

# Bagawat Geeta, Class 68

## Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda summarized Chapter 4. This chapter is broadly classified into three areas:

1. Ishvara Avatara.
2. Gyana Karma Sanyasa, the central theme of the chapter.
3. Gyana Sadhana Phalani or means of knowledge and its benefits.

**Ishvara Avatara:** This is discussed in shlokas #1 through #15. Here Sri Krishna shows the difference between Avatara and Jiva. Superficially, while both appear to be same and both go through same life stages (birth, family etc) there are three main differences. They are:

1. Cause of Avatara (Karana),
2. Swaroopam, and
3. Purpose (Upadesha Lakshayam).

**Cause:** At the karana level, Jiva's janma is caused by ignorance; it is because of ignorance Jiva has got the ego; and it is because of the ego, he acquires punya papam, and it is because of punya papam, he is forced to take this body; therefore for the jiva, janma is a fall because he is helpless. So agyanam is the karanam.

For God, it is omniscience and compassion. Here, he descends to uplift human beings. One has fallen while other has descended. Hence for Ishvara, the word Avatara is used or Avatarati. Therefore, for Jiva Agyanam is the cause of his birth while for God it is his Karuna.

**Swaroopam:** Jiva comes about because of ignorance. It does not

know its higher nature. So it is known as Bandha Swaroopaa. For Ishwara it is Leela. It is all a game. God does everything with a smile, even killing of a Rakshasa. So, he is known as Mukta Swaroopaa. In case of Jiva his body is made of the five elements. Maya produces the five elements and they in turn produce the Jiva Sharira.

In case of Ishwara, Maya straightaway becomes a Sharira. There is no time gap. There is no waiting for nine months. Narasimha avatara is an example of this. So, Maya Shariram becomes God, while Jiva becomes a Bhautika Shariram.

**Purpose:** In case of Jiva it comes into being to exhaust its punya and papam's. They can be exhausted only through Sukha and Dukha. This requires a body. Even in dream we exhaust punya and papam through the dream body. My Punya and Papam determine the type of body I get. Even animals go through same process. The only difference is that they do not acquire new Karmas.

Ishvara 's avatara, however, is not for punya papa ksheyaha. The Lord is punya-papa atitaha because he does not have Agyanam. Lord is responsible for arrival and maintenance of creation. He is the srishti karta as well as stithi karta. Normally he does not get involved in human affairs. He has given us Dharma Shastra's to follow. We are supposed to follow it. However, when we do not follow it, he is forced to take Avatar. One way he maintains Dharma is through directly removing the source of problems. Destruction of Rakshas is an example. Second way is to educate humanity to take more responsibility. Here, Sri Rama and Sri Krishna Avatara's come to mind. Rama taught by living. Ramayanam (Rama-Ayanam) means Rama's Dharma marga.

In Sri Krishna's case it is his teaching, not his life, that is the main focus. This is also known as Dharma Rakshanam. He tells Arjuna, through you, I have decided to revive the Vedic teaching. Therefore, revival of dharma, both by teaching and

destroying the adharmic people, is the purpose of avathara.

Thus, the cause is different; the nature is different and the purpose is also different.

Sri Krishna said as the Lord I taught the Veda in the beginning of the creation and again as Rama Avathara. I am now again teaching the same wisdom, through Krishna Shariram as well.

And having talked about avathara Sri Krishna concluded that discussion by making a great statement that "whoever knows the Lord completely" that person will get freedom. Here the emphasis is on "Knows the Lord completely", because the Lord has got two natures. One is the higher and the other is the lower nature. The higher nature of the Lord is never subject to birth and death. "I am never born" he says.

It should be noted that Avatara is not discussed in any other chapter of Gita.

**Gyana Karma Sanyasa:** This is the central theme of chapter 4 and is discussed in shlokas 16-24. Here Sri Krishna points out that there are two types of Karma Sanyasas or renunciations.

1. One is becoming a monk giving up society and Karmas. He pursues a higher goal. It is an external renunciation. It is also considered as the fourth stage of life. It is a ritualistic stage.
2. By discovering detachment like the Lotus where the water does not wet the leaf. And how can one accomplish this? There is only one method of accomplishing this. You have to switch or change your understanding about yourselves. Self-knowledge has to be there and self-elevation has to be there as well. The body cannot avoid karma association. The mind too cannot avoid karma association. Both body and mind are integrally related to the world; therefore interactions are inevitable.

Therefore, you have to discover a different eye, which is higher than the body mind complex, which is called Atma Tatvam. Through Atma Tatvam, I will recognize the asangha and akasha tulya atma. Comparison to Akasha is made here, as Akasha is not polluted by anything. Similarly, I have

to perform self-enquiry and clearly understand I am not the body and I am not the mind.

The body-mind-complex is part of this creation, so, let its interactions continue. I, meanwhile, should be like the actor who identifies with the role he is playing on the stage and becomes a different person once he gets back to green room. He forgets his stage role identity. He recognizes that I am different from all these roles.

This requires Srvanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyanam. It is called internal renunciation or Gyana Karma Sanyasaha (renunciation of action through knowledge). You are performing action without any attachments. There is no ownership of the action. A man sells his house but remains in it. He, thus, becomes a trustee. He thinks the house belongs to God.

This objectivity removes impact of Life situation. I have flexibility to recover and live. Although he is fully involved in action he appears as if he is not at all involved. He appears detached. It is a difficult process to practice.

While describing the Gyani, Sri Krishna talks of Grihastha and Sanyasi Gyani's. Brahmarapanam is a householder or Grihastha Gyani. Therefore, liberation is not dependent on Ashrama but dependent on Wisdom.

One who takes Sanyasa should pursue Gyanam. Chinamayanandaji gave his teachings first then he asked persons to take Sanyasa. So, Gyanam is very important, not Ashrama.

**All shlokas in this section are very important.**

## **Gyana Sadhana Phalani: Shloka 26-42.**

These shlokas describe the actions to be taken for obtaining knowledge. Twelve supporting Sadhanas are mentioned towards obtaining knowledge. Two additional Sadhanas are also described. So, the fourteen sadhanas are:

1. Daiva Yagna: Puja to God
2. Vishaya Bhoga Yagna: Every action of ours should be an offering to God, including food.
3. Gama Yagna: Mastery of our senses.
4. Kshama Yagna: Mastery of mind. You should control the mind and not the other way around.
5. Dravya Yagna: Practicing charity.
6. Tapo Yagna: Moderation in everything.
7. Yoga Yagna: Ashatanga Yoga.
8. Svadhyaya: Learning and chanting scriptures.
9. Gyan Yagna:
  1. Spiritual Self knowledge and
  2. Other disciplines that help us with knowledge.
10. Pranayama Yagna: Performed with devotion as a spiritual practice.
11. Ahara Niyama Yagna: Discipline in eating. This helps control our mind as well.
12. Guru Yagna: It is Guru Seva to one who can communicate the teachings of the shastras.
13. Sradha: Faith in scriptures and Guru. Asking questions to seek clarification. Keep in mind Guru and Shastra do not have anything to lose.
14. Tatparaha: Commitment. Do not criticize scriptures. Develop conviction and follow through.

While all 14 are under Gyana Sadhanas, Gyanam is the most important one of them all. Only Gyanam can remove ignorance. Scripture is like a mirror that can show your true Self. It is a Shastra darpanam. All other Sadhanas are optional. You can choose one or several of them to practice. Gyana Yagnam is not optional.

Sri Krishna also talked about the four Gyana Phalams.

They are:

1. Moha Nasha: Knowledge gives us power to face the future. I can face life, whatever comes.
2. Papa Nasha: All papams incurred upto the time of knowledge are all eliminated. All karmas are eliminated and Prarabhdha Karmas are defanged.
3. Karma Nasha: Sarva karma nasha. This includes papa and punya karmas.
4. Jiva Ishwara Aikyam: He recognizes the essential One. Just as in the Ocean and the wave, the water is the essence so also he recognizes that God and I are one. Aham Brahma Asmi.

Sri Krishna then told Arjuna that he should follow Karma yoga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga and thus become free.

This concludes Chapter 4.

### **Take Away:**

The root cause of human problems is Ahamkara or ego or the " I am the doer" feeling. Here Gita offers us some methods to obtain the detachment from Ahamkara.

1. You have to switch or change your understanding about yourselves.
2. Therefore, you have to discover a different eye called Atma Tatvam through which to recognize the Atma.
3. Clearly understand that I am not this body and I am not this mind. This conviction has to be there.
4. Be like an actor on the stage. Perform your part immersed in it, all the while remembering you are not that part.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta, Class 67

## Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 36:**

एतन्निष्कामोऽपि सर्वपापानां कर्मणाम्  
सर्वपापानां कर्मणाम् सर्वपापानां कर्मणाम् 1.36

**Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, from shloka # 36 onwards Sri Krishna is talking about Gyana phalam. In shloka # 36 he talked about the following benefits by obtaining Gyanam: 1) Sarva moha nasha, 2) Sarvatra Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam and 3) Sarva Papa Nasha.

**Shloka # 37:**

एतन्निष्कामोऽपि सर्वपापानां कर्मणाम्  
एतन्निष्कामोऽपि सर्वपापानां कर्मणाम् 4.37

**As a kindled fire reduces all fuels to ashes, so, Arjuna ! does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes.**

4. Sarva Karma Nasha:

Now in this shloka Sri Krishna talks about a fourth benefit of Gyanam called Sarva Karma Nasha. All three karmas, Sanchita,





explained. They were:

- 1) Sarva moha nasha,
- 2) Sarvatra Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam,
- 3) Sarva Papa Nasha and
- 4) Sarva Karma Nasha.

Now Sri Krihna wants to conclude with some dos and don'ts or Sadhanas.

He says there is no greater purifier than knowledge. There are many purifiers such as Ganga Jalam, Rudra mantra japam, etc. All purifiers can destroy papams. However, only Knowledge can destroy Avidya. No other purifier can destroy Avidya or Agyanam.

Who can get this knowledge? Only qualified and prepared persons can get this knowledge. Such a person is known as **Samsidhaha**. The method of preparation is known as Yogaha. Yogaha are two fold. They are Karma Yoga and Ashtanga Yoga. Following these two yogas also means leading a religious life. Vedas have decided upon a life style for spiritual growth. Vedic culture is meant for spiritual growth. It, however, does not ignore material growth. If we follow this Vedic life we will reach this knowledge. This is called Yogaha. It is a growth of spiritual, emotional and intellectual attributes. Put in another way it is Tatva Bodha's Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi. This knowledge can only occur in a pure mind. When asked how long it will take, Sri Krishna does not comment. Rather, he says, enjoy the journey.

### **Shloka # 39:**

शुद्धचित्तो यो यथात्मनि शान्तो भवति  
सर्वदुःखेषु तत्र शान्तिरिति श्रुत्वा ॥४.३९॥

**The man of faith, who has mastered his senses and who is**

**intent on it, wins knowledge. Winning knowledge, he attains without delay the peace supreme.**

In the previous shloka Yoga was mentioned as a Sadhana or a way of religious life and a qualified person was called a Samsiddhaha. In this shloka more sadhanas are prescribed.

**Shradha** is now prescribed. It is faith in the validity of scriptures until one gets knowledge. As you study the Gita you will notice that all your doubts are answered at some point during the study. Every Acharya also accepts questions.

Siddhi Grantha is a text that raises a lot of questions and clarifies doubts. This attitude of faith is called Sradha. Such a person is called Sradhavan. Such a person gets knowledge. It should be noted that Vedanta also accepts questions from current situations as well.

Another sadhana mentioned is **Tatparam** or sincere commitment to the Teacher. Explaining this, Swamiji said in the early stages of his Gita lectures he had Q & A sessions at the end of the class. However, he found, most people did not come prepared. They would ask questions that were not relevant to the teaching in the class. One should revisit the teaching and this is known as manaha. Only from this process can legitimate doubts arise. This is showing commitment to the teacher.

The next sadhana discussed by Sri Krishna is Sense control and focusing capacity or **Samyatindriyaha**. So, all above-mentioned sadhanas are required. They are:

- Samsidhaha, a qualified person.
- Sradha, faith in validity of scriptures.
- Tatparam, sincere commitment to the teacher.
- Samyatindriyaha, control of senses and a capacity for focus.

All four are required for Gyanam. Such a person gets peace that surpasses all understanding. Sri Krishna promises this



Parloka Sukham. One who does not believe in scriptures but believes in worldly pleasures, he may not get Paraloka sukham but he will get Iha Loka sukham. However, a Samshaya Atma even with worldly knowledge will not obtain Iha loka Sukham nor Para Loka Sukham.

So Samshaya is the worst enemy. Trust in family member, co-workers, even own driver etc., is required. Trust involves risk. Trust is very important in life. It is required for Vedanta as well.

### Shloka # 41:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.41 ॥

**Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga, has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge.**

Here Sri Krishna is summing up the sadhanas and the phalams. A person has to go through three stages of sadhana:

3. **First Stage:** Yogaha or yoga-samnyasta-karmanam. This means Gyanam and what is the Gyanam? Remembering at all times that I am the Atma, which is an Akarta. A person gets detached from all actions. Since actions belong to the body-mind-complex, he allows the body-mind-complex to function in the world; but he does not have attachment or identification and therefore he has renounced the karma identification.
4. **Second Stage:** This stage called Gyana-sanchina-samshayam is where he negates all his doubts by gaining conviction through mananam. Gyanam means conviction; I should be convinced of this knowledge and I should study until I am convinced.
5. **Third stage:** is Atmavantam. This is thenidhidhy asanam stage. In this stage, a person is alert and remembers the teaching at all times. Through the teaching, Gyanam must be available in my day-to-day life. So, Atmavan is



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# Bagawat Geeta Class 66, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 34:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४.३४ ॥

**Know it by means of obeisance, exhaustive questionings, service to the (teacher). Knowers who have realized the truth impart to you that knowledge.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in shlokas 26 to 33, Sri Krishna talked about the glory of knowledge. Now in shloka # 34 he wants to complete the topic with a description of how to acquire this knowledge. He says our normal instruments of perceptions are all extrovert and meant to reveal the exterior world. Knowledge of Self is not possible with these extroverted instruments.

Citing an example, he says one cannot see one's own eyes. To see one's own eyes one needs a mirror. So also to see one's Atma a special mirror is required. A regular mirror can only reflect the Sthula-Sharira or the gross body. It cannot reflect the Atma. For the Atma one needs the Shastra-darpanam. We also need to know how to use this darpanam. This darpanam must also be clean and free of dust or the image reflected will be dull.

This requires another assistant called the Guru. He teaches us

how to use the mirror. He allays all our misunderstandings and helps remove dust like obstacles and clears the mirror.

One requires a Guru. Obtaining knowledge without Guru is an exception. There are many types of Gurus. One type is the one who initiates by giving mantras. Another guru offers inspiration. All Gurus are useful and required. However, the Guru Sri Krishna talks about is the Gyana Guru. Sri Krishna did not give mantra Upadesha to Arjuna. He functioned as a teaching Guru. He systematically taught Vedanta. He did not say he was God. He did not ask for blind acceptance. He wanted Arjuna to listen to his teaching. Learning involves active listening. Teacher reconciles every statement. Chapter after chapter Arjuna asks questions. He does not accept Sri Krishna's teaching in blind faith. He challenges the contradictions in the teaching.

Citing example of the equation  $e=mc^2$ , Swamiji says, it is not meant for japa. Each item in it namely the E, the M, and the C all have to be understood in detail. This requires many years of learning. So also it is with Vedanta's equation "You are the ultimate reality". This is not a mantra Japam. One has to know it. Until you are convinced, the teaching is not complete. That is the reason that Sri Krishna went through each chapter until the end of chapter 18. Then Arjuna said, Oh Sri Krishna, my confusion is gone; I have now clearly understood your teaching. This is the Guru referred to here by Sri Krishna.

Describing such a Guru further, Sri Krishna says, such a Gyani, man of knowledge, must also have very good communication skills. In a shloka by poet Kalidasa from his treatise "Malvikgnamitra", the poet emphasizes that simply being a scholar is not sufficient. Imparting the knowledge to other seekers is more important and a scholar who does this is the scholar of highest order. Such a person is also called Stotriya Brahma Nishta Guru or a Gyani or a Tatva Darshi. Just as a doctor who smokes does not have moral authority to advise

a smoker, a Guru must have the moral authority. A Tatva Darshi has the true knowledge and as such he can give knowledge. The method of communication used by such Guru's followed Sampradaya. Therefore, a Sampradaya Guru alone is considered fit to give knowledge. Asampradaya Guru is not accepted as a teaching Guru.

The Shishya also has to be deserving of knowledge. Milk in the wrong vessel will split. The shishya has to be a patram. The Patram's requirements are:

1. Intense desire for knowledge or Jignasa.
2. Humility or accepting one's ignorance. It is also called Vinayaha.

An egocentric person cannot get knowledge. The shishya should express his humility by prostrating before the Guru. He should ask questions. He should perform service or Seva to the Guru. This service will remove his impurities.

Swamiji says it was common for a new shishya to spend some time performing only seva to the Guru. This gave both of them an opportunity to know each other, get acclimatized and build rapport. This was a requirement before starting the teaching. This was also a time of service. During this period both Guru and Shishya are judging each other. This period could even last up to a year. Dayananda Saraswathi in his ashram would ask students to submit their notes. He wanted to see if they understood his teaching or not. It is in this manner a shishya became a patram.

### **Shloka # 35:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.३५ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.३५ ॥

**By grasping that knowledge, O Pandava prince! You will no longer be deluded as you are now; and through that, you will behold all beings in the Self and then in Me.**



With Shloka # 34 the glorification and how to get Gyanam is over. Shlokas # 35- # 37 deal with Gyana phalam. Sri Krishna presents Gyana phalam as follows:

2. **Moha Nasha:** Arjuna surrendered to Sri Krishna due to his internal conflict in the battlefield. Arjuna was trained in Dharma Shastras. He was a man of knowledge. Yet, he is not able to resolve his internal conflict. He becomes indecisive. This conflict is caused by his attachment. He does not want to face the consequences of his action. He was not ready to accept the death of Bhishma and Drona. He also does not want to stay in the forest. This is Arjuna's dilemma. Our inability to face future because of our emotional attachments is the cause of conflict. Because of this we postpone our decisions. (Go to America or not? Marry or not? Etc.) . Some people go to an astrologer. Unfortunately two astrologers can never agree. This makes the decision even more difficult. The reality is that a decision has to be made. So, internal conflict is a big weakness. With Self-knowledge, I am ready to face any future. I know the outcome can go either way. Still I jump into it anyway. I am ready to face the consequences. Self - knowledge gives one the strength to face consequences. You will not get into internal conflicts anymore. Arjuna, decision-making is always difficult. Self Knowledge helps you and keeps you sane.
3. **Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam:** You will have Jivatma paramatma Aikya darshanam. How? Sri Krishna says, after this knowledge you will know the entire creation rests in God. He is like space, all- pervading. You will also know that the whole world is in "You". Therefore "You" are God. Just like the wave, it was told; you and the ocean are one and the same. Both are essentially water. Therefore, Water is the essence.

Ishwara is Chaitanya. You are Chaitanya. Everything is

Chaitanyam.

**Shloka # 36:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ 1.36 ॥

**Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.**

Two Gyana phalams were mentioned in last shloka. Here Sri Krishna communicates the third benefit.

3. **Sarva Papa Nashaha:** Self-knowledge destroys all your papams. Nothing else destroys papams. Destroying papams acquired through many janmas is very difficult through prayaschittams. Not only are there too many old Papams, we are also constantly acquiring new ones. Citing an example, Swamiji says, Shastra's say by leaving a young wife a man gets papam for seven Janmas. Self-knowledge, however, destroys all past papams as well as future ones.

Even the worst sinner will cross over the ocean of papam. The Gyanam boat will help you cross over the ocean-of-sins.

**Take Away:** Our emotional attachments are the cause of internal conflicts. This makes us unable to face the future. This was also Arjuna's dilemma.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy









Vedas, however, do not prescribe a time line to reach Gyana Yagnam.

Karma Yagna is an indirect means while Gyana Yagna is the direct means of liberation. Gyana Yagna is also not possible without Karma Yagna. There is no short cut.

Another meaning of the shloka is that all Karma phalams are included in Gyana Phalam. Karma phalam is finite in nature as it is a result in time. Gyanam leads to knowledge of "Aham Brahma Asmi". It is knowledge of the infinite. Infinite cannot become finite. Finite, however, can be a part of infinite.

In chapter # 2 Sri Krishna gave an example of this. He asks who will ask for limited water from a pond when a huge lake is nearby.

Shloka # 34:

शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुक्रेण शुक्रेण शुक्रेण शुक्रेण  
शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुक्रेण शुक्रेण शुक्रेण शुक्रेण 4.34

**Know it by means of obeisance, exhaustive questionings, service to the (teacher). Knowers who have realized the truth impart to you that knowledge.**

Here Sri Krishna says Gyana Yagna cannot be practiced independently. It needs external guidance. It needs:

- Shatram: that deals with the Self. My eyes can see the whole world but cannot see themselves. So we need a mirror. We need a special mirror, a verbal mirror, or a shastra-darpanam. I cannot operate it by myself. One can see one's Self only when this mirror is operated properly. For this a Guru is required.
- Guru

**Best Practices: Practice of some sadhana every day is highly recommended for a seeker.**

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta, Chapter 4, Class 64

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 27:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४.२७ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४.२७ ॥

**Yet others sacrifice all sense-activities and all activities of vital breaths in the fire of self-restraint, kindled by knowledge.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, with the 24th shloka Sri Krishna concluded Gyana Yoga. In shlokas 25 through 34 he now talks about the glory of Self Knowledge. In these shlokas he mentions twelve spiritual practices. One of them is also Gyana Yoga. He calls all of them Yagnahas. All of them involve worship of the Lord. He says all of them are great but Gyana yoga is the greatest of them all. All of them prepare the mind but only Gyana can give liberation.

Therefore all the eleven sadhanas are validated or made fruitful only when all of them culminate in Gyanam. Thus,



Gyanam is called sakshat mokshakaranam and all

other sadhanas are called parampara mokshakaranam. They can only indirectly help; Gyanam alone can help directly.

For preparation purposes, we can take any one of the eleven, however, there is no choice with respect to Gyana Yoga. There are many paths for Chitta shuddhi but only one for Gyanam. Hence it is considered the greatest one of all. Following is the essence of Shlokas 25-34.

Shlokas 25-27:

1. **Gyana Yagna:** Self Knowledge is also a form of Yagna.
2. **Deva Yagna:** is the ritualistic worship of various devatha
3. **Vishaya Bhoga Yagna:** considers every experience as worship. Thus, the entire world consisting of shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha are all taken as flowers. Thus music is considered a flower. A beautiful picture is a flower; a tasty object is a flower. All these flowers are offered to the Lord, who is inside us in the form of Atma Chaitanyam.
4. **Indriya Samyama Yagna:** This is sense control. Practice of maunam is such a Sadhana. One who masters the tongue not only controls speech he also controls his eating as well.
5. **Kshama Yagna:** It is thought discipline. Quantity, quality and direction of thought have to be controlled. It is a tough discipline, because it requires monitoring the mind throughout the day.

Seven more Yagnas are covered in following shlokas.

**Shloka # 28:**

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**Other ascetics, subject to severe disciplines, sacrifice their material possessions, their penances, spiritual exercises, prescribed lessons, and knowledge.**

In this Shloka five spiritual disciplines are discussed.

**6. Dravya Yagna:** It also means Dana Yagna. Danam can include: money, material, sharing knowledge, sharing time and sharing good will.

It is an important Yagna. In creation everything is in a flow. A river receives water and delivers to the ocean; Ocean delivers it to cloud and cloud delivers back to the river. Everything is cyclic. I too should receive as well as give. What I give should be proportionate to what I receive. If one does not follow this principle, the divide between rich and poor increases. Communism believes in forcible giving. Vedanta believes we should give out of our wisdom and share. Yagna, Dana and Tapaha are emphasized. Tapaha means moderation in everything. In olden days when one got more, one performed a big ritual and the Danam became a part of the ritual. This was done without any arrogance.

The scope and magnitude of dakshina danam can be understood when we consider the following: anna danam, vastra danam; chappal danam, kodai (umbrella) danam; vadi (stick) danam; pusthaka danam; kshetra (land) danam; svarna danam; and even kanyaka danam as a part of marriage ceremony.

**7. Tapaha:** Means the mastery of sense organs. It is willful Self-denial to establish my mastery over my own organs. Tapaha should not be enforced. Fasting is a spiritual practice while starving is not. Whatever I regularly use, I say, I will not use. Shiva rathri vratam, Upavasa are some examples. Saying no to coffee, to food, daily newspaper etc. are all examples of Tapaha. For some time, periodically, we should try to say no to all such things.

8. **Yoga Yagnaha:** This is Ashtanga Yoga of Patanjali to integrate one's personality. We have five layers of personality and we have studied, annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vigyanamaya and anandamaya koshas.

Annamaya is disciplined by yogasanas; so that I can sit in a posture for an hour without disturbance. It is a yogah.

For pranamaya disciple, we have pranayama.

For manomaya disciple, we have meditation.

For vigyanamaya discipline, we have study.

All five koshas are supposed to work together. Like instruments in a music concert all koshas should work together in harmony to produce anandamaya or bliss in us.

9. **Svadhyaaya Yagnaha:** is parayanam of the scriptures. It includes: learning to chant; memorizing and regularly chanting.

Learning to chant teaches akshara shuddhi. After that memorizing the chapter helps, as you can now understand the chapter holistically when the teacher teaches. Swamiji says he summarizes each chapter at the end. In ancient times this was not a practice as the student would be absorbing the whole chapter as he would have it in memory.

To help one memorize, scriptures were often in sutra or shloka forms.

Sutras are very brief abbreviated capsule statement.

Shlokas are metrical or musical forms such as in Gita.

Both were meant for memorizing. Therefore, they never used a printed version of the book. Students had to memorize everything. The idea was while young, one memorized the shlokas. As one grew older the desire to know more about the

shlokas arose and they were readily available in our minds. All scriptures are after all associated with Gods and Rishis.

10. **Gyana Yagna:** is study of the meaning of the scriptures. It is enquiry and analysis. Therefore during Svadhyaya it is called shabda grahanam; Gyana yagna stage is called artha grahanam. In the first one, Svadhyaya, you learn the words, in the second one, Gyanam, you learn the meaning. And that is why they start the svadhyaya at an early age and they do the veda adhyayanam in the 5th year, 6th year, 7th year, etc. Since it is a young mind, it will easily register, and thus can cover the entire vedas within 15 years.

In shloka # 25 Deva and Gyana Yagna were mentioned. In shloka # 28 again Gyana Yagna is mentioned. The Gyana Yagna here means it is related to analysis of scriptures. So tarka, mimamsa and vyakarana, all these come under Gyana yajna. Five secondary disciplines of the Yagna are also mentioned. They are: Draya yagyaha, tapo yagyaha, yoga yagyaha, svadhyaya yagyaha, and Gyana yagyaha. In this shloka Dravya Yagyaha means Sadhakas who perform Dravya Yagya. Tapo Yagyaha means one who performs Tapas and so on. These sadhakas are also called Yathi or Yathayaha or Sanyasi. From this comes the name Yathiraja college. Yathi means a committed spiritual seeker. He may even be a Grihasta. They are people of firm resolve. Will power is very important in spirituality.

**Shloka # 29:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४.२९ ॥

**Some intent on breath-control, blocking the movement of the in-breath and out-breath, sacrifice the in-breath in the out breath and, similarly, sacrifice the out-breath in the in-breath.**

11: **Pranayama:**

Here Sri Krishna discusses Pranayama as a useful spiritual discipline.

When we study the different layers of our personality, we find annamaya is the grossest layer, the physical body. The next interior layer is pranamaya, the energy sheath. Prana stands for the vital force, our energy. The next one is the manomaya, the mental personality; emotional or psychological personality .

Pranamaya comes in between annamaya and manomaya and if a person disciplines the pranic personality, then he will influence both annamaya as well as manomaya. When prana is disciplined, physical health will improve as will mental health.

Pranayama practice is of two types.

1. As an exercise to improve health or a secular discipline.
2. Vedas want to make it part of religious discipline.

Thus, we have the chant Om Bhoohu, Om Bhuvaha etc. This is garbha pranayama. It purifies the mind.

Pranayama is a very big discipline. There are advanced courses offering Pranayama for obtaining material success. Kundalini yoga is a part of this. Kundalini is Pranic energy. It is really about tapping into our potential energy in any form. Thus, walking daily is a manifestation of this power. Even memory is a power that needs to be exercised. Power in a waterfall is the electricity and a manifestation of Kundalini Shakti.

These are all, however, manifestations of Anatma. Kundalini has no connection to Gyanam.

Vedanta is not interested in materialistic powers. From Vedanta's perspective, Pranayama can be used for Chitta

Shuddi. There are three types of Pranayama. They are:

1. Puraka: Inhalation. Here exhalation is offered as the sacrifice.
2. Rachaka: Exhalation. Inhalation is offered as the sacrifice.
3. Kumbhaka: Neither inhale nor exhale. Antara Kumbhaka, retain after inhaling. Bahya Kumbhaka, is retaining after exhaling.

All these are Yagnahas. Kumbhakaha, where breath is stopped is good for a restless mind. It can, however, only give relative quietude. Only knowledge can bring absolute quietude.

### Shloka # 30:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३० ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३० ॥

**Yet others, with strictly regulated diet, sacrifice vital breaths in vital breaths. All those are conversant with sacrifice, having destroyed their sins by acts of sacrifice.**

### 12.Ahara Niyama:

So 11 yagnahas are over; now comes the 12th and last one. The last one is known as Ahara Niyama. It is discussed in chapter 6 again. Here one has to control quantity and quality of our intakes.

There should be a fixed time for eating. Over eating should be avoided. One should get rid of Tamasic foods such as meat and alcohol. When food discipline is missing our pranas become thick and undisciplined.

Ahara niyama converts sick prana to healthy ones. Digestion and breathing are improved. They destroy all internal impurities.

With Best Wishes,

# Bagawat Geeta Class 63, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 24:**

ब्रह्मसंज्ञासंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं  
ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं 4.24

**The means of the sacrificial offering is Brahman; Brahman is the oblation placed in the fire of Brahman and by Brahman is the sacrifice made. This scarificer, who concentrates on the act that is Brahman, reaches Brahman alone.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in Shlokas 18-24 Sri Krishna dealt with Gyana Yoga. In the 24th shloka he concluded Gyana Yoga. In the 24th shloka he was teaching the highest philosophy of the Upanishads. This Teaching can be summarized as follows:

1. Recognizing that the Consciousness principle is different from the body, mind and thought complex. This is similar to the electricity that while it illumines the bulb, is distinct and separate from it. Thus, Consciousness is a also separate entity. That is who I am. I am not the body-mind-thought complex. Body-mind-thought complex is only an incidental tool. In it's absence I stop transacting but continue to exist. "I" am existence and it does not require a body-mind-thought principle.

2. This "I" the Consciousness principle is behind all the bodies not just mine. There is only one Consciousness enclosed in many bodies. This Consciousness is same in everyone. From Consciousness' point of view we are all one.
3. This "I" behind all bodies is the essence and truth. The body-mind-thought complex is not independent of Consciousness. Consciousness is Satyam.

Upanishads say Consciousness (Karana) is the cause and everything else is the effect ( Maryam). Once I see that Consciousness is the cause and matter is the effect then I also become aware that there is no matter separate from Consciousness. This requires an attitudinal change in me.

This is similar to gold that is the cause of an ornament. There is only one gold while ornaments are many. Even in science while all elements are superficially different, they are all still energy. Vedanta says even the energies are different, only the Consciousness is one.

How can the invisible consciousness become the visible creation, if you ask, the science answers that the intangible and invisible energy can manifest as tangible matter. If that is possible for energy, Vedanta says, that the intangible formless consciousness alone is appearing as the tangible form-ful matter. And the one, who has this vision, sees the one truth behind all the superficial plurality; this is called Sarvatra svarna

darshanam. In the case of ornaments, bangles, chain, ring, etc. there is sarvatra ekasvarna darshanam; behind rivers and oceans and lakes, there is sarvatra eka jala

darshanam; behind all furnitures, there is sarvatra eka wood darshanam; similarly, behind the pluralistic universe Gyani has got ekathra atma darshanam. This is called Atma Ekatva Darshanam.





pure. That inner purity is sought from God. So, since the God is involved; prayer is involved; spiritual purity is involved; all of them are called yagnaha. Even sweeping temple, sweeping your own home are all yagnaha's, if you look upon the house as a temple. Therefore, what we require is only an attitudinal change, it makes everything a pooja,

It purifies the person spiritually; therefore all of them are called yagnahas.

Even eating is a Yagnam, hence the name Pranagni Hotra Yagnaha. Thus, from the grossest eating to the greatest yaga Sri Krishna calls them all Yagnaha. To this he also adds self-knowledge as a yagnaha. So even the study of scriptures come under yagnaha.

These are all Gyana Yagnahas. He then points out that Brahma Gyana Yagna is the highest of all of them. Why do we say so? It is not that other Yagnas are useless, but none of them lead to the Lord or Brahman. Any puja can only lead you to Gyanam. They are indirect means. Gyana Sadhana is the only direct means.

The oil, the wick, the lamp etc., don't remove darkness. Only the flame from the lamp will remove the darkness. Oil, wick, lamp are made meaningful by the flame. Gyana Yoga validates all other Sadhanas through Gyanam.

Suppose you say you don't like Gyanam, nothing wrong with it, continue with all other Sadhanas. Then, at some point in this life or other, you will be ready for Gyana Sadhana.

In the Shloka: Paramatma is fire (Brahmagni); Lower self is oblation. The lower, limited "I" should be resolved in the higher, unlimited "I". The wave resolves in the ocean. The wave is worried about its life and death. The wave family is worried too. Then the Guru wave comes and tells them to identify One's self with the water and not the waves. The moment the wave recognizes the truth it realizes that I am the



of his undisciplined sense organs. This is also known as Dama Yagnaha.

Second line of Shloka: It describes Vishaya Bhoga Yagyaha. When I become a slave to sense organs, I say no to it. Citing example of coffee, currently I am slave to it. I should be able to say no to it at any time. Within my control, I enjoy legitimate sense pleasures. This enjoyment is Yagyaha.

Here the oblation is forms, colors, sounds, taste etc. Homakunda's are seven. They are: the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth. This Yagya is called Vishaya Bhoga Yagyaha. In this all our experiences such as Shabda, Sparsha, Roopa, Rasa and Gandha are all converted to Yagyaha. Every work, every word I utter all are offering to you. Here Lord is Consciousness. He is Me. So, Shabda offering becomes Shabdagyanam and so with Sparsha Gyanam as well. etc.

#### **Shloka # 27:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.27 ॥

**Yet others sacrifice all sense-activities and all activities of vital breaths in the fire of self-restraint, kindled by knowledge.**

We have complete four Yagyas. This is the fifth one called Atma Samyama Yagyaha or mental discipline. Through this discipline the 10 organs, five of knowledge and five of action are controlled. The five organs of knowledge are: Shabda, Roopa, Rasa, Gandha, and Sparsha. While five organs of action are: vak, pani, pada, payu and upastha; the organs of speech, the hand, the leg, the organ of excretion and the organ of reproduction. These ten can be disciplined only by our mental discipline.

With Best Wishes,

# Bagawat Geeta Class 62, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 20:**

कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति  
कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति 4.20

**Giving up attachment to the fruits of works, eternally content, independent, the man, engaged in works as he is, does nothing at all.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in shlokas # 18-24 Sri Krishna is giving us the essence of Gita and the Upanishads or the Atma Swaroopa Gyanam. Once a person gets this knowledge, Karma, action and action-less, both do not shackle him. Both action and inaction don't affect him. If this knowledge is not there (Agyani), when he is lacking any action, he starts thinking of work again. When an Agyani does not work he will want to work and vice versa. The problem is in our mind. Therefore, never try to change the external world or your action. Rather change your self.

Once a person gets this knowledge as Grihasta or Sanyasi, there will be freedom. It is the knowledge that gives the freedom.



very end. He has to accept whatever is given to him as food. However, since he has no ego, he also does not have Karmaphalam.

Content with what is gained by chance, beyond dualities, rid of competitive spirit, equanimous in gain and loss, one is not bound in spite of working. 4.22

**Content with what is gained by chance, beyond dualities, rid of competitive spirit, equanimous in gain and loss, one is not bound in spite of working.**

This shloka can be for both Grihastha Gyani as well as Sanyasi Gyani. Shankaracharya says it is for Sanyasi gyani. Swamiji says he will interpret it as for Grihastha Gyani.

He welcomes everything in life as a result of his actions. Events in our life are not totally controllable by us. My future is not in my total control. Some claim, " I can control my future". This is arrogance until one is hit by a misfortune. Even God cannot claim it. Other type is the fatalistic one who says I have no control over my future. This approach is also wrong. Gita says I am one of the important contributors to my future. I do have control to some extent. All other factors that control (war, weather, etc.) are called Daivam. The whole world is interconnected. All such external factors are called Daivam or Prarabdham. I prepare to do my best and accept whatever happens as Karma phalam.

If the karmaphalam is a failure, accept it. I still have to work for the future. Accept the present and work (hard) for the future. Worry cannot change the present; worry cannot change the future also. Worrying does not help.

Such a Gyani is one who is beyond the pairs of opposites. Life is facing a series of opposites. What does it mean? It means you cannot physically go beyond the pairs of opposites because, wherever you go, there will be pairs of opposite. Therefore, what is going beyond the pairs of opposites? It is nothing more than not allowing the pairs of opposites to

disturb the mind. Making the pairs of opposites incapable of disturbing me too much.

You can strengthen yourself. The protection is Gyanam that will protect you from the pair of opposites. He is one who has gone beyond competition. Current thinking is that competition brings the best in people. Shastra says competition is bad. One tends to compare with the winner. This leads to depression, jealousy and cheating. Love and cooperation is better than competition. Matsaryam (competition) is a very bad quality.

According to Vedanta, success is the ability to manage failure in life. If there were a method of succeeding all the time, Sri Krishna would have taught us that. He teaches us to work for success but be ready for both, success and failure. This is called Samaha. Such a person is very active and without shackles. All actions become leela for the Gyani. For an Agyani it is all a struggle.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥४.२३॥

**Whose attachment has vanished, who has been liberated, whose mind has been established in knowledge and who works as a sacrifice, all works are dissolved.**

This shloka is also about Grihastha Gyani. Many people wonder if one has to take Sanyasa. Sri Krishna says physical renunciation is not required. Inner detachment is, however, a requirement.

Grihastha Gyani has given up his claims. Everything belongs to God. Everything I have is a gift of God. We should use it for inner growth. God can take anything at any time including my body. I am thankful for God's gift. Everything around me belongs to God.

He is associated but not hooked to anyone or anything. With





The body does not limit me. I will survive this body. This " I " cannot transact in the world as medium of transaction (body) is not there.

First stage: So, the first stage of vedanta

is seeing "I"-as-Consciousness, and body-mind-and-the-world as matter. I am consciousness while

Body, mind-and-world is matter. Unfortunately, this knowledge is not complete. The knowledge that " I am Atma" and everything else is "Anatma" is still Dvaitam.

Next Stage: The next stage of Vedanta is knowing that there is no matter other than consciousness; matter is a myth; matter is non-substantial; even though it appears as tangible solid substance; matter does not have a substantiality of its own. The substance is consciousness alone. Atma alone is the substance. Matter does not exist separate from consciousness. There is no material world separate from me, the observer.

How can I swallow this? Vedanta now gives an example. In dream you experience an external world that is so real that you have nightmares. It comes from within you, in you and resolves in you. On waking up you understand it was a dream.

So also in waking, it is another dream state. Vedanta says this world is also dream of another level. We have got two levels of dreams; one is called pratibhashika dream; another is called vyavaharika dream; and when we look at this from the body's standpoint, it has got a reality. It is a prathibhashika and Vyvaharika dream. Vedanta says you are in a dream state even in waking state. Therefore Sri Krishna wants to say that everything is nothing but Atma; there is no anatma separate from atma. This is the essence of this shloka.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Baghawat Geeta, Chapter 4, Class 61

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 18:**

कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्  
कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्4.18

**Whoso beholds non-work in work and work in non- work is wise among men; he is integrated; he does all works.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, by way of introducing the nature of karma, Sri Krishna is discussing the essence of the Upanishads in shloka's 18 to 24. Of these shlokas, 18th is considered a key shloka; wherein Sri Krishna talks about atma-anatma viveka; the difference between the higher-I in me, and the lower-I in me; the higher-I is called Atma; and the lower-I is called Ahamkara.

The higher-I atma has been talked about in the second chapter, where Sri Krishna pointed out that this atma is of the nature of consciousness, distinct from the body and all pervading. It is an akarta as it does not perform any action. It is only a witness. And this akarta-atma, this eka-atma; this poorna atma is my higher nature; and I have got a lower-I also called ahamkara; and this lower-I is nothing but the mind. The mind-principle is called the lower-I. Mind by itself is inert. It

becomes sentient through the blessing of Atma. Citing example of a bulb, it is similar to the filament in a bulb that needs electricity to energize it. Such a mind when blessed by Atmatvam becomes sentient and is called Ahamkara. This finite Ahamkara is my inferior "I" or ego. Ahamkara has to perform action, as it is its nature. Ahamkara, thus, accumulates Punyam and Papam. And this ahamkara alone takes another body and again exhausts the punya papam and in the process acquires fresh punya papam; and thus the punarapi jananam; punarapi maranam, samsara cycle continues for ahamkara. There is no way of stopping this ahamkara, because this ahamkara is motivated, activated, because of our identification. Sri Krishna says, by self-knowledge, we learn to own up to the higher-I, rather than the lower-I.

The moment the shift to higher "I" happens, the lower "I" loses momentum and it will stop. A Gyani is not a patron of Ahamkara. This shift from lower "I" to higher "I" is called wisdom. I own up to my Akarta nature, even while Ahamkara is active. This detachment from Ahamkara is the benefit of the wisdom. The question comes up, as to who is leading the dog? Is it the owner or the dog? Right now Ahamkara is leading me. Ahamkara has a function, but I should not be enslaved by it. The word Swamy means one who is master of his own Ahamkara. The word Aswamy means the opposite of Swamy.

What drives human beings to accomplish things? What is the driving force? In human beings the driving force behind any pursuit is that without those accomplishment(s), I feel small; That is why people always say, I want to be somebody in life; because he or she feels that right now he or she is a nobody.

And therefore I have a sense of smallness. Through accomplishment, I am trying to be somebody, I am trying to become full and complete; fulfillment or poornatvam is the goal. Unfortunately such a person never gets the poornatvam as the finite ahamkara plus finite accomplishment is still equal to finite ahamkara. Previously I was a miserable BA; then a

miserable MA; and now a miserable Phd. The misery continues because finite plus finite is equal to only finite and not infinite. It is the finite ahamkara struggling to become poornaha and life becomes a failure.

Gyani knows everything is finite. Ahamkara can never be poornaha. He accepts Ahamkara and lets it perform. He, however, seeks Poornatvam in the higher I. It is ever Poornaha. He enjoys poornaha at higher level, while performing action at lower level. He does not feel fulfilled in completion of projects. Thus, he is ready to quit the world at any time.

**Shloka # 19:**

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**Him the wise call a man of discrimination, all of whose undertakings are free from desire-prompted imaginations and all whose works have been consumed in the fire of knowledge.**

Once a Gyani has discovered poornatvam , will he be motivated to work? Generally activities are born out of necessity or dissatisfaction. If all people are satisfied then there will be no motive to work. The general belief is that discontentment leads to action or work. This is a misconception, says Swamiji. Sri Krishna says a person can also work out of fullness. Such a person has no axe to grind. A gyani can contribute with contentment. What drives him? Compassion drives him. He has universal identification and universal compassion. It becomes his nature.

Heat can't be separated from fire or light from the Sun. So also, compassion is intrinsic to a Gyani. It is compassion without motives. Backed by compassion, he acts according the need of the situation. It is like a mother with a child. Compassion crystallizes into action.

His actions are not due to lacking anything or loneliness. Without performing activity too he is full. He is free from the desire to fulfill himself. He is free from future projections. Thus, we are not comfortable with ourselves. Thus, one asks: How will I look in this dress; with this girl; with this house; etc? There is a big gulf between the small "I" and the higher "I" in such a person. This causes restlessness in him. I am not happy with the present, I am a dissatisfied "I". That is why Swami Dayananda Saraswathi says: I have rejected myself and when I cannot accept myself, I cannot accept the world also; I find fault with every person, every job, every set up and every house. The problem is not with the world rather the self-rejection expresses itself in the form of world rejection. Conversely, self-acceptance, expresses itself in the form of world acceptance. Again Swamiji beautifully says: a Gyani is at home with himself as he is and therefore at home with the world as it is. There is no dreaming and projections. He lives in the present. I am fine as I am; and enjoy doing whatever I can do, and whatever I have to do. He does not travel from unhappiness to happiness. He is always in a state of happiness.

There is no connection between set up and poornatvam. Set up belongs to the lower level, egoistic level and poornatvam belongs to a higher level. To put it in Upanishadic language, the set up belongs to vyavaharika satya; poornatvam belongs to paramarthica satya; he does not mix up order of reality. And another interesting thing happens to such a person, the Gyani. When he dwells in the lower "I", the karmas, the actions, do not produce punyam or papam. Only when I am identified with ahamkara or when there is a sankalpa, only then punyam and papam are produced. Since Gyani does not have the crystallized-ego, it does not

produce punyam and papam. That is why in Tatva Bodha, we saw, Gyani does not generate agami karma. All his karmas are destroyed. Citing example of a roasted seed although it looks

like a normal seed it cannot germinate anymore. So too a Gyani cannot produce any more karma's.

For roasting Ahamkara you need the Gyana Agni. By this fire Ahamkara is burned down. Such a person is called Pandita. Panda means self knowledge. Chapter 2, shloka 11, also refers to Pandita.

**Shloka # 20:**

कर्मफलस्य संन्यासोऽप्यस्यैव कर्मफलस्य संन्यासोऽप्यस्यैव  
कर्मफलस्य संन्यासोऽप्यस्यैव कर्मफलस्य संन्यासोऽप्यस्यैव 4.20

**Giving up attachment to the fruits of works, eternally content, independent, the man, engaged in works as he is, does nothing at all.**

Sri Krishna pointed out that a Gyani is free from karma and sankalpa. He is a free person. Citing analogy of Thermometer (slave of surrounding) and thermostat (controller of surroundings), Agyani is like a thermometer while Gyani is like a thermostat. Therefore in one, he is a slave of the set up, in

the other, he is the master of the set up and what makes you a master is only Gyanam. Sri Krishna says any person of any status can obtain Gyanam. A gyani is at peace even amidst society while an Agyani is miserable even in an Ashrama. Varna, ashrama, religion, sex, profession and nationality do not matter for obtaining Gyanam. There two types of Gyani's:

- GrihasthaGyani: A householder can also become a Gyani. Shlokas 20,22,23 and 24 discuss Grihastha Gyani.
- Sanyasi Gyani: Shloka # 21 talks of Sanyasi Gyani.

Shloka # 20, second line:

**Grihastha Gyani:**

He has to perform pancha maha yagyaha. He is also extremely

active. The difference is that he does not feel fulfillment through activities. Gyani does not connect fulfillment with his pursuit. His fulfillment is in the higher "I". Gyani's satisfaction does not come from the set up. He is equally happy without it. If I give support, it is love. If I seek support, it is attachment.

Once he has poornatvam he does not lean on any external factor. Strength comes from knowledge. He does not have any psychological dependence although he may have physical dependence. He expects results from his actions but he is not concerned about them. In effect he does not worry about results. If expectation is not met what to do? Swami Dayananda Saraswathi used to say, " Success in life is preparation for failure". With such a healthy mind a Gyani performs his actions. In philosophical sense, he remembers his higher Self. In a psychological sense, he is free, as his actions do not create any anxiety in him.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# **Bagawat Geeta Class 60 – Chapter 4**

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 15:**



ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अर्जुनस्य भ्रातृकत्वं च ॥ ४.१५ ॥

**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.

Sri Krishna says, only through Gyanam can one insulate his or her mind from the tyranny of action. Once insulated, the action will appear like a game, a leela. For a Gyani it becomes a sport while for an Agyani it is a major undertaking. This method of insulation is available to every being. The method is not a new one. Your own forefathers have used it. Why don't you use it as well?





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

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## **Bagawat Geeta, Class 59, Chapter 4**

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 13:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.13 ॥

**The fourfold class-system according to the divisions of Prakrti's constituents and works, has been ordained by Me. Though I am its author, know Me to be the immutable non-agent.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna is talking about Varna Ashrama Dharma as described by him through the Vedas. According to Vedas, society is divided into four classes. Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. These four classes can also be seen from three other perspectives. They are: Jati (parentage), Karma (profession) and Guna (character) respectively.

When a Jati Brahmana becomes an elected MP, he has become a Kshatriya by Karma. He could even become a Vaishya if he spends a lot of time chasing after money. Thus, there are many permutations and combinations that are possible.

Are there any gradations among the three?

In Jati, all four are created equal.

In karma too all occupations are equally important for the peace and progress of society. The mantra Purushasuktham says all four are parts of God. The four parts are Face (Knowledge, Brahmana), Arm ( Soldier, Kshatriya), Thighs and Knees ( Money, Vaishya) and legs (Movement or work, Shudra).

Every organ is important. You realize this only when an organ does not function. Thus, there is no difference between professions. Swamiji says India's caste problems exist because this equality in professions has been violated.

However, in Guna there is gradation. A Noble person is superior to others. He will not demand it but people will themselves respect him. All of us should strive to become Guna Brahmana. Guna Brahmana is superior to Guna Kshatriya, Guna

Vaishya or Guna Shudra. This is because he is the one closest to knowledge. He is a Satva Guna Pradhana. Guna Kshatriya is a little away, as he still has to attain knowledge. Guna Vaishya is even further away as he is still selfish, although very active. Guna shudra is lowest. He has not even started selfish activity. He has a long way to go.

Puranic stories such as Nandanar are about a non-brahmin although he was a Guna Brahamana.

### **Jati: Do we have a choice regarding Jathi?**

In Jati, there is no choice. We can't change our parentage. Moksha does not require Jati as a basis for it.

### **Guna: Do we have a choice regarding our Guna?**

Can a Guna shudra become a Guna Brahma? Here there is choice. Character change is possible. All sadhanas are to help us in this process. We are born Tamo Guna Pradhana. It is the intrinsic nature of our body to be lazy. In Tatva Bodha we learnt that body is made from Tamas Amsha.

So, we have to move from Tamas pradhana to Rajas Pradhana. Rituals (karmakanda) can help us in this process. And then, move from Rajas to Satva Guna. One should learn to be contemplative. Upasana kandam helps with this change. Thus, after I become a Guna Brahma, one has to go to the Nirguna state (Ishwara Aikyam) through Gyana Kanda.

### **Do we have a choice regarding Karma or occupation?**

We do have a choice. We can choose our occupation based upon:

1. Jathi or hereditary profession
2. Guna: based upon inclination.

Both have advantages and disadvantages.

### **Advantages:**



With jathi, there is no need to choose. One is already exposed to the atmosphere. Even a child listens to its mothers singing in its womb. Preparation takes place early, including food.

**Disadvantages:** If he does not like the profession he chooses, life can be miserable. Even today, Jathi based jobs are quite common.

**Guna:**

**Advantages:** There is no strain in person. He looks forward to Monday. Doing what I enjoy is important to a healthy life.

**Disadvantages:** I can never get an early training. Inclination becomes evident later in life. I may not choose correctly.

Drona and Vishwamithra are examples where Jathi was dominant.

Shastra warns us; let not money be a basis for profession. If this happens arts and crafts may die.

This is the Varna Vyavastha per Vedas and as per God.

Sri Krishna says even though I have created the four-fold class of humanity; still I am active all the time. However, these actions do not bind me. So, Arjuna do not escape your Karma. You can, even performing your Karmas, enjoy peace. Even though I do all activity they don't disturb me. I am not affected.

**Shloka # 14:**

ॐ कर्मफलं न प्राप्नुयान्मम ॥ कर्मणो भक्त्यर्पणवत् ॥  
ॐ कर्मणो भक्त्यर्पणवत् ॥ कर्मणो भक्त्यर्पणवत् ॥ 4.14 ॥

**Works do not taint me; I desire not their fruits. Whoso knows Me to be such, is not bound by works.**

Sri Krishna says Karma and its phalam cannot disturb me. I am not concerned about the results of action. Lord will not do any injustice to me.

