Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathi is difficult to obtain while Gyanam is easy to obtain, if you are prepared. So, one has to start preparation right now. Practice of Karma Yoga and Upasanas are all part of their preparations.

They know that mere effort is not enough; that there will be endless obstacles (pratibandhaha). To succeed Ishwara anugraha is crucial and so, they surrender to God.

If you remember, I had told you in my introduction to the seventh chapter, one thing that is highlighted in the first

six chapters of the Gita is individual effort; then in the next six chapters, that is from the 7th chapter to the 12th chapter, the importance of Ishvara kripa is highlighted; Therefore prayathna is important; anugrah is important; only when both go in hand in hand, can we succeed.

Yatante indicates free will. Namasyanta indicates role of grace. So is freewill important or grace important? Both are equally important. If you discard freewill, you are fatalistic person; If you discard anugraha; you are an arrogant person; anugraham if you say no, arrogance; freewill if you say no to it means it is fatalism; we should neither be fatalistic; nor arrogance; we should know our effort is important; Ishvara's grace is also important; Thus a balanced approach is required.

To be ever steadfast, is their personality. Just as a sports man has trainer, dietician, psychologist etc to support him similarly their total focus is on moksha.

Thus at all levels: annamaya; pranamaya; manomaya; vigyanamaya, even anandamaya, all levels, there is only one focus that of moksham alone; this they pursue and seek.

Shloka # 15:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥१.१५॥

And others, worshipping Me with the sacrifice of knowledge, wait on Me looking up to Me as one with themselves or as different, in manifold ways-Me with face turned everywhere.

Now God is my goal. Even understanding of this goal evolves over time. There are thus three levels of understanding of God:

1. In beginning stages: **God is creator of world**, the nimitha karanam, like a weaver, carpenter etc. The God is even seen as many headed or omniscient. Thus, four

- heads of Brahma indicate the four Vedas. It is a personal God like Vishnu. Once you progress then,
2. Next level: Initially if God is seen as a person, he is limited spatially, meaning not present everywhere. **Here God becomes the world.** God is appearing as this universe. This universe is a form of God, Vishwarupa Ishwara. Here we are saying that Bhumi is the feet of the Lord; the sky is the body of the Lord; heaven is the head of the Lord.
 3. If god is everything, is Kuvam also God? Such doubts can arise. If god had only positive attributes he is limited. God does not become creation, rather it appears as creation. **Real God is free from all appearances.** He is Param Bhavana. **He does not have any form at all.**

Thus from Eka Rupa Ishwara>to>Aneka Rupa Ishwara>to> Arupa Ishwara. Everyone has to go through all these three stages.

Some worship me as non-dual Ishwara by taking to Gyana Yoga. Through Vedanta Viveka they see Arupa Ishwara. Some others worship Aneka Rupa Ishwara. Furthermore, some others worship a God with a distinct form such as Rama or Krishna.

Swami Chinmayananda started his ashram in Bombay with a Shiva Deity. Hare Krishna people criticized him saying that he used Krishna's name but went with Shiva.

Take away:

God is free from all appearances. He does not have any form at all.

Intelligent people learn from other's suffering. Unintelligent learn from, their own suffering.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Mandukya Upanishads, Class 1

Introduction to the Upanishad:

Greetings All,

Swamiji said, having completed Taittiriya Upanishad now we are entering Mandukya Upanishad. It is a different Upanishad from Mundako Upanishad. Today, I will give you a general introduction to this Upanishad. In the introduction I will consolidate the introductions of previous Upanishads. Thus our original scriptures are called Vedas or Shruti, a means or source of knowledge. They are a body of literature through which we come to know about the means and ends of human life. It is also called Shruti, as Rishi's heard it, as revealed to them by the Lord. So, Vedas are considered a revealed literature, one not born out of human intellect as such also called Aupurushyam. They have been propagated as karna parampara as well. These Vedas are four in number and are: Rg, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana.

This vast Vedic literature is classified as follows:

1. Veda Purva.
2. Veda Anta.

This Veda-purva section talks about varieties of karma. Karmas are rites to be done. Therefore, it is called karma section (action-section). Veda-anta section does not focus on action but on knowledge. Veda-purva section gives benefit by doing. Veda-anta section gives benefit by knowing. Therefore, Veda-

anta section is called Gyana section (knowledge-section). In all the four Vedas, karma section and Gyana section are found. Veda expects every follower of Veda to start with the karma section, the religious way of life. Gyana section deals with the spiritual life. One should start with religious life and graduate into spiritual life. **Without religious life, spirituality will not work. Without spirituality, religious life is incomplete.** Therefore, the follower of the Veda should follow a religious life and go to spirituality.

Veda Purva: First part or beginning part of the Vedas includes: a) Sadhya Trayam, b) Sadhana Trayam and c) Dosha Trayam.

Sadhya Trayam: are three types of human goals. The human goals are:

1. Self Improvement
2. Improvement of possessions. This can include one's house, material possessions, one's family etc.
3. Improvement of set up. This includes the environment in which you live or environmental improvement.

Human being desires security and happiness and they are dependent on these three goals. If anyone of these goals is missing, happiness and security are difficult to reach. So, these are the goals for a human being in Veda Purva.

Sadhana Trayam:

To accomplish the human goals three disciplines known as Sadhana Trayam are prescribed. They are:

1. Physical disciplines for the body that include rituals. These disciplines are also called Kayika Sadhanani.
2. Verbal disciplines in the form of Japa and Parayanam. They are also known as Vachika Karmani.
3. Mental disciplines also known as Manasa Karmani often in the form of meditation.

Dosha Trayam: Are the three forms of defects. All human goals have certain intrinsic defects or Doshas. These defects are considered natural to the human goals. The defects are:

1. **Dukha mishritatvam:** These are goals that are mixed with pain. The goals give joy but are mixed with pain of acquisition, preservation and the pain of loss.
2. **Atriptikaram:** They never give total satisfaction resulting in perpetual struggle. It is like a gambler, even when he wins, he wants to play more and more.
3. **Bandhatvam:** They are all dependency causing goals. They lead to enslavement. They weaken an individual.

Generally majority of people are satisfied with the Sadhya, Sadhana and even with the Doshas. Majority of people who are mediocre are satisfied with these three. Some rare people having experienced doshas look for goals that are defect free. Very few seek Dosha Rahita sadhyam, defect free goals.

To these advanced people, adventurous people, Vedanta addresses them; it tells them that it has Nirdosha Sadhyam; for them Vedanta is relevant. And, what does Vedanta say to those mature people? It says this dosha rahita sadhyam is Brahman. Gita in chapter five also defines Brahman as Nirdoshaha. Now, the Seeker wants to reach this Brahman. Vedanta, however, tells him, kindly don't seek Brahman. You will never find Brahman, as You are that Brahman. Tat Tvam Asi. This is the revealing and shocking statement of Vedanta. Listening to this from Vedanta the seeker finds a problem. Until Vedanta statement he, the seeker, looked at himself, as one saturated with Doshas. He sees defects in each one his five koshas as well. His life is riddled with defects, is his conclusion. Even a rare, good opinion about myself, will be shattered by family and society. So, what is my vision of myself? It is that I am Sa-Dosha while Vedanta says you are Nirdosha Brahman.

So, what am I, is the big question? Am I the pure Brahman or

am I the defect-full human? I can't dismiss the Vedas, as they are divine in origin. Veda is called Adrishta Pramanam, so I can't set it aside.

Even though Vedanta declares that, we will not easily accept it, because we already have a conclusion about ourselves. Our conclusion is that we are miserable jivas but Vedanta says that we are, the wonderful, Brahman. Our conclusion has been arrived at due to our experiences over so many years. Samsara is helplessness, anger, frustration, and depression. Life has become a meaningless, burdensome, boring struggle. 'We are miserable jivas' is a conclusion that we have arrived at but Vedanta says otherwise. Which one is correct? We have to enquire. Thus begins self-enquiry as to whether we are miserable jivas or wonderful Brahman. Vedanta, being a means of knowledge, helps us perform that enquiry.

At the same time I experience my own doshas everyday. I can't set them aside as well. Anubhava Pramanam says I am Sadushta while Veda says I am Adushta. **Therefore, I have to enquire into self-enquiry, acquire self Knowledge and this will then remove my self-misconception.**

Once I am a seeker of knowledge, I must seek an appropriate instrument of knowledge as well. For color knowledge I require eyes. For knowledge of sound I require ears. So, we need Pramanam. There are six pramanams or instruments. They are:

1. a) pratyaksha: perception,
2. b) Anumana: inference, comparison and analogy
3. c) Upamana: postulation, derivation from circumstances
4. d) Arthapatti: non-perception,
5. e) Anupalabdhi: meaning negative or cognitive proof,
6. f) Shabda: word, testimony of past or present reliable experts.

Of these six instruments five are outward facing, objective proof of the external world. None of them, however, observe my

self. They will not help with self- knowledge. Eyes can't see my own face. It is an intrinsic limitation. Then, there is only one pramanam and that is Vedanta Pramanam that can reveal my own nature. Without mirror I can't see my face. So, I have to use Vedanta Darpana. To use mirror I need eyes as well. It is like I need a microscope to look at the very small microbes and I need a telescope to see far away objects. To attain Brahman I have to employ Vedanta Pramanam. Now, how do you use Vedanta Pramanam? First of all never use it all by yourself. Learn how to use it. Operating it involves the following steps:

- Sravanam
- Mananam
- Nidhidhyasanam

The more you look into the mirror, you see yourself with greater clarity. Similarly, Shastric study is to turn you towards your self.

Shravanam: It is a systematic analysis of Vedanta teaching and extracting the central teaching. For this analysis six factors have to be considered. They are:

1. Upakrama-Upasamhara: commencement and Conclusion,
2. Abhyasa : practice or reiteration,
3. Apurvata: unprecedentedness,
4. Phala: fruit,
5. Arthavada: glorifying passage or explanatory statement and\
6. Upapatti: illustration.

In simple English, **Shravanam is a systematic and consistent study of Vedantic literature for a length of time under a competent teacher.**

Who is a competent teacher? One who was a competent disciple is now a competent teacher. This will give me self-knowledge that I am Nirdosha Brahman.

Mananam:

This process will remove all doubts about the teaching. I find it difficult to believe that I am defect free. Mananam should clear all such doubts. It will free knowledge from all forms of doubts.

Nidhidhyasanam: It is Vedantic meditation. It is internalizing the teaching by dwelling on the doubt free knowledge in any form such as reading, writing, repeated listening, discussion, teaching and meditation. Meditation is not insisted upon as the only method. This internalizing is the de-conditioning process. There are many forms of Self-Conditioning. We never question our conditioning. Here we want to eliminate all our conditioning. Once I discover this fact, all three Sadhyams, their arrival and departure, will not make any serious difference in me.

When things and people are around me, I feel it is a burden; but without them, I also feel emptiness. Moksha means both, burden and emptiness, do not affect me anymore.

All this we learnt as an introduction from previous five Upanishads. A few more points need to be noted. One doubt that can come up is that scriptures say, Brahman can't be revealed by words. Reasoning alone can prove it.

Now, words can reveal an object only if the object fulfills certain conditions. They are called Shabda Pravriti Nimithani. Here Shabda means words; Pravriti means function; Nimithani means condition.

There are five conditions for words to reveal any knowledge. Brahman, however, does not fulfill any of them. How can Brahman be revealed by studying scriptures or words or via shabda Pramanam?

The five conditions for words are:

1. Rudhihi or Pratyaksha Vishayatvam: means it is available for direct perception. You can see an object. Then we can name the object. Let us call the object a "Clip". In future the word Clip reveals the object in mind.
2. Jathihi: Means species. Consider a tree outside that you have not experienced. You have experienced some other tree(s). You understand tree without experiencing the tree outside. You are able to do so because this tree also belonged to the same class of tree. You, thus, understand the meaning of the word "tree" as object falling under a species.
3. Guna: Properties of the object also help identify it.
4. Karma: When someone says, call the driver; the word driver reveals him through his function.
5. Sambandha: Relationship is another way of revealing. Thus father, brother, sister etc., reveal relationships.

Brahman, however, does not have any of the five above. If so, how will Upanishad teach Brahman?

Take Away:

1. Without religious life, spirituality will not work. Without spirituality, religious life is incomplete.
2. Shravanam is a systematic and consistent study of Vedantic literature for a length of time under a competent teacher.
3. When things and people are around me, I feel it is a burden; but without them, I also feel emptiness. Moksha means both, burden and emptiness, do not affect me anymore.
4. Shravanam: It is a systematic analysis of Vedanta teaching and extracting the central teaching.
5. Mananam: This process will remove all doubts about the teaching.
6. Nidhidhyasanam: It is internalizing the teaching by

dwelling on the doubt free knowledge in any form such as reading, writing, repeated listening, discussion, teaching and meditation.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy