

Upadesa Saram, Class 6

Greetings All,

Shloka 7 and 8.

Shloka # 7: "Constant , natural meditation like the steady flow of ghee or a stream of water is better than intermittent contemplation."

Shloka #8: "The meditation "I am that" regarded as more purifying than one based on dualistic thought."

Refreshing our memory of the last class Swami Paramathananda said Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is dealing with a variety of spiritual exercises in his teachings. He discussed three of them namely Kayika, Vachika and Manasa Karmani. Thus:

Kayika relates to performing Puja.

Vachika relates to performing Japa.

Manasa relates to Dhyanam or Upanam.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi classifies Dhyanam or Upanam into two types. They are:

- Bheda Upanam
- Abheda Upanam also known as Ahamgraha Upanam. Ahamgraha literally means "self-grasping," or "self-identification."

Bheda Upanam: Elaborating on this upana, Swamiji says, in this Upanam God is different from me. Upanam Upanya bheda exists. After Bheda Upanam one moves to Abheda Upanam. Here you visualize God as myself in Soham Bhava. There is nothing wrong in this Upanam as God can be invoked in any object. Even as God is invoked in a Saligramam, or a mound of Turmeric so also one can invoke God in himself, as well. This is Abheda Upanam. It is superior to Bheda Upanam.

Abheda Upasana: is the stepping-stone for Vedanta. Here, one has to know "I am God". Abheda Upasana is an ideal intermediary phase between Bheda Upasana and Vedanta. The transition from duality to Advaita is not easy. One should practice saying "I am Lord". Every time puja is performed, the priest in his mantras offers puja to himself as well. The priest reminds us that there is no difference between God and me. Abheda Upsana is superior to Bheda Upasana.

Shlokas 9 and 10:

Shloka # 9:

"The repose of being poised in one's true nature, devoid of thoughts, is the highest devotion. It comes from the strength of meditation."

Shloka # 10:

"Sinking of the mind in the heart, its source, is Action. Devotion, Union and Knowledge."

The possible culmination of any meditation (Bheda or Abheda) is Samadhi. Samadhi means absorption in object of meditation. I forget myself as meditator. One does not know he is meditating. This is similar to when the Waker is so absorbed in the dream world that he forgets that he is the projector of the dream. The dream becomes real to him. This is due to a natural propensity of the mind to do so; that is absorption leading to forgetfulness. This is also called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The difference between meditator and meditated is lost. Subject object difference is lost. Vidyaranya defines Samadhi as forgetting that I am the meditator.

The word Susthithi in shloka # 9 means getting lost in Soham Bhava. Here the absorption is total. All Bheda Bhavana is gone. Thoughts of all divisions are gone. In Gita Chapter 6, Sri Krishna compares this state to a flame that remains without a flicker. The mind remains in Abheda Vrithihi. In this state, the flow of advaitic thought excludes dvaitic

thought. Swamiji cautioned that Advaita Gyanam is different from Abheda Upasana. So, how does this absorption come about? It comes from deliberate meditation (bhavana). Just repeating "Om Namaha Shivaya" will take us into this state of absorption. By regular practice it becomes spontaneous. The Samadhi is the greatest form of Bhakthi. Puja and Japa are all aspects of Bhakthi as well. Ramana Maharishi says Abheda Samadhi is the highest form of Bhakthi. I am absorbed in the Lord and he is in me. In this context Bhakthi is considered Samadhi.

Thus, so far, Ramana MahaRishi has spoken about four disciplines: They are Puja, Japa, Dhyanam, and Samadhi.

In the next shloka Ramana MahaRishi explains two more Sadhanas. They are Yoga and Gyanam.

Yoga: While Patanjali's yoga is referred to, the emphasis is on Pranayama as a spiritual discipline.

Gyanam: Here the term Bodha is used in shloka # 10 for Gyanam. It means Self-knowledge.

So the six disciplines now are: Puja, Japa, Dhyana, Samadhi, Yoga and Gyanam.

For all these disciplines there is only one goal. The goal is that the mind should abide in peace. This Shanthi-Sthithi is goal of all Sadhanas. Swamiji says, a question does come up, after practicing all these Sadhanas, how do I know if I am progressing spiritually? The acid test is obtaining mental poise or shanthi. Even when Prarabhdam brings different experiences, maintain calmness amidst the turmoil. This is progress. Otherwise, it is not spiritual progress. Do I enjoy general equanimity at all times? Manaha Swastaha (shloka 10) means freedom from stress and abiding in my heart. Mind should have peace.

Shloka # 10:

“Sinking of the mind in the heart, its source, is Action. Devotion, Union and Knowledge.”

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has talked about six sadhanas. They are, Puja, Japa, dhyana, bhakthi (Samadhi), Yoga (Pranayama), and Bodhaha (Self knowledge). He discusses both Pranayama and Self Knowledge later.

Jivan Mukti is peace of mind alone. Swamiji says five of the six Sadhanas provide only a temporary peace of mind. Thus, all of them, except Bodha or Gyanam, provide a temporary peace of mind. Only with Atma Gyanam can we get permanent peace of mind.

Shloka # 11:

“ the mind becomes a quiescent by regulation of breath, like a bird caught in a net. This is a means of mind control.”

In shlokas 11 and 12 respectively Ramana Maharishi deals with Yoga. Yoga has many steps. Ramana Maharishi however highlights Vayu-rodhanam or regulation of breath. There are several types of Pranayama. They include: Puraka, Rechaka and Kumbhaka. Ramana Maharishi says Pranayama will make the mind quiet. Even science accepts this today. During stress, a deep breath brings down the body's toxic chemicals. Pranayama is highly recommended for stress. Even Readers digest had an article on this topic. Pranyama regulates Prana and mind. The Pancha Koshas are interconnected. Is it biochemistry that changes emotions or is it the other way around? Clearly, psychosomatic diseases improve with Pranayama. When Prana is regulated Annamaya and Manomaya Kosha are improved as well.

Rodhana in shloka # 11 means regulate. Even a turbulent mind becomes quiet with deep breath. Pranayama is like a cage for a bird. Just as a cage arrests the movement of a bird so also Pranayama arrests movement of a mind. The term Jala-Pakshi Vada is used in the shloka to mean a net or a cage for a bird.

Shloka # 12:

“Minds and breaths, expressing themselves as Consciousness and Action, are only two branches of the same Primal Power.”

So, how does Prana control the mind? Answering, Prana and mind are like two branches of the same tree. When one branch is pulled the other branch also comes along. Citing another example, all four legs of a table are connected to a wooden plank. If you pull one leg of the table other three also follow. So also with Prana and Manas, both are connected to one Prakrithi. Prakrithi (Maya) is the cause of Prana (Rajo guna) and Manas (Sathva Guna).

Chitta Vayava in this shloka means mind and Prana. Chitta means Gyanam.

Shakyordvayi means two branches.

Shakthimulaka means Maya or Prakrithi or main trunk of the tree.

By controlling mind, Prana is also controlled. In a very emotional state the breath changes, it becomes shallow. If both can influence each other why should we regulate mind through Prana? Controlling the grosser Prana is easier than subtler mind. From gross one goes to the subtle. When Pranayama is not possible, only medicine can help. Drugs and liquor are all trying to control the gross and thus the mind.

Shloka # 13:

“Control of the mind is of two kinds, its lulling and its destruction. A lulled mind will rise again but not the one which is destroyed.”

Now Ramana MahaRishi enters the last Sadhana called Gyanam. Even yoga and pranayama can only make the mind quiet temporarily. After all one cannot practice Pranayama all the time. Pranayama is not the ultimate solution. It only manages the problematic mind. Only Gyanam will destroy the problematic

sacrifice.”

Recapping last week’s teachings Swami Paramarthananda said Sri Krishna discussed Karma yoga from different angles. Karma Yoga consists of two paths. The first is appropriate action and second is proper attitude.

Appropriate action: All Satvika karmani fall under appropriate action. In this, I contribute more to the world through performance of Pancha Maha Yagya’s or Proper Actions.

Proper Attitude:

- One should have Ishwara Arapana Budhi while performing proper actions.
- Consequences of actions are accepted without criticism with Prasada Budhi.

Thus, Proper Action + Proper Attitude= Karma Yoga.

Following are Sri Krishna’s commentary on Karma Yoga, looking at it from different angles.

First angle, it is a commandment of the Lord. Nobody can escape it. By Agya, if we do not follow Karma Yoga, we will get Pratyavaha Papam. If we do not perform Pancha Maha Yagya we will bring down our spirituality. Here Karma Yoga is presented as a threat and more for immature people. Citing an example, violating the law of the land results in police action. If people follow the law no police action is required. So, here too, if people do not follow Karma Yoga the punishment is imprisonment in Samsara.

Second angle presented by Sri Krishna was that Karma Yoga is not a commandment; rather it is presented as a worship or expression of gratitude or love to God. The first angle was one of fear from which comes the saying “a God fearing person”. In the second angle one follows not out of fear but out of gratitude. The more you enjoy the harmony of universe, the more you express gratitude.

Astronaut John Glenn, when he saw the world from far out in space, said " one who appreciates the creation, he cannot but believe in God, and he cannot but pray to Lord." Our morning worship is an appreciation of the universe and expression of gratitude for it. Even the opening of a tap for taking a bath results in an expression of gratitude for the glory of water. If you perform Sandhya Vandanam also you worship water. When they look for life, they look for water in a planet. I don't take Oxygen for granted either. Intense appreciation of the environment through fire worship, worship of water, worship of earth, worship of space etc., are all a part of Vedic religion. I don't have to produce or pollute. If I can maintain harmony, it is great.

Convert your life as an offering to me, as a Yagya.

If an action is not worship, it will cause bondage. Worship will liberate. It is similar to the poison of a cobra. It can be a killer or a savior, depends upon how you handle it. Action by itself does not cause bondage or liberation. It is our attitude that matters.

Thus,

Action + Devotion= Liberating factor.

Action-Devotion=Binding factor.

Action + Devotion=Yagya, a liberator

Action – Devotion=Karma, a binder.

Therefore, Arjuna may you do all your actions as a worship of the Lord. Such action itself gives satisfaction.

That is why we use the expression: mamopatta-samastaduritaksaya-dvara sri-paramesvara-prityartham; It means: I am happy that I have done this as an offering to the Lord.

Swamiji says we are not supposed to expect appreciation. Shastra advises family members to appreciate the contribution of every member of family. Thus, a husband should appreciate his wife and she in turn should appreciate him as well. A teacher should not expect appreciation from his students.

Rather, the students should appreciate the teacher. So, you have no rights. You only have duties. Our society is a duty based

Society. Dayananda Saraswathi said: "where duty is emphasized, humility will come. Where as, where right is emphasized, fight will come; court will come;

divorce will come; all these things will come. Swamy Dayananda Saraswathi also used to say: "When you do your duty, others get their rights".

Shloka # 10:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.१० ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.१० ॥

"Bringing forth creatures together with sacrifice, the Lord of creatures said of old: multiply by means of sacrifices; let it yield whatever work you seek."

A life of sacrifice is prescribed by the vedas themselves for the harmony and progress of the society. Such a life of contribution; such a life of sacrifice; such a life of sharing called the Yagna way of life, is prescribed by the vedas themselves for our own benefit.

Swamiji says, the Vedas are for our own benefit. They are a like a manual. Just as a manufacturer's manual let's the customer know how to handle his product. It is meant for the user. The instruction on how to take a medicine, are on the bottle. He who created the world was one with an extraordinary intelligence. Bhagawan has created this world and with it a manual on how to live in this world accomplishing Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Without this manual we will not know how to live in this world. So, Bhagavan gave us the Vedas. They preach a life of Yagya and with it you will prosper.

It is said that Prajapathi, Lord Brahma, created all living beings. He also created the human beings. He then called the

human beings alone and gave them the Vedas. Vedas were not given to animals, as they don't have the free will to abuse. They follow dharma and harmony of creation. A forest is in harmony until humans enter it. It is the same with the ocean. They say there is a particular type of rodent species that once their population reaches a limit, some of the rodents will commit suicide as a way to limit the population. This is a way of sacrifice for the good of their society.

Therefore, God did not give Vedas to animals. For human beings it is a great blessing as well as a big curse. It depends on how we use it. Human beings can create their own heaven or hell.

A human being can lead an ideal life of giving and sharing, based upon freewill. Therefore humans can get the greatest benefit of moksha; or they can create a hell for themselves as well.

With life of Yagya, may you prosper. Swamiji then discussed a life of competition versus cooperation. In competition one does not share knowledge. One turns selfish. In cooperation, there is growth. That is why, even in sports, when there is heavy competition, there is cheating; use of drugs; all prompted by a desire to win. As per Veda's competition is a disease called matsaryam. Among the six evils of kamah, krodhah, lobhah, mohah, madah and matsaryah, matsaryah alone is the evil of competition. Veda's says competition should be replaced by cooperation. I should be happy when the other person also thrives. In competition the worst instincts come out including qualities such as cheating.

Kamdhuk in the shloka means kamadhenu or one who fulfills all your desires. Swamiji says the human intellect is our Kamadhenu. We can accomplish anything with it. So, when we hear Vyasacharya could see the war, sitting in the palace, few people would have thought television was even possible. Now we have TV, internet, computers and many more.

All this (artha, kama, dharma)became possible due to applied human intelligence. Moksha also is possible with an intelligent way of living or by Karma Yoga. Vedas are not against material progress. If you are committed only to material progress without spiritual progress then you will not grow. We are a combination of Atma and Anatma. What is spiritual growth? It is the discovery that I am Atma, the substratum of everything. Materially you cannot expand beyond a certain limit, intellectually too one cannot expand beyond a certain limit. Spiritually, however, the possibility for growth is unlimited. And such a balanced pursuit of material well being (dharma-artha- kama) as well as self-knowledge is called Karma Yogaḥ.

Shloka # 11:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.११ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.११ ॥

“By means of this sacrifice nourish the Devas; let the Devas nourish you. Mutually nourishing, may you win supreme good.”

Continuing his talk on Karma Yoga as Yagna, Sri Krishna says by following Karma Yoga Yagna, you are propitiating the gods of the creation; you are propitiating the devathas. Devathas are presiding over natural forces. Thus, Indira presides over rain and thunder and Varuna over the ocean. Nature is propitiated. Nature is not violated. In return Gods will bless us. Creation and we need not be inimical rather we should live in cooperation. While Science wants to conquer nature, Vedas want the world and I to live in harmony. So, propitiate Gods. Gods will bless you with rains.

In the language of the Shastra's, every tree is like the body of the Lord and every river is compared to the blood vessels of the Lord. So, when you are polluting the river, you are polluting the blood of the Lord. When you are blocking the river, you are blocking the blood vessels of the Lord. So the ultimate message is respect nature; live in harmony with

nature, live in ecological harmony; this is called Karma Yogaha.

Even Kalidasa in his composition mangalashtakam addresses nature. He addresses all the trees; offers prostrations to all the rivers; offers prostrations to all the plants; and says, I appreciate the role of everything and I take a vow that my life will be in harmony with nature

May you Propitiate Devathas. May you accomplish overall well being including dharma, artha, and kama. We have enough for everybody and nobody needs to starve, however, there is no proper distribution or sharing. People are obese in some countries. Overeating destroys you. There is enough for human need but not enough for human greed. Through Karma Yoga may you attain all Purushartha's.

With Best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Upadesa Saram, Class 5

Greetings All,

Shloka # 4: "Ritualistic worship, chanting and meditation are done with the body, voice and the mind; they excel each other in the ascending order."

Shloka # 5: "Worship of God in his eight fold form, understanding that He is so manifest, is proper worship of Him."

Recapping last class Swami Paramarthananda said Ramana Maharishi mentioned three types of Karmas that help inner

growth. He broadly classified them as Kayika, Vachika and Manasa Karmani.

In shloka # 5 Kayika karma is defined as offering puja to God as it purifies a person. Two types of puja are mentioned.

First type of puja is a direct and formal puja performed in a room or in a temple following all rules of puja, as per shastras. This puja may also include Nithya Sandhya Vanadanam.

Second type of puja is indirect puja where everything I do, all my actions, is an offering to god, as a puja.

After that, in shloka # 6, Ramana MahaRishi describes Vachika Karmani or oral activities. They include Parayanam and Japam.

Parayanam:

The Parayanam can be Vedic or Non-Vedic. They can even be in any language such as Tamil, Malayalam etc. They all should, however, be glorifying God.

Japa:

Japa is taking God's name, one name and repeating it. Japa is a great and efficacious spiritual Sadhana. Sri Krishna says among Yagyas, Japa Yagya is best. For Japa Yagya an initiation is not a requirement. One can consider Bhagavan as one's Guru; choose an Ishta Devata and then chant. The mantra chanted must be one for an Ishta Devata. Ishta Devata is one towards whom you are naturally inclined. For an Ishta Devata, one can consider, the family deity or the village deity as well. Choose a Nama and with God's grace start chanting it. Chanting 108 times is considered ideal. More than that is allowed as well.

Formal Japa must be performed sitting down and in a quiet place. Mantra Japa is essential for nourishing spiritual body even as food nourishes the physical body and love, the emotional body. Once I choose the Nama and the place of worship, I should then sit in a proper posture and invoke the

Ishta Devata deity. A photo or a figurine is helpful to mentally invoke an image of the deity. Then, one offers namsakara. If one knows a dhyana shloka praising the deity, this also helps with visualization. If a person has been initiated in several Devatas give importance to your Ishta Devata mantra. Do not discard the other initiated mantras. The other mantras need not be chanted 108 times. In general, the more you repeat a mantra, the greater its Shakti.

Before and after chanting a mantra such as "Om Namah Shivaya" for over 100,000 times over a period of say two months one should perform Purascharana. This mantra chanting is like depositing money in a bank, it is depositing spiritual power. You can draw on it whenever you need it. It may be helpful in a crisis. You can call upon the mantra and say, "With power of this mantra let this crisis pass". Such a Japa helps in the material world as well. Thus, mantra Japa is useful for spiritual as well as material well-being. Every Japa has a meaning. It is useful to know its meaning. Most of them mean surrender to God. Thus, Namah Shivaya means I surrender to lord Shiva. It also means, I accept whatever happens, wherever it happens (family, workplace etc.) as will of God. This is known as Sharanagathi. I think of the meaning of the Japa and then start chanting. Initially it can be loud to set the pace and pitch and later one can convert it to Manasa Japa.

During Japa there is no need to think of the deity. The mind can only do one thing at a time, deliberately. So, one has to decide if one wishes to concentrate on deity, mantra or mantra meaning. Concentration on mantra and its meaning are two different things. We have to choose one of them. In Japa, importance is given to sound of the Japa. It is not Artha Pradhana rather it is Shabda Pradhana. That is the reason a mantra cannot be translated into another language. The letters (or word) are most important. The silence between letters of mantra is important. In mantra japa one should concentrate on sound of the shabda alone. The silence between words of

mantra is also important. Mantra meditation is different from silence. In Japa, concentration is on sound of the shabda. Silence is an important Vedantic meditation. There is a meditation called Silent meditation. It falls under Nidhidhyasanam and can be performed after Vedantic study especially of Manduka Upanishad. In this meditation, one starts with the Nama and then focuses on the silence. From silence then one goes to Chaitanyam. In Mantra Japa there is no silence. One only focuses on the words or letters of the Japa. After performing the Japa one should perform namaskara. A Japa mala can also be used. Mantra Japa is very important in many religions including Christianity and Islam.

Shloka # 6:

“Uttering the sacred words, either in a loud or low tone is preferable to chants in praise of the Supreme. Mental contemplation is superior to both.”

As per Ramana Maharishi, Japa Mantra can be performed in three modes. They are:

1. Uchha Japa: Loud chanting, all can hear.
2. Manda Japa: Whispering chant, only I can hear.
3. Manasa Japa: Purely mental, even I can't hear.

Manasa Japa is considered most efficacious. They say it is ten times more effective than Manda Japa. Manda Japa is ten times more effective than Uchha Japa.

Manasa Japa is a form of meditation as well hence it is also known as Japayagnam. So, if anyone wants to practice meditation the best method is to chant the Nama mentally. This is the best method to get started on meditation. Other forms of meditation require understanding of scriptures. With this Vachika Karmani portion of shloka # 4 is over.

Shlokas 7 and 8 respectively deal with Manasa Karmani. They contribute to one's spiritual growth. Ramana Maharishi calls it Chintanam. Any thought associated with Ishwara is Manasa

karma. Even a flame can be thought of so long as it is associated with Ishwara as remover of darkness. One can meditate on nature such as on a river, a flower etc. Here God is considered the intelligence behind nature. Nature itself is Vishwa Roopam. Ishwara Chintanam can also include your children, considered a gift from god. Anything connected with God; thinking about it is Manasa Chintanam. Any activity associated with Saguna Ishwara is Manasa Chintanam. It is also called Upasana or mental spiritual activity. Puja is not Upasana as it a physical activity. Only mental activity qualifies as Upasana.

Shloka #7:

“ Constant, natural meditation like steady flow of ghee or a stream of water is better than intermittent contemplation.”

In this shloka following word meanings are important to note.

Sarala Chintanam: Flow of thought of God.

Viraltaha: Not obstructed by other worldly thoughts. The flow of divine thoughts is not obstructed by worldly thoughts.

Two examples of such meditation are provided in this shloka.

First is the analogy to flow of ghee. When it is poured, because of its thickness, it flows in one continuous flow (Dhara Pravaha).

Second is analogy of flow of a perennial river or stream.

In the first one, flow is artificially maintained by tilting (Aajya Dhara) and later it becomes a natural flow.

Swamiji says Ishwara Upasana is of two types.

1. Ishwara is different from me (Dvaita Upasanam). This is acceptable in beginning stages, however ultimately we need to know that there is no difference between Jivatma and Paramatma.
2. I imagine God as myself; it is a higher form of

meditation. Even in SandhyaVandanam this is prescribed. It is Advaitam and is called Abheda Upanam.

After Vedanta studies I will know I am God, however, at this time, I imagine I am God.

Nyasa means I visualize the deity as myself. This is Abheda Upanam. This is superior to Bheda Upanam. It prepares you for "Aham Brahma Asmi".

Swamiji says, one's Dasa Bhava (dualistic) should go . I should know "I am Jagat Karanam" or the Swamy.

Shloka # 8:

"The meditation "I am that" is regarded as more purifying than one based upon dualistic thought."

This is describing Abheda Upanam.

Here there is Abheda bhavana. Thinking Soham means I am Sakshat Ishwara. It is superior to Bheda or Dvaita Upanam. We must start from Dvaita and then move to Advaita.

(My note: Purascharana means preparatory rites, which is associated with mantra japas. Puras means first of all and ācaraṇa means undertaking, practicing and performing. Therefore puraścaraṇa means first preparatory rites. There are two types of puraścaraṇa rites. One is to make saṅkalpa to certain prescribed number of recitations followed by homa, tarpaṇa, mārjana and bhojana on a regular basis. The second one is to do mantra japa and complete certain rounds as prescribed mantra śāstra-s. Puraścaraṇa should be done only after obtaining specific permission from the Guru, who initiated the mantra. Guru should be worshiped before and after puraścaraṇa. It is important that Guru should be offered dakṣiṇa. If Guru is not available, dakṣiṇa should be offered to his wife or son.)

With best wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Upadesa Saram, Class 4

Greetings All,

Refreshing our memory of the last class Swami Paramarthananda discussed shlokas 3 and 4 respectively. In the first two verses of this book Ramana MahaRishi was refuting the claims of the Poorvamimsaka philosopher. Karma, secular or sacred, cannot give one Moksha. Karma is in fact a big roadblock to liberation. Karma has by its nature a snowballing effect. Thus, karma leads to more and more Karma. In this process a person becomes an extrovert. This quality in turn blocks one's path of Self Enquiry.

Shloka # 3: In this shloka, Swamiji says, even though Karma is an obstacle to Moksha still it can be converted to a medicine or Tonic for spiritual growth. This can be compared to the way snake venom can be converted into a snakebite antidote. Thus, Karma can promote inner growth. Karma converted to a Sadhana becomes Karma Yoga. Karma Yoga helps with spiritual growth.

How to perform this conversion? By dedicating all Karmas at the feet of the Lord. Thus, all our daily karmas from waking, brushing teeth, eating, working and sleeping all these activities can be performed as a puja. A prayer is performed to the Neem tree even as one obtains its twig for cleaning the teeth. Known as Danta Dhavanam (cleaning the teeth), here one prays to the Neem tree requesting it's blessing in removing all impurities from ones mind even as we brush our teeth. Several mantras are chanted before eating making it an offering to God. All these are known as Ishwara Arapana Bhavana. It is an offering to God with the prayer " Let this Karma turn out well".

Discussing Karma Phalam, Swamiji says, it is consequence of our Karmas that result in the stresses and strains of life. One does not know what the outcome of our Karmas will be. Nobody can guarantee a result. In Karma Yoga, one receives the consequences of one's actions, good or bad, as Ishwara Prasadam.

Karma is of two types. Sakama Karma and Nishkama Karma.

1. Sakama karma's are actions that are for one's material prosperity such as house, family, children etc. Its primary focus is material growth. It may provide some spiritual benefits as well, if performed as Karma Yoga.
2. Nishkama karma's are actions performed exclusively for inner growth. It may provide the benefit of some material growth as well.

Karma Yoga says both Sakama and Nishkama Karmas should be performed as an offering to God. Both will contribute to our inner growth, only in different proportions. It should be noted that while the results of Sakama Karma are usually visible through one's acquisitions such as a car, a house etc. Nishkama Karma's results of inner growth are often invisible.

Aim of Karma Yoga should be to increase the percentage of Nishkama Karma. Shastra's prescribe some Nishkama Karmas known as Pancha Maha Yagya's for one's inner growth.

A seeker has to set priorities in life. Should one go after material growth or inner growth? A choice of material growth means the focus of one's life is on external acceptance, social status, money etc. However, a life focused on inner growth will purify one's mind and reduce the Raga and Dvesha. Raga is attachment to external world. Dvesha is dislike of attachments to external world. Raga and Dvesha alone cause all the stresses in life. Thus:

Raga is due to powerful expectations. Raga can also be called extreme attachment.

Dvesha is due to the mindset that “ I expect this not to happen.” Dvesha can also be called extreme aversion. Both can cause stress in our life.

A karma Yogi makes Raga and Dvesha just preferences. It is an attitude of: If available, it is fine, if not, that is fine too. Swamji says an intolerant mind is an irritable mind. The word Anayas means relaxed mind. Vedanta requires a relaxed mind. Once Raga and Dvesha are reduced they will promote Moksha. One has to keep in mind Karma Yoga cannot give Moksha. Karma will, however, prepare the mind for Moksha.

As already said, material growth is tangible while inner growth is intangible. That is the reason one does not recognize inner growth. Peace and happiness depends on inner growth. Peace and happiness has no relation to external growth. Comfort is not the same as peace and happiness. A rich man sitting in the comfort of his bungalow may be in great turmoil, while the poor man after a day's hard work may be blissfully asleep in a field. Swamiji says, “ I can be comfortably unhappy”. Between the two the choice is very clear. Always choose the path of inner growth.

Shloka # 4: So, what are these karmas that provide inner growth? Ramana maharishi says they are:

1. **Puja:** Ishwara aradhana. Worship of God, daily. One chooses a deity, Ishta Devata, to worship. God in any form as a symbol is worshipped.
2. **Japa:** Nama Japa. Recite and repeat a particular name of God. Sri Krishna says in the Gita that Japa Yagya is an excellent form of worship.
3. **Chintanam:** Ishta Devata Dhyanam, Upasanam and or Meditation.

It should be noted that different organs of the body perform these three Karmas.

Puja: is Kaya Karyam or performed by the physical body and

physical actions.

Japa: is performed by Vak Karyam or organ of speech, the mouth.

Chintanam: is Manaha Karyam or performed by the mind.

Ramana MahaRishi now expands on each of these three karmas. Puja is now explained in shloka # 5 and Japa is explained in shloka # 6.

Shloka # 5:

Swamiji says there are two types of Pujas. He calls them grade 1 and grade 2 pujas respectively.

Grade 1 Puja: is a formal puja performed daily in front of an idol. In its simplest form this puja should consist of offering flowers, Naivedyam and Deeparadhana. There are many books on how to perform a puja. Puja is a required to be performed for spiritual growth. It is also a Raksha for us. The daily puja is a Kavacham. Negative forces are all around us but they will not touch one or one's family. Through Puja you are also setting an example for future generations. Swamiji says, if a father smokes, the child will pick it up. All daily Pujas should end with the prayer:

ॐ सर्वान् भवन्तु सुखिनाः

सर्वान् भवन्तु निरामयाः

ॐ सर्वान् भवन्तु सुखिनाः

ॐ सर्वान् भवन्तु निरामयाः

ॐ सर्वान् भवन्तु सुखिनाः

Om, Sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ

Sarve santu nirāmayāḥ

Sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu

Mā kashchit duḥkha bhāgbhavet

Om Shāntiḥ, Shāntiḥ, Shāntiḥ

May all be prosperous and happy

May all be free from illness

May all see what is spiritually uplifting

May no one suffer

Om peace, peace, peace

Swamji says this prayer has a cumulative effect.

Grade 1 Puja then expands to Grade 2 Puja. In Grade 1, God is worshipped as the idol in front of me. Here God is a small entity.

Grade 2 Puja:

In reality, God is very big. The entire universe is a manifestation of God. Sri Krishna elaborates on God in Gita chapters 7 through 11. In Chapter 11 he provides the Vishwaroopa Darshanam. In Vishnu Sahasranamam God is described as a person in some sholkas while in others he is described as the whole creation. The objective of the Grade 2 Puja is to look at the whole universe as the Ishta Devata or as AshtaMoorthishwara (God with Eight aspects). The eight aspects are: Pancha Bhoota (Earth or *Prithvi*; Water or *Jal* ; Fire or *Agni*; Air or *Vayu* and then Ether or *Akasha*), Surya (all stars), Chandra (all planets and their satellites-non self luminous) and All Jivas.

Grade 2 Puja is service to all living beings (human, animals, plants, and insentient beings). It is common to see a Tulsi Plant in a Hindu house. The Tulsi is worshipped for all plants. Cow is usually fed on behalf of all animals. One human being is supposed to be fed everyday on behalf of mankind. Swamiji says, before going to bed, one should ask oneself if I have contributed to the AshtaMoorthishwara today or not?

Ramana MahaRishi says Grade 2 puja is a more important puja. One should give more than one takes in. Chinmaya Mission has a logo that says: What I give is more than what I take.

How to perform this grade 2 Puja? Service to the world can be performed in many ways including through offering of time, money and consoling words. Even offering a prayer such as "Sarve bhavantu sukhinaha..." is very impactful.

Service performed with right Bhavana becomes a puja. In such a service arrogance does not rise, one does not seek recognition and there is no expectation of reciprocation. I am fulfilled in the service itself. My service itself becomes a puja. I am happy in the service. It is not my duty to seek acknowledgement. I have no right to ask for gratitude of others for my service.

Karma Eva Phalam. The Karma Yogi considers the performance of the Karma in itself as the Karma Phalam. Such a person enjoys himself as a Karta. He does not want to be a Bhokta.

Swamiji says such a person performs any work with complete devotion and reverence. He performs the work as a dedication to God. In doing so, he performs the work completely and thoroughly. He even performs more than is required. He is not concerned about the result of his work. He does not feel he is giving more and not receiving back in proportion. The performance of the work itself gives him the greatest joy and satisfaction. Such a person is a true Karma Yogi.

Thus from both pujas inner growth occurs.

In Shloka 6 Japa is explained.

Shloka # 6: There are two types of Japas. One is Vachika and other is Manasika.

Vachika is oral recitation. Manasika is mental recitation. Vachika can be in a loud or medium sounding voice. Manasika Japa is quiet without any sound.

Between the two Manasika Japa is more powerful. In this mode one also does not disturb others.

(My Note on Raga and Dvesha: Extreme attachments and extreme aversions are both obstacles on the yogi's path to freedom.

Attachments (raga) arise from our previous experiences of pleasure and happiness. Aversions (dvesha) emerge from previous experiences of pain and suffering. Over time, our sense of self-identity is largely formed by a long list of such likes and dislikes. We define ourselves as a collection of our previous emotional experiences.

We can become subconsciously driven to seek opportunities to repeat previous experiences of pleasure over and over. This is the seed of addiction. The object or person or experience that originally generated pleasure becomes the symbol or substitute for the pleasure itself. Greed and lust and addiction are all downfalls of excessive attachments.

We can also become subconsciously driven to avoid previously painful experiences. Our desire to protect ourselves limits our options in life and clouds our ability to see clearly. As in the case of attachments, we mistake the person or situation or object that caused us pain with the painful experience itself. We can go to great lengths to avoid situations that we are afraid of – whether they are physical, emotional, or spiritual. Fear and hatred are the downfalls of excessive aversion.)

Take away from this class:

Swamiji disclosed the great secret of Karma Yoga. Keep the following in mind as you perform any kind of work including at your office, home, social etc.

Swamiji says such a person performs any work:

- As a dedication to God
- With complete devotion and reverence.
- Completely and thoroughly
- Even more than is required
- Without any concern about the result of his work
- Without feeling he is giving more and not receiving back in proportion.
- In such a manner that the performance of the work itself gives him the greatest joy and satisfaction.
- In such a manner of puja, that arrogance does not rise,
- Without seeking recognition
- Without any expectation of reciprocation.
- As a Karma Yogi and considers the performance of the Karma in itself as the Karma Phalam.
- With the feeling, I am fulfilled in the service itself.
- With the feeling my service itself is a puja. I am happy in the service.
- Without seeking acknowledgement.
- Without asking for gratitude of others for my service.
- With a pleasant smile.
- With great enthusiasm.

Such a person is a true Karma Yogi.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 38

Greetings All,

Lord Krishna talked about the importance of karma up to the 7th verse; and now from the 8th verse onwards, up to 20th verse, the Lord is dealing with the important topic of karma yoga. Hence the chapter's name as well. It is a very important chapter of the Gita. In last class I pointed out Karma Yoga has two components to it.

Karma + Yoga= Karma Yoga.

Here Karma is proper action and Yoga is proper attitude.

Proper Action (karma)

Proper action is divided into three types of actions known as Satvic, Rajasic and Tamasic.

In **Satvic** actions there are more beneficiaries. I may also be benefited. It is Selfless action. I give more and take less. In a final accounting I should have given more and taken less. According to the material world, success is, when I can perform minimum action and get maximum money for it. As per Shastras it is the other way around. According to them I should do more and take less. This is what makes it Selfless.

Rajasic Karma is when the other beneficiaries are few. I am concerned about my immediate family and myself. In today's world people do not even care for their old parents anymore. All this makes it selfish.

Tamasic Karma is when I am benefitted and others are not. Others are actually harmed. It is harmful action.

Satvic Karma provides fast benefit. Rajasic provides slow benefit. Tamasic does not provide any benefit. Tamasic person actually falls down spiritually. He may amass wealth by

cheating and other such means, spiritually, however, he will move away from the shastras.

So a Karma Yogi should increase Satvic Karmas, reduce Rajasic Karma and avoid Tamasic Karmas. Satvic Karmas are defined in Shastra itself as Pancha Maha Yagya's. They **are Proper actions**. They are:

- Deva Yagya: My contribution to Devas.
- Pitra Yagya: My contribution to Forefathers.
- Bramha Yagya: My contribution to scriptures and Guru Parampara.
- Manushya Yagya: My contribution to human beings.
- Bhuta Yagya: My contribution to environment, animals, plants etc.

In Hinduism all plants and animals are worshipped. They are all part of Pancha Maha Yagya. One should lead such a life of contribution. This is proper action.

Proper Attitude (Yoga)

The **second part is proper attitude**. Even the best action will not give benefit if I look down upon the action. (In Tamil :Kadane ne panren or I will do it like repaying a debt, reluctantly). Our attitude must be that every action must be an offering to God. It is called Ishwara Arpana Budhi. This applies to performance of Satvic as well as Rajasic Karmas. Even Rajasic karma performed humbly is uplifting. Thus, we have the saying Daridra narayan. I am not giving to that Daridra but to Daridra Narayan. Similarly we have the expression Nara seva is Narayana seva and Manava seva is Madhava seva.

Even food should be offered to God first and then taken. This is all done to bring about an attitudinal change called Bhavana. Even the mundane task of cleaning a desk, do it as an offering to God. Once I make it an offering to God, I will do it wholeheartedly because I will not do anything inferior for

God. If you do it in this manner, you will do the task well and wholeheartedly, as a Karta.

Whatever I do will produce a consequence. Even if you are doing selfless service in society people will criticize. People will criticize even good work. Whatever be the consequences have a Prasada Budhi; take the good and the bad as a gift from God. This attitude is called Yoga.

With this proper attitude, when I perform every action as an offering to God, I will not worry if it is pleasant or unpleasant. All our actions may not be that pleasant. Swamiji says we do perform unpleasant actions. If I have to take care of my old parent who is not that well, it is a duty. But it may not be pleasant, as it will involve money and inconvenience. Some such person may even pray for the speedy demise of that parent.

For many people going to office is an unpleasant task. Similarly, a housewife also has complaints. Cooking three times, year round, with no entertainment, she may want to dine out, while he may not want to. Arjuna too is faced with an unpleasant task of fighting his own Kith and Kin.

When every action is an offering to God, there is pleasantness in the work. One does not grumble about the work. A karma Yogi works with great enthusiasm. Chinmayananda used to say: "Keep smiling at all times".

Prasada Budhi: Whatever the fruits, I accept it with complete grace, without any complaints. Whenever I don't get the expected result we tend to think of God as unjust. Whatever God gives is a just result of Prarabdha Karma. We should keep in mind that results often come from previous lives as well. When a local cricket umpire gives his decision it is accepted without question. If so, why can't you accept the decision of the universal umpire? This includes the decision of death as well. Whatever God gives, accept it. **When I am not able to**

accept it, pray to God to give me the strength to be able to accept it. Budhi in this shloka means attitude.

This attitude gives Samatvam or a balanced mind brought about by a Prasada Budhi.

What is the benefit of Karma Yoga? The main benefit is very fast spiritual progress. This will be evident in self-knowledge. I will easily grasp self-knowledge. It may even provide some material benefit as a bye-product.

Shloka # 8:

कर्मण्येवाङ्गिरसो श्रद्धावाक्यं कुरुष्वहं ॥
कर्मणो भवति श्रेयसो भवति श्रेयसो ॥३.८॥

“Always do prescribed work; work is superior to inaction. Indeed, even life in the body is impossible without working.”

Action is always superior to inaction. In inaction mind is idle and it becomes the devils workshop. Only a Gyani can remain idle. Citing example of two quiet people who were in an ashram, one felt the ashram was quiet. The other felt it was a like cremation ground. Both people experience quietude differently.

If you resort to inaction, living in the world will be very difficult. Even if you have everything you need, you will still have to act to maintain your body. So, Arjuna, perform action. Perform the actions prescribed in the scriptures. The Pancha Maha Yagya’s prescribed are compulsory. You have to contribute to society. It can be through teaching, giving food, giving your time and even smiling at people. Somebody said, “People come from miles to get a smile”.

The Pancha Maha Yagya’s can be seen from different angles. It is a commandment from Lord. It is like following a traffic rule. Mature people will follow the law, as it is good for society. Citing JFK “ Don’t ask what your country can do for

you, ask what can you do for your country"? Immature person may not follow the law, hence this commandment. If you don't perform the Karmas or omitting your duties you will get special Papam called Prathyavaya Papam and will fall down spiritually. Hence, the language of threat used, by scriptures.

Shloka # 9:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.९ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.९ ॥

“ This world is bound by works other than those done as sacrifice. O son of Kunti. Free from attachment, do work as sacrifice.”

In previous shloka Sri Krishna said Karma Yoga has to be followed. New research shows fear must not be used with a child. It crimps the mind of the child. In USA a child cannot be beaten. Corporal punishment is considered very bad. It must be used very sparingly. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, You need not take my commandment in previous shloka as Ishwara Agya (command). I used it for immature persons only. So, Karma Yoga should be converted to Ishwara Yagya or worship of the Lord.

From Ishwara Agya it becomes Ishwara Yagya. In this context the following saying comes to mind, “We have enough for man's need but we do not have enough for man's greed.”

So, Karma Yoga is for worship of the Lord. Normally a puja is performed in a short time. Sri Krishna says, you may perform the short puja in the beginning, but ultimately the real puja is to convert your very life into a puja. Let my very living become an offering to you.

Shankara says in Soundarya Lahiri: Oh! Mother, wherever I go, take it as pradakshanam. So also, whatever you are eating, make it an offering to God.

What is Karma Yoga? They say, "Work is worship". I can do worship during puja at home. How can I worship in my office? In Hinduism the whole world is a manifestation of God. Everything is God. You can worship him anywhere.

When work is performed with this attitude our actions will not be binding. There will be no bondage. This worship will lead to liberation.

Why is work the cause of bondage? Our actions create tensions. We wonder whether it will work properly. It results in a state of constant anxiety. We worry if the child will get admission or not? Will I be able to go to America or not? Will I win the contract or not. Every action results in stress.

That is the reason there are so many stress management programs offered today.

By the age of 40 many executives have psychosomatic diseases caused by stress. Some have high blood pressure, some have diabetes and some have high Cholesterol.

Although he has a high salary he cannot even enjoy good food. He cannot take salty food; he cannot eat sweets; he cannot eat sour things because of ulcer; and so on and on. What is the point of all this money if a man cannot enjoy the simple things of life, asks Swamiji.

He says, a man can work and enjoy his life under only one condition. By converting your life into worship and telling yourself that whatever comes is prasada. Only by leading a life of converting work to worship can we lead a stress free work life.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Is Life Predetermined?

Many events of our life are out of our control and most of our life appears to be predetermined. It appears that we may be able to influence only a small portion of our life. Our birth is destined. Our death is destined. And most of our life appears destined. Then, is it correct to say that our life is destined and we can do nothing to change our destiny?

I had the privilege of meeting the Swami Paramarthananda in August 2016 and at that time I presented this question to him.

Before I present the answer from the Swamiji, some discussions regarding the laws of karma. Karmas can be classified, based on their occurrence, into three types:

1. **Sanjitha Karma:** Sanjitha karma is the sum total of all karma accumulated from our previous jenmas (lives). Sanjitha karmas will mature over many jenmas (births/lives).
2. **Agami Karma:** Agami Karmas are generated by our actions in this life. Some agami karma will mature in this life and some will become sanjitha karma for maturity in later lives.
3. **Prarabtha Karma:** Prarabtha karma is the karma maturing or fructifying in this life. Maturing karma could be either from this life or from previous lives.

Some of the laws of karma:

1. Some of the prarabtha karma are from this life and others are from previous lives. Maturity or fructifications of Karmas is not linear. This is similar to seeds of plants – some seeds sprout quickly while others take longer.
2. Karma includes both punyam (positive karmas) and pavam (negative karmas). Punyams are the result of our dharmic actions and pavams are the result of our adharmic actions.
3. While I do not control what has happened in my prior lives (sanjitha karma) or what is happening in this life (prarabtha karma), I can control how I react to my current situation (agami karma). A dharmic and purposeful life can increase punyam or decrease pavam.
4. All karmas – sanjitha, prarabtha and agami karmas- are the results of my actions in this life and previous lives. I did not have control over any and all of my actions of my previous lives. I do have control over any and all of my actions in this life. I and I alone created all of my karmas. While my adharmic choices in the past have resulted in current unfavorable situations, I should make dharmic choices here and now. I can't change the choices I have made in the past, but I do have the free will to make the correct choices now.
5. When prarabtha karma for this life is exhausted, the body falls.
6. When sanjitha karma is exhausted, we get moksha or liberated.

Swamiji stated that some of the prarabtha karma are parapalam and some are dhurpalam, that is they are weak and controllable or strong and non controllable. However, we do not know which ones we can control and which ones we can not control. So we must always exercise our free will and make

dharmic choices. We may also be able to reduce the impact of the controllable prarabtha karma by doing prayachitham (remedial measures). Prayachithams are of two types:

1. Lowkika prayachitham: These are worldly activities we can perform. Example of a lowkika prayachitham is going to a doctor when getting ill.
2. Sasthrika prayachitham: These are the rituals mentioned in scriptures. If these rituals are performed as described in the scriptures, the impact of prarabtha karma can be reduced or eliminated.

When we face any adverse situation we should always do our dharmic duty and take proper prayachitham – either lowkika prayachitham or sasthrika prayachitham. For example, when one gets seriously ill, one should seek the treatment from a doctor. Refusing to follow medical advice and accepting the medical condition as our destiny is fatalism. Our scriptures do not allow fatalism and fatalism is fundamentally against the duties of a human being. Bagawan Krishna has emphasized this many times in Bagawat Geeta.

In conclusion, we always have free will and that free will gives us control over Agami Karma. A dharmic life can reduce agami karma pavam. We can also do some prayaschitham for prarabtha Karma to mitigate a negative phalam.

Notes:

- This post is based on my meeting with Swamiji in August 2016 as well many of his classes, specifically his classes in Tatva Bodha and his class number 148 – Chapter 10, Verse 33 of Bagawat Gita. I also recommend the readers to listen to those classes and get their own perspective (this post is from my perspective).
- I thank Ram Ramaswamy for framing this question in logical way. Many parts of this post are borrowed from his original question, which is reproduced below:

To exhaust Prarabhdha karma one gets rebirth. This is destiny. While living, one experiences prarabhdha karma phalam, this too is destiny. Once Prarabhdha Karma is exhausted for this lifetime, the body falls. This is also destiny.

Agami Karma's are new karmas generated by our actions in this lifetime. Some Agami Karma phalam will occur in this lifetime itself. Others will become Sanchitha Karma that will come back in a later life.

We do have some control on Agami Karma or so it appears. A purposeful life can reduce agami karma. We can also do some Prayaschitham for Prarabhdha Karma as well to mitigate a negative phalam.

Looks like there is an only a small portion that we can influence. Most of our life appears destined. Our birth is destined. Our death is destined. Some parts of our life are also destined; we just do not know which part.

Is it then correct to say that based upon the part (Small) we do not control, our life is not destined? Even Ramana Maharishi told his mother: What has to happen will happen. What should not happen will not happen, however much we try. Is this not destiny?

Bagawat Geeta, Class 37

Greetings All,
Shloka # 6:

कर्मणो यमकर्माणाम् सुखादयः प्रसूयते ।
कर्मणो यमकर्माणाम् सुखादयः प्रसूयते ।
कर्मणो यमकर्माणाम् सुखादयः प्रसूयते । 3.6

“ Controlling the organs of action, he who has his mind dwelling on their objects has a confounded mind; he is said to be a hypocrite.”

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramathananda recapped last week's class. In this shloka Sri Krishna is clarifying Arjuna's doubts about Gyana Yoga and Karma Yoga. He says there is no choice between the two. Everybody has to go through karma yoga first which is the only means of purifying the mind and thereafter everyone has to go through gyana yoga, which is the only means of liberation. Gyana yoga means a study of the scriptures under the guidance of a guru. Guru Shashtra Upadesha Sravanam is called Gyana yoga and everyone has to go through it.

Even though there is no choice between these two sadhanas, there is a choice in one's lifestyle. The choice is between Grihastashrama and Sanyasashrama. While there is no choice between these two sadhanas, Sri Krishna says, there is a choice with regard to the lifestyle that a person chooses. However, there is no uniform answer to this as it depends upon the type of seeker. Sri Krishna, however, observes that Sanyasashrama is a more difficult one to follow. Sanyasa is not for a majority of the people; it suits only a small minority. It is better to continue in Grihastashrama throughout or after Grihastashrama take to Sanyasa. He recommends Grihastashrama to Arjuna as well. He tells him activity is safer than withdrawal.

Sri Krishna gave three reasons in support of Karma Yoga (or not withdrawing from life) in shlokas 4, 5 and 6 respectively. They are:

1. By avoiding Karma, one cannot get peace of mind. If I have no action, I may think I will have peace of mind, however, inaction does not give you peace of mind.
2. Total Inaction is impossible. Based upon one's Gunas, one will perform action. Try staying at an Ashram for a

week.

Swamiji then told the story of a Sanyasi in a temple.

In a temple, there was a Sanyasi sitting; without doing anything and he got daily Prasadam from the temple. A new officer took over the administration. He wanted to bring about changes and improvements. He asked how many people got the Prasadam. He got a list of names and at the end of the list was named the "Quiet Swamiji." If he did not do anything, why should the Quiet Swamiji get prasadam, was his question? The people in the temple told the officer the Swamiji was a respected

person and he should at least talk to him. He asked the Quiet Swamiji why he should get Prasadam for doing nothing. The Quiet Swamiji told him: My doing nothing is very good for the society. He said sitting quiet was not very easy and requested the officer to try it at least for a week. The officer thought it would be very easy and agreed. Once he sat with the Quiet Swamiji for some time, he got restless. After a few hours of quiet time he became extremely restless and gave up. He told the Pujari to give the Quiet Swamiji a double quota of Prasadam daily. Giving up action is not easy. Our gunas and svabhava will pressurize us to act.

3) Not only will action not result in moksha but it can also become a risky proposition. When there are no goals or plans in mind, the mind does not have anything to do, especially since he does not have Gyanam. An idle mind is ideal for seeking many types of enjoyments. In one's mind and imagination too one can enjoy a lot. He then violates Sanyasa and the suppressed emotions erupt. Such a person, wearing an ochre robe, declares himself to be a saintly person to the world, while in reality he is caught up in his sense world. This is called "Mithyachara", meaning what I am thinking, the society does not know. Such a person is also called a "Vimudatma" or a hypocrite. So, Arjuna, considering that inaction is dangerous, lead an active life.

Shloka # 7:

Controlling the sense organs with the mind, he who commences
the Yoga of action with the organs of action, unattached, is
held to excel, O Arjuna.

“Controlling the sense organs with the mind, he who commences
the Yoga of action with the organs of action, unattached, is
held to excel, O Arjuna.”

What is an ideal Ashrama? As per Sri Krishna, it is
Grihasthashrama, where one can fulfill Artha, Kama as well as
perform Service to society. Even a wife is called saha dharma
charani, which means one gets married not primarily for
fulfilling the Artha Kama desires, but for primarily
fulfilling my service to the society. In this process I
also fulfill my personal desires in a legitimate manner. And
therefore, Sri Krishna says, it is better for one to remain in
society.

What is an ideal life to lead? As a Grihastha, as an active
person in society, let him regulate his sense organs first and
then fulfill his artha & kama. Artha means security, money,
possessions, house, status etc. name, fame all related to
security while and Kama means entertainment. Shastras give
freedom to fulfill the Artha & Kama desire only in
Grihasthasrama and not in Sanyasasrama. Sanyasa is exclusively
meant for fulfilling moksha desire only. Therefore Grihastha
should fulfill his desires by regulating the sense organs and
without violating dharma and morality.

Citing example of pickle, sometimes we forget that pickle is
only a side dish and indulge in it as if it were the main
dish. So too, in such a life, Dharma should dominate and not
Artha and Kama. Giving must be more than receiving. This is a
Dharmic Purusha. Sensory excesses should be controlled by a
discriminating mind. It does not mean suppression. Shastras
are against suppression. Citing example of
a river, stopping the flow of a river will not help, it will

Upanishads, all talk about Karma Yoga. In general karma Yoga can be defined as:

Karma +Yoga=Karma Yoga

Karma here means proper action.

Yoga here means proper attitude towards the action and the result of the action, both respectively.

What is proper action? Actions are of three types. They are Satvic, Tamasic and Rajasic.

Satvic: action is one in which more numbers of people get the benefit. It can include me as well. Example would be a businessman who gets profits but shares it with society. This is also called Nishkama Karma or Self less service.

Rajasic: action is one where beneficiaries are minimum. It is primarily focused on my near family and me.

Tamasic: action is one that is harmful. I hurt others for my benefit. I do not consider others. In India, a blaring mike is often encountered where there is no consideration of the people around. Any action that disturbs is Tamasic.

Karma Yoga should be primarily Satvic and Nishkama Karma. Shastras prescribe some of these Nishkama Karmas. They are known as Pancha Maha Yagna's. Performing the Pancha Maha Yagna makes our spiritual progress very fast. They purify one's mind. They reduce one's Raga, Dvesha, Kama and Krodha. The Pancha Maha Yagna's are:

1. Deva Puja: Life should consist of religious activity or worship. This may depend upon your Jathi, Varna etc. Sandhyavandanam, Rama Nama Japam all fall into this category. This is dedicating exclusive time for Devas. It is treating Devas as guests. It can also be called prayer time.
2. Pithru Puja: Worship of forefathers. Scriptures give

great importance to this puja. Some time should be allocated for this. The ancestor worship can be as per family tradition.

3. Rishi or Brahma Yagna: This is the worship of scriptures. We have a glorious tradition. We have to do something to preserve it and propagate it. Daily Parayanam or study of scripture such as Ramayanam falls under this yagna. Our Gita class is a part of Brahma Yagna. We are also responsible for handing over these teachings to posterity. We should share it with children through daily study. There are ritualistic ways of performing Brahma Yagna as well. In this process we also remember the Rishi Parampara (all Rishi's) who have brought down to this day the knowledge of our scriptures for our benefit.
4. Manushya Yagna: All types of social services fall under this Yagna. Feeding the poor, giving time to orphanages, giving time to old age homes, schools, etc., all fall under this Yagna. Feeding hungry is the primary Manushya Yagna also called Anna Danam.
5. Bhoota Yagna: This is protection of the environment and all other beings such as animals, plants, the water, air and the earth. This is the reason our scriptures show the animals as Vahanas of Devas. The story of Shakunthala makes the message clearer. Shakuntala, when she had to leave the ashrama of Rishi Kanva, she takes leave of all people, the plants, and even the deer. One particular deer was very dear to her. It pulled her dress, not allowing her to leave. Even the trees bowed their head down. Shakuntala had won the hearts of all by her service.

All these five mahayagnas are compulsory. One who leads such a life is a very blessed person.

Take away from this class:

Please consider incorporating Pancha Maha Yagna practices in your daily life. Swamiji says they will transform you spiritually.

With Best wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Upadesa Saram, Class 3

Greetings to all,

Shloka # 1:

“The results of action flow according to the law of the Creator. Is Karma, action, God? It is insentient.”

Continuing his teaching of Upadesha Saram Swami Paramarthananada refreshed our memory about the last class. He said this text is the essence of the teaching of Lord Shiva and it begins with a negation of the ritualistic practices that were the core belief of the Poorvamimasakas.

In Shlokas # 1 and # 2 Ramana Maharishi addresses this negation. The Poorvamimasakas have a misconception regarding Ishwara and Karma. In the first shloka misconception about Ishwara is negated. In the second shloka the misconception about Karma is negated as well.

In the first shloka Ramana MahaRishi points out to the existence of Ishwara. Vedapramanam and logic supports this. Creation is not an accident. It confirms: Ishwara Asthi.

In second shloka Ramana MahaRishi confirms that it is Ishwara alone who brings out the world as well as the Vedas for the world. In several places Jagat Karta Ishwara is mentioned. He is the giver of Vedas. Negating the proposition of

Poorvamimasakas that the world is eternal and that God need not create it, Ramana MahaRishi says both the world and Vedas were brought by God.

Saying that Karma does not produce Phalam also negates their third misconception. Even the laws of Creation cannot produce Phalam. It requires a discriminating person to produce the Phalam. Karma cannot do it nor can the various laws of the universe. Both are Jadam's. Here, Ishwara alone gives the Phalam, keeping the Karma of the person in mind.

Shloka # 2:

“ The fruits of action are transient. Action causes one to fall into the ocean of further action. It obstructs the goal”.

Here Ramana MahaRishi refutes the misconception of the Poorvamimasakas regarding Karma. Ramana MahaRishi gives us three important lessons in this regard. They are:

1. Karma cannot give us liberation. All types of Karmas including Service, devotional, meditational and ritualistic will not produce Moksha.
2. On the other hand Karma is an obstacle to Moksha.
3. Not only is Karma an obstacle, it is actually a cause of bondage as well.

Explaining each lesson further:

1. The misconception that Karma can give is liberation:
 1. The Karma Phalam from all Karmas such as Service, devotional, meditational and ritualistic are finite in nature or Anithya whereas Moksha is defined as infinite or Nithyaha. Vedas reveal this as well. They say all Karma Phalam's are anithyam. Both Mundako Upanishad and Gita say the same.
 2. Logic also reveals it. Action and Reaction are always equal and proportional. Karma always occurs in the finite as place, time and people are known.

So, results too have to be finite. Sruthi reveals it as also our own experiences. Therefore Karma Phalam is Anithyam.

2. Karma cannot give us Moksha; it is actually an obstruction: Karma makes a person extrovert. Caught in activity, it leads to more activity. Karma does not give us time for introspection. Only in introspection can we think of Moksha, Gyanam, Vedanta Sravnam etc. A life without leisure does not permit this Self Enquiry. Therefore, Karma is an obstacle to Self Enquiry. In Karma, the mind becomes restless and shallow.
3. Karma cannot give us Moksha, it is actually an obstruction and it is a source of greater bondage.

In Karma one gets more and more enmeshed in Samsara. Karma leads to more Karma. It multiplies itself. Even if you want to get out of it, you cannot. It becomes like a whirlpool, in an ocean.

As we grow older Shastras say we should withdraw from Karma to Vanaprastha. However, in reality, we are not able to so.

Thus, rebutting the misconception of Poorvamimasakas, Ramana MahaRishi say's Karma cannot give us Moksha.

Shloka # 3:

“ Action dedicated to God and done without desire purifies the mind.

It aids liberation.”

If Karma is so poisonous, can we renounce it? Shastras say we cannot

renounce it. The reasons are:

1. Our organs are made to be active. Gita chapter 3 also addresses it.
2. All human beings are born with countless desires for wealth, possessions and entertainment. We also tend to amass for our children and grandchildren. This creates

Kama within us that in turn beget more and more Karma. Kama (desire) cannot be removed due to our Avidya or Self Ignorance. We do not have a choice. I would like to give up activity, but cannot. In such situations, Vedas come to help us. Vedas say even if Karma is a poison, it can be used in such a manner as to extract medicine from it. Citing example of snake venom, it is used to extract medicine for snakebite. Thus, even a poison becomes useful.

Even the painful experiences of our lives can be helpful if we know what to extract from them. Properly handled Karma is called Karma Yoga. This converts the poison into medicine. How to convert Karma into Karma Yoga? Ramana Maharishi says, convert all Karmas into a Puja.

Ramana MahaRishi is not saying anything new. Gita Chapter 3 also explains the process involved. Ishavasa Upanishad also addresses it.

Vedas say there are two types of Karmas. One is Sakama Karma and other is Nishkama Karma. What is the difference between the two?

Sakama Karma is materialistic Karma that produces primarily worldly benefits. These Karmas too, if offered as an offering to God, become spiritual benefits. Their spiritual benefit is however relatively small. Nevertheless, they too purify one's mind.

Nishkama Karma produces primarily spiritual benefits. These spiritual benefits are often intangible and invisible. It also produces material benefits but only as a byproduct. Nishkama Karma gets us closer to Moksha.

Both Karmas (Sakama and NishKama) must be performed as an offering to God.

Ramana Maharishi has not defined what are Sakama Karma's, as

we all know them very well.

What are the NishKama Karmas? The Panch MahaYagna's are Nishkama Karmas. Swamiji will describe them in detail later.

Before starting any Karma, God is always to be remembered. One should strive to perform more and more NishKama Karmas and less and less of Sakama Karmas.

When inner growth is your primary goal, you are then considered a seeker.

When material Growth is your primary goal, even if you a religious person, you are not yet a seeker.

When I am obsessed with what I have, I am a materialistic person. However, when I am obsessed with what I want to be, I am a Karma Yogi. Such a Karma Yogi is a promoter of Moksha.

Swamiji reminded us that Ramana MahaRishi's teaching are very concise and as such should be studied with other scriptures.

Shloka # 4:

“Ritualistic worship, chanting, and meditation are done with the body, voice and the mind; they excel each other in the ascending order.”

What are the NishKama Karmas? Ramana MahaRishi describes them at three levels:

1. Kayika Karma: Here the physical activity is the dominant, while verbal and mental are also present. Many rituals require physical activity. Puja is one such activity. All NishKama Puja performed without seeking materialistic benefit is considered the best. Regular Puja is very important for a seeker. Many people who study Vedanta do not perform Puja. Without Puja transformation does not take place. Many People who are seeking “Who am I” often forget the Puja. They say Ramana MahaRishi never did Puja. They seem to forget

that he was at a different level from most of them. Puja is the best method of Kayika Karma.

2. Vachika Karma: is Japa offered to God.

3. Manas Karma: Is Ishwara Dhyanam. With Best Wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 36

Shloka # 3:

“The blessed Lord Said:

O Sinless One! Two kinds of disciplines in this world were set forth by Me of yore-for Samkhyas the disciple of knowledge , and for the Yogins, that of works.”

Recapping shloka # 3, Swami Parmarthananda, said, after listening to teachings in chapter 2, Arjuna now has questions about the roles Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. He thinks there is a choice between the two. This is a mistake. Sri Krishna at no point presented them as optional. All scriptures agree that Gyanam alone can liberate. So there is no choice. All have to go through Gyanam. Before going to Gyanam one has to be qualified for it. This can be done through Karma Yoga. Everybody has to prepare their mind and only then can they go to Gyana Yoga. So there is no choice, both are essential. One prepares the mind and the other removes ignorance. Arjuna did not understand this, hence his question. Sri Krishna wanted Arjuna to fully understand this requirement of scriptures. Here Sri Krishna introduces the concepts of Sadhana and Life style (also called Nishta). Everybody requires both of them. The lifestyles indicated are:

- 1) Pravriti Marga and
- 2) Nivritimarga

Pravrithi marga is Grihastashrama and Nivrithi marga is Sanyasa or Gyanashrama.

Swamiji says there are three possible lifestyles for human beings. They are:

1. Grihasthashrama followed by Sanyasashrama. Karma , such as money, people etc. One uses these to lead an active life of service and in this process removes the sharp edges of mind. It removes the sharp edges of the personality like kamaḥ, krodhaḥ, lobhaḥ, mohāḥ, etc. This is just like a knife sharpened by a rough surface. After Grihastashrama one goes to Sanyasashrama. This stage is to acquire knowledge. Here the person is free of responsibilities. He should not possess anything. Yoga (acquisition) and Kshema (preservation) are both, burdens. He has to shave his head or grow his hair. Grihastha's duties are prescribed, as are different ones for a Sanyasi. For a grihastha, parayaṇam is rudram, chamakam, sukthani, etc.; for a sanyasi daily parayaṇam is upaniṣhad, brahma sutras, bhaṣyam, etc. Even his (Sanyasi's) daily karmas are designed for the pursuit of Gyana yoga; and therefore Gyanam does not require any expenditure. However, Karma does require expenditure. This life style is considered the ideal one.
2. Grihasthashrama followed by a continuation in Grihasthashrama. One performs Karma yoga and then gradually moves to Gyana yoga, all within Grihasthashrama. This life style is a little more difficult but can be managed. In this life style, the Gyanam stage can occasionally be disturbed because of the life of a grihastha. This is just like a knife can occasionally be a screwdriver and a screwdriver too can occasionally be used for cutting. So this life style is strictly Grihasthashrama only.
3. In this third life style one skips Grihasthashrama to Sanyasa. Here the hope of purifying the mind is

difficult. Here too one can manage with some difficulty. Here one performs Karma through Japas and service to his Guru. This is strictly Sanyasashrama. It is least favored of all life styles.

The first lifestyle is best and second one is also acceptable. So Arjuna, continue in the Grihasthashrama.

Clarification of some words used in the shloka 3:

Pura means- through the vedas, from past. It is said The Lord created Brahma. The Lord created the world and brought out Brahma from his navel, and at the same time gave the Vedic teaching as well. And that is reason Brahmaji has four heads representing the four Vedas.

Anadh: means the pure one or Arjuna.

Samkhya: means Sanyasi

So pure minded Arjuna, these two lifestyles I have introduced among the human beings; the animals do not have four ashramas; they do not have any problem. Only the human beings have these two main ashramas, Grihastha and Sanyasa.

Explaining further, a Sanyasi is supposed to remove his sacred thread and give up Gayathri mantra. He now goes to Omkara Mantra. Swamiji explained the Om (A U M) is a shortened version of the Gayathri mantra.

Gayathri has got three lines; each line is simplified into one letter. Tatsavithurvarenyam is simplified into A; bhargodevasya dhimahi is simplified into U, dhiyo yona prachodayat is simplified into uM; A plus U plus uM is AUM or OM.

A Sanyasi should not worry about earning. He was to be dedicated to seeking knowledge and well being of society. In turn, society was supposed to provide for him.

Nivrithi: Pursuit of knowledge.

Yoginaha: means extroverted people not committed to knowledge.

Karma Yoga and Sadhanas such as Pancha Maha Yagna govern such active people.

Swamiji will explain Pancha Maha Yagna in a future class.

Shloka # 4:

“Man does not achieve freedom from works by abstention from them. None attains perfection through the mere renunciation of works, either.”

Whatever life style one adopts one has to go through Karma Yoga and then study the scriptures in a systematic manner under a Guru.

In this shloka Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, you should not avoid action. He gives three reasons for this:

Reason # 1: By avoiding or giving up action, you cannot get Moksha. You cannot move away from duties. Running away from problems does not solve it. Our true problem is internal, although we think it lies outside us.

In this Shloka Naishkaryam and Sidhi both mean Moksha.

In scriptures there are statements that say that by giving up Karma one can get liberation. Sri Krishna clarifies that wherever it says renouncing Karma will get liberation, it should also state that Gyanam should support Karma. Sanyasa works only when it is backed by scriptural studies.

Explaining what scriptural studies mean, Swamiji said, in his ashrama when they were studying the bhasyam, some of the Shankaracharya's bhashya was so deep, it took 15 continuous days of studies to complete one mantra.

By mere renunciation, wearing an Ochre robe, one cannot get Moksha. Sanyasa does not guarantee Moksha.

Shloka # 5:

“None indeed , even for a moment , remains without doing work. All, being dependent, are made to work by the constituents of Prakrti.”

Reason #2: Giving his second reason for not giving up action, Sri Krishna says, it is impossible to give up action. Everybody will be forced to perform some action based upon his nature. A man cannot give up physical action and even if one does so, your mind will become active. This is because everyone’s prakrithi causes him or her to act. Maya has three Gunas that pervade creation. The ornament will reflect the type of gold it is made up of. Thus, we have gold with more silver, lead and copper that reflects in the ornament. Traits of Karanam (cause) will be there in the effect as well. Parents are evident in their children. The three Gunas, Satva, Rajas and Tamas are present in different proportions in each one of us. The human being is helpless. The most you can do is channelize these energies. People try to stop thought in meditation; Swamiji says this is a mistake. Vedic meditation is more into directing your mind rather than stopping thought. Any type of meditation that we prescribe involves the appropriate thought. And therefore Sri Krishna says that if you try to give up your action, wherever you go, you will start fresh action. If you become a sanyasi and go to Rishikesh and if you are a rajasic person, your leadership qualities will exert and you will form a sanyasi association. So, even if you renounce action, you will still find action. So, Arjuna, please do what you have to.

Shloka # 6:

“Controlling the organs of action, he who lets his mind dwell on their objects has a confounded mind; he is said to be a hypocrite.”

Reason # 3: The third argument offered by Sri Krishna is that giving up action is very risky and can be counter productive. One can go to Vedanta only after purifying worldly desires.

Everybody has got certain natural needs; so they talk about the hierarchy of needs; first the need is for survival; then food and clothing; and thereafter the need is for entertainment; thereafter the need is to be wanted; I want to love someone and I want to be loved by someone. Human mind has different levels of needs including needs for self-respect, doing something in the society, so that the society will remember me.

A person has to go through them and accomplish some self-respect, as they say, to let the ego ripen.

The ego has to ripen before it falls. This can happen only in society and through family life. Sanyasa Marga is a one-way traffic. A grihastha can become a sanyasi; but a sanyasi cannot become a grihastha. That is why Dayananda Swamiji used to tell us; when he went to Uttarakashi, he met many sadhus, sanyasis and he was talking with

them. During discussions, Swamiji said: I want to take sanyasa. Many of those sanyasis told him: Do not take that decision. One of them said: You know, somehow after a fight with my wife, I left and took up sanyasa, because one day my early morning coffee was delayed. And now here, on the first day, Himalayas and Ganges were wonderful and fine and I thought this is the best place to stay for life; but on second day, third day, fourth day, it was the same Ganga, same Himalayas, and

if you ask for bhikṣha, the bhikṣha would also be the same; unlike in my house, where it was different every day. Here, you will have have no choice.

A Grihastha cannot become a Brahmachari. If ego has not matured it can miss a lot. If mind is not ready for Sanyasa, it can misfire. It can become a life of Mithyachara. Pressure mounts in mind for pleasures. So it is risky to skip and go to Sanyasashrama.

Take away:

1. It is only by going through life's ups, downs and travails that eventually our ego will ripen and hopefully fall off. Running away from life will not help.
 2. Even if you run away, as Swamiji points out, the grass is not greener on the other side. Sanyasa may not help.
- With Best Wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy
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Upadesa Saram, Class 2

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of Upadesha Saram, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the last class we discussed that this book contains the essence of Veda Shastram. Vedas are divided into two groups:

1. Veda Poorva- also called Karma Kanda is the step used for preparation of the mind.
2. Vedanta – also called Gyana Kanda is the step used to remove ignorance of the mind.

Karma Kanda is done in an intelligent manner in which one enjoys the worldly life and desires but also allows one to grow spiritually. In this stage fulfillment of worldly desires is primary while spiritual growth is secondary.

As one grows older in Karma Kanda, this process starts to reverse. Now, the desire for the material world diminishes and desire for spiritual progress increases. This is Gyana Yogyatha Prapthihi.

Gyana Yoga itself is for Gyana Prapthi. It allows us Jivatma and Paramatma Aikyam.

Upadesha Sara's shloka's 1-13 are related to Veda Poorva or Karma Yoga. Shloka's 14-30 are related to Gyana Prapthi.

Karma Yoga is our first focus. Upadesha Saram is a teaching of Lord Shiva to Poorvamimamsaka students. Therefore, it begins with negation of Poorvamimamsaka philosophy. Poorvamimamsaka's have certain misconceptions. Ramana MahaRishi removes those misconceptions. Poorvamimamsaka's believe in rituals and not Vedanta. They considered Vedanta a non-fertile desert portion of a country.

The first misconception of Poorvamimamsaka's is that there is no God. If asked who created the world, they say both (God and world) are Mithyas, they are not created. If God does not create Karma Phalam, who does? Or, who is the Karma Phala Datha? Their answer is that the Niyathi of Karma creates Karma Phalam. Citing examples, Gravity does not need a God it follows laws of gravity. If you light a fire under water, the water will boil, no God comes in, to do this. They feel, the laws of physics, the moral laws, the laws of rituals etc., govern all actions. There is no Karma Phala Datha. The Karma itself is the Phala Datha. This is their second misconception.

There are many rituals and there are special rituals. These special rituals, such as Avahanthi Homam, provide finite results such as blessing of a child, money etc. These are, however, Anithya Phalam.

There are also certain special rituals that produce Nithyaphalam. It is called the eternal heaven, Swarga. It is similar to Christianity and Islam's concept of heaven.

In this context Swamji cited Nachiketas who told Yama: Swarga is a fine place because you are not there. In this Swarga there is no disease or death.

Mokshsa is immortality. If Swarga provides it, why do we need Vedanta, is the question posed by Poorvamimamsaka's. So, the third misconception of Poorvamimamsaka's was that Karma is

Moksha Janakam.

Shloka # 1:

“ The results of action flow according to the law of the Creator. Is Karma , action, God? It is insentient.”

No laws can give phalam. You require a judge. An intelligent principle decides the phalam as per law. Actions alone are not enough to consider, one has to take into account the motive as well. Citing example of the Palavan Bus driver who hits a man in order to save him from a major accident, one has to take into account the motive of the driver as well. Without a judge, a judgment cannot be given.

Law + Judge=Phalam

Law itself is Jadam. It does not discriminate. The intelligent principle is required to preside over the law. The judge has to be well versed in Jivan Rashi (Past, present, all Lokas etc.). The judge has to be omniscient. When Karma is relevant to a family all members of the family simultaneously exhaust their Karmas. The Phalam has to be versatile. Millions of such events occur in the world and have to be addressed simultaneously. This requires a super-intelligent principle.

The word Kartu means Creator. By using God as the Creator, creation has manifestation and un-manifestation. As per Vedas the Universe comes and goes. Modern science also says the universe was created. This requires a Creator.

A question can be asked, as to why can't the world be created accidentally. Citing a story about Shakespeare, it seems there was an explosion at the printing press and all letters got thrown out. Later putting them together resulted in creation of Shakespeare's works.

Can accidentally even a shloka be written? How can we accept the concept of an accidental Creator? Creation requires a

creator and the Vedas. Both originate from the Lord. Therefore first misconception of Poorvamimasaka's is negated.

Law is blind and it requires an intelligent interpreter. This God is the Creator of Karma Phalam. Every experience I go through is a Karma Phalam. It was produced by an action of my own. Therefore, I am responsible for my Karma Phalam.

Relationship of Cows, Parent- Child and a good friend are all required. They are all Karma Phalas. The Phalam comes from God's hands. Why can't law books regulate Karma? It requires an agent to regulate. Vedas are Jadam. They require an interpreter. Physical laws are also Jadam as are moral and other laws. So, Ishwara is the Karma Phala Datha. This is, obviously, not accepted by Poorvamimasaka's.

Here we are talking about Vyavaharika Saguna Ishwara who is different from Vyavahrika Saguna Jiva and Vyavahrika Saguna Jagat. This is based upon a Vyavahrika Drishti. Here Jiva and Ishwara are different and as per Vedanta, Karma is also Vyavahrika.

In Paramarthika Drishti, Jiva and Ishwara are one. One should not confuse and mix up Vyavahrika and Paramarthika Drishti's.

Shloka # 2:

" The fruits of action are transient. Action causes one to fall into the ocean of further action. It obstructs the goal."

Karma does not produce results. Ishwara produces Karma Phalam per Karmic law. In this shloka Ramana MahaRishi negates the second misconception of the Poorvamimasaka's. They claim that some Yagas produce Swarga Loka. Here Ramana Maharishi negates their idea and says, no Karma can produce eternal result as the Phalam is always Anithyam.

Now a question comes up. Poorvamimasaka's also believe in Vedapramanam. They ask, " If you believe in Vedas, they say

Swarga is eternal. If so, why don't you accept our Nithya Karma Phalam?" Vedantin's counter this with the question "There are places in Vedas that say Swarga is not eternal or it is Anithyam." Which word of Vedas should we accept?

My Note: Vyavahrika and Paramarthika explained.

The scriptures speak about two different frames of references to understand the relationship between the Man, the world and the God. They are the Vyavaharika state and the Paramarthika State.

The Vyavaharika state refers to the Dual (Dwaita) state of reference. Most people understand the Universe from this plane. They perceive the duality of object and the subject. There is the world (Jagat) and there is Individual (Jiva) and the God (Ishwara) all separate. The Paramarthika state refers to the Absolute Non-dual (Advaita) state of reference, where only Brahman/Atman is. There is no difference between God or Individual or the world. The former is a temporary and relative state of existence whereas the latter is the absolute-permanent state of existence.

With Best Wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy