

# Bagawat Geeta, Class 69, Chapter 5

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda started Chapter 5 today. He said in chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively, Sri Krishna spoke about two topics. He spoke about Sadhana and Lifestyle. Recapping those teachings Swamiji said:

1. **Sadhana:** Regarding Sadhana he made it clear that everyone has to go through Karma Yoga Sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. There is no choice. Karma Yoga is the means towards Gyana Yoga and Gyana Yoga is the means towards liberation.

Karma yoga is a means and Gyana Yoga too is a means while moksha is the end. You can have a choice between means and a choice between ends but not a choice between a mean and an end. One can choose between pants or shirts. Here, there is choice. Choice is only between similar. Thus, one can't choose between a pant and a shirt. Similarly, one cannot choose between Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. Once you choose an end, it means the means is a given.

Citing an example, getting into a bus is meaningful only when you have chosen not only the bus but also the destination. You cannot choose the bus without choosing the destination. We are not getting into the bus for a joy ride. Similarly, if you have chosen a destination, you have to choose the means as well.

Citing another example, suppose I go to a doctor for stomach pain and the doctor prescribes a tablet. I cannot get away from not taking the tablet. If I chose the end of removing the pain, I have to choose the means as well. Therefore,

choosing the means and end is complementary; one choice will validate the other choice and the other way around as well. Thus, Karma Yoga is the way to come to Gyana yoga. Gyana yoga is the way to Moksha.

Citing another example, it is just like a person occupies both the father status and son status. With regard to his son, he is the father and with regard to his father, he is the son. From Karma yoga's perspective Gyana Yoga is an end. From Moksha's perspective Gyana Yoga is the means.

After explaining quite a bit by Sri Krishna, Arjuna is still not clear. His confusion is with respect to sadhana. This is an area of confusion to many people.

There are people who think karma yoga and gyana yoga are alternative means of liberation. Many still think and talk about different paths to liberation. Thus, if you are an active person, you attain moksha through karma and if you are an intellectual person, you attain moksha through Gyana yoga.

Even Shankaracharya struggled to clarify this confusion. He too says karma yoga cannot lead you to liberation, it will take you to Gyana yoga and Gyana yoga will lead to liberation; this is one part of the teaching;

Then there is second part of teaching with regard to the lifestyle. A person can lead two types of lifestyles, one is life of activity in society and the other is life of seclusion or life of work and life of withdrawal.

or Life in society and life in seclusion.

## **2.Life style:**

Sri Krishna described two types of lifestyle. One is a person who is active in society and other is one who leads a life of seclusion.

Active in society is known as Grihasthashrama. While one

leading a life of seclusion is known as Sanyasahrama. In olden times, after Gurukula, both lifestyles were open to a person. A lifestyle is also called a Nishta. Sri Krishna points out that every person has a choice in lifestyle. One can be a Grihastha or a monk. Whatever lifestyle or ashrama one adopts in both of them you have to have follow Karma yoga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga.

Grihasthashrama Dharma is Karma Yoga for householders. Sanyasahrama is Karma Yoga for monks. Both have their rites, pujas and rituals prescribed.

Grihastha will have a sacred thread while a Sanyasi has a danda. Grihastha has got rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. Sanyasi too has rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. The type of parayanams may vary.

For a grihastha Vishnu Sahasranama and similar mantras are emphasized. For the sanyasi,

Upanishad, Bhashyams, etc. are emphasized.

For a grihastha, saguna ishvara namas are given, like Namashivaya, Narayanaya etc.; for a Sanyasi, Upanishad mahavakya mantras are given for japa, or Omkara japa, and other similar mantras are also given. For both, puja is a requirement. All these are necessary to develop a mental conditioning required for reaching Gyana yoga. A sanyasi should qualify himself to enter Gyana yoga. A grihastha also has to qualify himself to come to Gyana yoga.

Sri Krishna asks all to follow their Svadharma.

Once ready, both should come to Gyana Yoga. Thus, in sadhana, there is no choice. In lifestyle, however, there is choice. Each lifestyle has plusses and minuses. For Gihastashrama the plus points are he is able to perform Pancha Maha Yagna, perform noble services for society, he has security through his children, family and wealth. The minuses are that he has

equal responsibilities. He has to raise his children, provide education, marry off his daughters etc. He has to face the fears and anxieties related to raising a family.

In Sanyasa ashrama, however, there is no responsibility, no wife, no husband, no children and you need not bother about anything. If you get hungry, ask Bhavathi Bhiksham Dehi; somebody will give Bhiksha. So, while there is no responsibility there is also no security.

So, every ashrama has got it's plus and minus points. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, take to any ashrama and pursue both the sadhanas and get liberation.

After listening to all this Arjuna wanted further clarification. He wants to know about the Nishta, when there is a choice. **Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our decision.**

Arjuna's mind at the moment is voting for Sanyasa. He does not want to kill. In crisis, he wants to escape with Sri Krishna's blessings. His question is which is better, Grihastha or Sanyasa? Sri Krishna is going to talk about Sanyasa Yoga.

**Shloka # 1: Arjuna said:**

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ।  
गृहस्थाय वा सन्यासे वा ।  
कृष्ण उवाच ॥ ५.१ ॥

**The renunciation of works, Krishna, and again, their performance you praise. Tell me for certain which of the two is better.**

In spite of Sri Krishna's clear teaching, Arjuna asks: Sri Krishna, you glorify both ashramas. You have glorified life of activity (grihasthashrama). You have also glorified Sanyasa Ashrama, life of seclusion. The two are contradictory. So, Sri Krishna, tell me, which one is better of the two? Both are



undistracted life. The many duties of grihasthashrama are all seen as obstacles. Therefore, in grihastha ashrama, karma yoga can be ideally followed;

In sanyasa ashrama, karma yoga cannot be ideally followed because he does not have the resources to do a lot of karmas; there is no money with them; he cannot do any good karma; he has to manage with limited activities, like japa, puja, susrusha, etc. Therefore, there are certain advantages in following some sadhanas and some disadvantages in following other sadhanas. However, in both, you can follow the sadhana and attain liberation; therefore in both ashramas one can follow the sadhana and attain liberation.

Shastra also talks of the ashrama that fits a type of person. Sanyasa requires a particular mental make up that is not an easy one. Sanyasa ashrama is dangerous for an unprepared person. Sri Krishna, says, for majority of people life of activity is safer and ideal. In Vedas there are rules when one goes from Brahmacharya to Grihastha. From Brahmacharya one can also go to Sanyasashrama with Guru's advice and Shishya's acceptance.

The greatest risk of sanyasashrama is that you can't go back. It is an irreversible process.

So, Sri Krishna says, Grihastha Ashrama is a better choice for majority. He says Gita is for general public, while Upanishad is for evolved one's. While Upanishad prefers Sanyasahrama, Gita considers Grihasthashrama as the best. We should keep in mind that in Gita, both the Teacher and Student were grihastas.

### **Shloka # 3:**

गृहस्थश्च संन्यासी च कर्माणां भेदोऽस्ति  
गृहस्थोऽपि कर्मणोऽप्युत्तमं करोति 5.3

**Know him to be a perpetual renouncer who neither shuns nor**

**seeks, O mighty-armed! One who is above such contraries is really liberated from bondage.**

Now that Sri Krishna has recommended Grihastha Ashrama, is there any way one can get advantage of both Ashramas? This is a thought that can come in a person's mind. Sri Krishna, addressing this question, says, there is a method. He says one needs to handle Raga and Dvesha in Grihastashrama. Householder's life is influenced by many factors. It is said nine planets influence a householder. A son-in-law is considered the tenth planet. He is a planet over which you have no control. Whatever he does affects your daughter but you cannot do anything about it.

Thus, there are many relationship that are similar, in which you have no control. When you get married to a girl and you place a knot on one neck simultaneously you

are putting knots on many other necks as well. You are immediately related to the girl's family. All these knots are factors that can influence you but you cannot control them. Therefore, you have to learn to manage your ragah-dveshah. Whether your likes and dislikes are fulfilled or not, you have to learn to navigate through life without being affected. This requires tremendous strength; And therefore Sri Krishna says a grihastha is a sanyasi, if he has learnt to handle likes and dislikes; For one who has managed his ragah-dveshah the house itself is an ashrama That is the trick. Sri Krishna , however, does not say how we are to manage Raga and dvesha.

### **Take Away:**

Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our decision.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

---

# 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. Swaropa, 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 Swaroopam. For Ishvara 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 Swaroopam. 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 Ishvara, 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 asanga 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 Grihasta and Sanyasi Gyani's. Brahmarapanam is a householder or Grihasta 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

---

# Bagawat Geeta, Class 67

## Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 36:**

सर्वपापेभ्योऽपि सर्वभूतानां परमोऽहं भवामि ।  
सर्वपापेभ्योऽपि सर्वभूतानां परमोऽहं भवामि ॥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:**

सर्वपापेभ्योऽपि सर्वभूतानां परमोऽहं भवामि ।  
सर्वपापेभ्योऽपि सर्वभूतानां परमोऽहं भवामि ॥1.37॥

**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, Prarabhdha and Agami Karmas are all destroyed with knowledge. Just as a glove insulates one from an electric shock so also Gyanam insulates one from the effects of Karma. While our karmic events don't change, our response to them now changes. The karma cannot affect a Gyani anymore. He is insulated from its effects. It is as though stopped.

Sri Krishna also compares knowledge to a huge conflagration. Everything is burnt in the fire of Gyana including karmas.

The fire for such a conflagration, however, has to be well kindled. A weak fire can be extinguished by a large piece of wood thrown into the fire. Half knowledge, compared here to a weak fire, will not help. Knowledge needs to be obtained from a Parampara Acharya. Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam are all required. Knowledge obtained in this manner, from a qualified teacher, will reduce everything to ashes.

What is the difference between Papa Nasha and Karma Nasha? Shloka # 36 talked about Papa Nasha while Shloka # 37 is talking about Karma Nasha.

Papa nasha only refers to papa karmas. Here Karmas mean both papa and punya karmas. Both fall under Samsara. Punya leads to Svarga. But eventually one has to return from Svargam as well. Swamiji compares it to going to America and coming back to Chennai with its heat, humidity and mosquitoes. Thus, Punya is a sorrow that comes later and is a Bandha (attachment). So, Gyani goes beyond both papam and punyam.

## Shloka # 38:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.38 ॥

**Nothing exists here as purifying as knowledge. Perfected in yoga, in course of time, one wins it in one's own Self.**

With Shloka # 37 Gyana Phalam is over. Four Gyana phalams were 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





- 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 benefit in this very life.

He also says with Gyanam we also need to address or overcome some of our deeply entrenched Vasanas as well. This may take some time.

Our actions and responses are governed by two factors, one is our knowledge; and another is our vasana; knowledge will take care of part of the problem, but we have to handle our vasanas, or habits as well.

Habit changing requires deliberate effort. It is not that easy to change well entrenched habits like emotional problems, inferiority complex, lack of self-image jealousy, anger, irritation etc. They are all well entrenched and one needs to handle one of them at a time. Only by controlling our Vasanas can we attain true knowledge.

**Shloka # 40:**

अज्ञानोऽशुचिर्दुश्चिन्तितोऽशुश्रूणोऽशुसंयतः  
 अज्ञानोऽशुचिर्दुश्चिन्तितोऽशुश्रूणोऽशुसंयतः॥४.४०॥

**The ignorant, the unfaithful, the doubting self perishes. Neither this world nor the next nor happiness accrues to the doubter.**

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna talked about positive traits. Here, now, he talks about negative traits. He describes them as follows:

1. Ignorance: with respect to the world. He says every

human being has to be informed about the world to lead a normal life. Worldly knowledge is required.

2. Ashradha: Lack of faith in scriptures.
3. Samshayaha: Doubt.

Of the three Samshayaha or the doubting Thomas is the most problematic. Suppose a person is not worldly he may not get worldly ananada, however, due to his shraddha he will obtain 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:**

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



As per shloka # 41, try to reach a state of alertness of mind at all times. Most of the time our mind is not alert. This alert mind is also a detached mind.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

---

## Bagawat Geeta Class 66, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 34:**

ज्ञानं प्राप्नुयान्मया भक्त्या यत्तु योऽपि  
सर्वज्ञो भवेत्सर्वभूतहितं विदुषोऽपि॥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.**

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





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.



Shloka # 30 discussed the discipline related to food as a Yagnaha. Upvasa (Upa-Vasa) means staying near God. To do so one has to avoid sensory objects on the day of Upavasa. The word Ahara does not only mean food, it also includes other sensory objects that we come in contact with such as hearing, speaking etc., or the Pancha Indriya's. In Chapter 6 Sri Krishna discusses quantity control of food while in chapter 17 he discusses its quality control. Both need to be controlled.

So, discipline with respect to Ahara means Pancha Prana are to be disciplined. This is also a Yagnaha. Undisciplined Pancha Prana is the sacrifice for disciplined Pancha Parana.

With this shloka, all 12 Yagnahas are complete. Sri Krishna does not say that all 12 sadhanas have to be practiced. He recommends some or some combination at least be practiced.

Citing the sacred thread ceremony or Yagno pavitham is one such Yagnaha. Man is born Animal-man. He then becomes a Man-man through his spiritual life. Later with knowledge he becomes God -Man. The twice born is a deliberate person. By practice of Yagnahas one destroys impurities obstructing knowledge. Hence all Yagnahas are glorious.

### Shloka # 31:

They partake of the ambrosial remains of these sacrifices and repair to the eternal Brahman. The non-performer of sacrifices does not own (even) this world; why then, O best of Kuru princes! Speak of another? 4.31

**They partake of the ambrosial remains of these sacrifices and repair to the eternal Brahman. The non-performer of sacrifices does not own (even) this world; why then, O best of Kuru princes! Speak of another?**

Sri Krishna says if a person practices one or more of these Sadhanas it will be helpful. Food should be taken only after the sadhana.

Thus, Shastra says one must get up before sunrise. We must





**the sacrifices of materials. All works, without exception, Arjuna! culminate in knowledge.**

Here Sri Krishna talks about the glory of Gyana Yagna. He says Dravya Yagna (Karma Yoga) is of lesser superiority than Gyana Yagna. Why so? Since all Karma Yagnas culminate or fructify only in Knowledge, they are useless if they do not take us to Gyanam. Karma Yagnam is incomplete without Gyana Yagnam. 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:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥ 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

---

## **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:**

Other ascetics, subject to severe disciplines, sacrifice their material possessions, their penances, spiritual exercises, prescribed lessons, and knowledge. 4.28

**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 ॥ १ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १ ॥ 4.29 ॥

**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.

Pranyama is a very big discipline. There are advanced courses offering Pranayama for obtaining material success. Kundalini yoga is a part of this. Kundaini 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



thick and undisciplined.

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

---

## **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,





dhyana yagnaha; upavasa yagnaha; yatra yagnaha; pranayama yagnaha; all these are called yagnaha. Why are they called yagnaha? Because in all these different sadhanas, the one common factor is God. All these yagnahas are dedicated to God, for superior growth. In all of them I pray: ॐ mamopatta samasta duritakshayadvara Sri Parameshvara prityartham, that all my impurities must go away; and I must become spiritually 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.





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,

Ram Ramaswamy

---

# Bagawat Geeta Class 62, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 20:**

कर्मफलमोक्षोऽयं कर्मण्यो धनदायकम् ।  
संन्यस्य ततोऽपि नान्यत्कुर्यात्तदात्मनः ॥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.

A Grihasta Gyani is liberated in spite of an active life. Sanyasi is also liberated by his way of life.

Grihasta Gyani is liberated because of his Gyanam not due to his work. Work comes to him in waves, one after the other. He finds rest despite it all. He is a Nithyapatya. He is a Nirashayaha. He does not depend on people. Even in action he is free. The popular saying, "When shoe fits, you don't feel its presence. You feel it when it does not fit" fits him perfectly. For Gyani Karma is not a hurdle.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 4.21 ॐ

**Free from expectations, controlling mind and self, renouncing all possessions, one who does an exclusive form of bodily work incurs no sin.**

In this shloka Sri Krishna talks of a Sanyasi Gyani. This person is also free. He has renounced everything including relationships. Renunciation does not mean suppression. He does not lack anything. He has mastered the body-mind –thought complex. His body is made fit for this renunciation as well. He has to keep himself fit, as there is nobody to take care of him. In this shloka Atma means body. Since he does not have responsibilities he also does not have possessions.

In Grihastha ashrama the advantage is that one has security from children, money, wealth etc. The disadvantage is he has to take care of all of them.

In Sanyasa Ashrama the advantage is that there is no

responsibility, no wife, no children and no property. The disadvantage is that there is no security. He is in the hands of God.

Both ashramas have positives and negatives. Sanyasa Ashrama is a civic death. He does not even vote. He has a body given by God. He has to take care of it as hard as possible till the 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.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 4.22

**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. Shashtra 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.

योगयोगयोग योगयोगयोग योगयोगयोगयोगयोगयोगयोग  
योगयोगयोगयोग योग योगयोग योगयोगयोगयोगयोगयोगयोग4.23

**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





First step of vedantic knowledge is Chetana-Achetana vibhaga. After this knowledge, I must now claim Consciousness as myself. I must now say, " I am" rather than " I have".

I must know I am not a part, product or property of the body. 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

---

# Baghawat Geeta, Chapter 4, Class 61

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 18:**

ॐ कर्मणो भक्त्या चोत्तमं कर्म ॥ १८ ॥  
ॐ कर्मणो भक्त्या चोत्तमं कर्म ॥ १८ ॥ 4.18

**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



also, compassion is intrinsic to a Gyani. It is compassion without motives. Backed by compassion, he acts according to 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:

शुद्धचित्तोऽपि कर्मफलसंशयान्मुक्तो  
शुद्धचित्तोऽपि कर्मफलसंशयान्मुक्तो 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

---







A Gyani is master of situations.

### Shloka # 17:

ॐ कर्मणो भवति धर्मो मयि नास्ति शक्यः ॥  
ॐ कर्मणो भवति धर्मो मयि नास्ति शक्यः ॥ 4.17 ॥

**Indeed you ought to know about work; also you ought to know about bad work; and, besides, you ought to know about non-work. Profound is the course of work.**

Sri Krishna says, not only I am going to teach about Karma, but also about its nature, also about wrong Karma (Vikarma) and also about Akarma (inaction).

I will discuss about action, inaction and wrong action. This knowledge you have to work to gain it.

This is an introduction to Gyanam as an insulating material.

Gathihi: in the shloka means, Swaroopam or nature of action.

### Shloka # 18:

ॐ कर्मणो भवति धर्मो मयि नास्ति शक्यः ॥  
ॐ कर्मणो भवति धर्मो मयि नास्ति शक्यः ॥ 4.18 ॥

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

From # 18-24, Sri Krishna deals with knowledge or solution to all problems. This shloka is the core of chapter #4. It is a very impotent shloka in the entire Gita. It condenses the teaching of all Upanishads. Hence Gita is also considered an Upanishad. Essence of Upanishad is Gyanam. It is discussed in chapter # 2 of Gita and now in Chapter # 4 as well. Shloka # 18 is very significant and a difficult one to understand. This shloka has language of contradictions.

The literal translation is as follows:

“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