

Bagawat Geeta Class 60 – Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 15:

ॐ कर्मणो भवतु फलमात्रं हि ज्ञानात् ॥ १५ ॥
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Knowing thus was work done by ancient seekers after liberation. Therefore you too do only work, as was done by the ancients in bygone days.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Arjuna wanted to escape his Sva-dharma that is killing his own kith and kin. It was causing him great mental distress. And also it is said in the scriptures “By actions one is bound”. Whenever we take up any action there is a strain on our personality. Will we succeed or not is a question that bothers us. This causes anxiety. Also the result of action is not fully dependent on our efforts. Result depends on other factors some of which are not in our control. So, future is uncontrollable. Also, results may not be up to our expectation.

Arjuna is experiencing all this on the battlefield. He wants to escape his Karma. Sri Krishna, however, is teaching him not to escape karma. Maximum you can do is you can change the karma from one action to another action; and often you find that when you change

the field of action, it ends up like falling from the frying pan into the fire. While you can change the action you cannot give up the action. Therefore Krishna wants to teach Arjuna how to be involved in action but not be affected by the action.

“Wise person sees action in in-action.

Wise person also sees in-action in action.”

The contradiction:

If you see a thing wrongly, can you be a wise person?

Shankaracharya has written a large commentary on this shloka. This shloka has also been called a knotty shloka of Gita. In chapter 2, shloka 2.69 is also a knotty shloka. These verses are called the knotty verses because when Vyasa wanted Mahaganapathy to become the scribe; Mahaganapathy put a condition that once I start writing, I cannot stop. Therefore, you have to continuously dictate and if you stop for some reason I will leave. Vyasa agreed to this condition of Ganapathy but he placed a condition on Ganapathy as well. He said when you take down my commentary you should know the meaning of it, as well.

Thus, Vyasa composed knotty verses intermittently, to gain some time and Ganapathy some time to grasp them. Such shlokas are called Grantha Grandhi.

As per Vedanta every individual's personality consists of two parts:

- 1) Anatma: Consisting of the body, mind thought complex.
- 2) Atma: consisting of the Conscious principle that makes the body, mind and thought complex sentient. It can be compared to the electricity that makes the bulb illumine. This invisible principle is all pervading and independent and it continues even when the body is gone. There may be many bulbs but the electricity illumining them is one and the same. Similarly the Atma blesses the body, mind and thought complex and thus makes it sentient.

Wise person also sees in-action in action.”

We discussed Atma and Anatma in chapter 2. While there is only Atma, Anatma's are many. Atma is all pervading while Anatma is limited in nature.

The Atma being all pervading cannot perform any action. Action involves physical or mental movement. So also it is with space, which cannot perform any action. While air, water, and fire can move, space cannot. Therefore, the all-pervading Consciousness is action-less. Hence, it need not renounce Karma. Consciousness is ever free from Karma.

The Anatma (Ahamkara) can never be free from action. It is a material entity. Matter is in eternal motion. Even a standing wall is full of atoms that are in motion.

In the book " Tao of Physics" the author describes Nataraja's eternal Dance. How do you know that he is eternally dancing? If you look at his jata, it is always parallel to the ground; when will the jata be parallel to the ground, it is possible only under one condition; when it is fiercely moving; that is why it is Natarāja's picture as vishwa roopa that is in eternal motion.

Thus, the smallest of atoms and the largest of galaxies are in motion.

Anatma's motion can never stop. Even if you see it at rest, it is still in motion in a potential form. Karma cannot be given up in Anatma.

Therefore, focusing on Atma own up to the permanent state of its rest. This inaction is called Gyana Karma Sanyasa.

A wise person sees the permanent peace of Atma even though there is action in Anatma. He discovers peace even in Anatma. So, discover peace amidst outer activity. Citing an example, even when the hand moves, the light illumining the hand is not moving. Similarly even when the body moves, the awareness does not move. Actors move but the screen does not move. Therefore,

turn your attention to the screen.

“Wise person sees action in in-action.

Discussing the second part of the shloka, action in inaction, when Anatma is resting (sleep) it appears action-less although actions reside in it in potential form. Thus, in sleep, all actions are waiting in seed form. The wise person sees the potential action in the action less-ness of the body mind complex. It means it is explicitly active or potentially active. Atma is ever inactive.

When action overwhelms me we don't know how to get out of it. We feel overwhelmed. It is like catching the tail of a tiger, after sometime you will tire while the tiger will not. You then look for a place without action or shantam or shivam. This place is my own shanta swaroopam. So a wise person knows how to dip into his own tranquility. Sri Krishna wants to give us a taste of this shantam. This is provided to us during sleep. At that time you don't have a Karta personality. Deep sleep is absolute Ananda. This is Atma Swaroopam.

For Gyani, this atma ananda is available all the time. He is called a real Yogi or person of fulfillment.

Shlokas # 19-24 are commentaries on shloka # 18.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy