

Upadesa Saram, Clas10

Greetings All,

Shlokas 21:

This, the Heart, is the true import of "I". For it exists, when the " I" is not.

Continuing his teaching Swami Paramarthananda says,

in first part of Upadesha Saram, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talked of various Sadhanas such as Upasana, and Ashtanga Yoga highlighting Pranayama. All of them are for preparing the personality and are for Gyana Yogyatha Prapthihi. After following this everybody has to come to Gyana Yoga or Atma Vichara or Bodha Marga. From shloka # 14 onwards Eka Chintana or Advaita Atma Vichara is discussed. Only through Gyana can mind be handled. Unless mind is handled properly one cannot get liberation. Mind is a Mithya instrument with low order of reality. Consciousness is different from mind. I am different from mind. I am the agent behind mind. I am true while mind is Mithya. Recognition of mind as mithya results in Mano Nasha. Mind equals Ahamkara because it consists of thought and even in that the primary thought is the "I" thought. Mano nasha is Ahamkara Nasha. Knowing the Atma or knowing the I can falsify Ahamkara. There is no pot other than the Clay. Only after Knowledge of Clay can Pot be falsified. It is the same with water and wave. Once we see everything as water there are no more waves. Only after Atma Gyanam can Ahamkara be falsified. This can be done only through Atma Vichara.

Shloka # 22:

The body, the sense, the vital force and ignorance, all these are insentient. They are not the consciousness, which "I am".

Aham Patati or Ahamkara falls. This occurs through Atma

enquiry. This is arriving at the consciousness principle through Pancha Kosha or five-layered body. Therefore self-knowledge is knowing I am not the five-layered body but the Consciousness. Consciousness is not a part, product or property of the body. It is Nithyaha, Sarvagathaha, Nirvikaraha, Aprameya, Akarta, Abhokta etc. I am that Consciousness existence principle. "I am body" is a mithya. This knowledge is Atma Gyanam. After this gyanam Ahamkara falls. Ahamkara means the mind. It is falsified.

Shloka # 23:

Is there another consciousness to light Existence? Existence itself is consciousness from which the I arises.

In previous shloka, Ramana Maharishi pointed out that Atma is different from the five-layered body. It is pure undivided attention. It is existence associated with every object. This existence principle is called Sat. It is in my body as well. In body, we call it "am". In an object we call it as "is". The "am" and "is" are same. Bodies are many, objects are many, and existence is, however, only one. How can one experience this pure existence? Right now we are experiencing existence associated with objects. We are not experiencing existence in its pure form. We experience a watch, that it exists, by saying it "is". We can differentiate between existence and non-existence. Even though we experience existence, it is with respect to objects. Atma is pure existence. We need to separate existence from objects and come to pure existence.

How to become conscious of pure existence?

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says pure existence can never be an object of knowledge. It will always be a subject or the consciousness principle. Pure consciousness is the very Subject. Chit cannot illumine Sat. It cannot objectify Sat. How can you objectify it when it is You.

You want to see your own original "I". You can only see the

reflected I in the mirror. The eye can never perceive the original I . Even though eye can't objectify the I you still don't have any doubt about the original I. That doubtless I is pure existence. That doubtless I is pure Consciousness in Sat Chit Atma Asmi. It has no limitation. Limitation is only for body. "I" am free from

limitations hence "I" am Sat Chit Ananada.

Explaining Shloka # 23, Where is the Consciousness that is separate from existence? Is there a consciousness that is separate from existence? If it is there, then we can separate them. Consciousness can then look at existence. That is not possible. Existence equals Consciousness. So, objectification of consciousness is not possible.

Explaining Shloka 23, a Consciousness that is the illuminator of existence and different from existence, where is it available? There is no such consciousness as it is the very Subject. This is because Consciousness (Chit) is in the form of pure existence Sat.

Aham =Sat. Pure existence is in form of Consciousness.

Therefore we can say: Pure existence is in form of consciousness. Also, Consciousness is in form of Existence. Consciousness and Existence are one and the same. They are just two words for one. It is the plurality of names, both referring to one Atma or " I am". Once you know this, your spiritual journey is over. Existence has also has all properties of Atma such as : Nithyaha, Sarvagathaha, Nirvikaraha, Aprameya, Akarta, Abhokta, etc . It exists even after fall of body. It should learn to claim " I am the Atma." This is Nidhidhyasanam.

Shloka 24:

The difference between God and individual is only in name, form and intelligence. They are the same in their essential

nature as the heart.

This Existence-Consciousness is the same one behind the Samashti (Macro) as well as Vyashti (Micro or Jivatma). In both Jiva atma and Paramatma, the atma is the same one. The difference is in the medium of manifestation. This is the Jivatma Paramatma Aikya Gyanam.

Shloka # 24 is a Mahavakya. Are the wave and the ocean different or identical? From a superficial angle they are diagonally opposite. Thus, the wave is small while ocean is big; Wave is supported, Ocean supports; Wave is an effect while ocean is the cause; Wave is subject to arrival and departure while ocean is not. However, if you analyze them as wave is water and ocean is also water. Then, there is no such thing as wave. Wave is only a Nama and Roopa. So also with Ocean, it is also only a Nama and Roopa. The water is the same in both. So also in Vyashti (body) and Samashti (creation) there is only one Atma. Superficial Jivatma and Paramatma both are in reality Atma.

Chandogya Upanoshad says: Tat Tvam Asi. Shankaracharya has written on this maha mantra in Vakya Vrithi.

Explaining Shloka # 24, The difference between Jivatma and Paramatma is superficial. They are just name and form and not the content. Thus:

Atma +Samashti=Paramatma

Atma +Vyashti=Jivatma

From Nama Roopa perspective they are different. But Svabhavatha (true nature) the Param and Jiva adjectives go away and one is left with Atma only.

Both are pure existence (nirguna), which is the ultimate reality. So have a penetrating vision for Advaitam.

Shloka # 25:

When perception of name and form ceases, there is the vision of the Self. This is also the vision of God, for, God and the Self are the same.

This shloka is also a Mahavakya. From these verses we know Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi knew about traditional teachings. He knew the mahavakyas. He shows that he was in sync with Shankaracharya.

Take the wave and ocean. Remove nama and ropa and you will see it is only water. Thus, one can see the content by just shifting our vision from Nama Roopa. This is known as Bhoga Tyaga Lakhanam. Bangle is gold, chain is gold, ring is gold. Give up superficial nama and roopa and you will come to understanding of Jivatma (essential nature) and simultaneously the essential nature of Paramatma as well. They are not different. They are the one essential nature. Self Realization is God realization. They are not a separate process.

After removal of Vesha (dress) one sees the oneness of Jivatma and Paramatma. One who sees the water, for him there is no ocean or wave. I am that Atma.

Take Away from this class: Shloka # 25:

Giving us a very powerful tool of discovering the Self, Swamiji says we should look at people and objects without Nama and Roopa. Please experiment with concept and if you hold that thought long enough you will see a change in perspective.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Upadesa Saram, Class 9

Greetings All,

Shlokas # 19:

Wherefrom does this “I” thought arise? If one enquires thus, it vanishes. This is self-enquiry.

Continuing his teaching Swami Paramarthananda says, all types of Sadhana's such as Puja, Japa, Dhyana, Samadhi, Yoga, and Gyanam all will have to culminate in Atma Vichara. They are important but they are complete only with Atma Vichara. Thus Atma Vichara only will eliminate Ahamkara or the mortal “I”. It is not optional but a compulsory knowledge. Ahamkara is born out of Self Ignorance. Ahamkara goes away with Gyanam. As long as a root is there the tree will sprout again. Agyanam is moolam of Ahamkara. Therefore, Atma Vichara needs to go along with Guru Shashtra Upadesha. Even when somebody has got this knowledge without a Guru, they are rare prodigies. They got their Guru Upadesha and knowledge in past births. Therefore, these prodigies do not require Guru Upadesha. For majority of us, we need the Guru Upadesha. So don't quote Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi to avoid Guru Shashtra Upadesha. Majority of us require it. Upadesha means systematic teaching of shastras. This will lead to Atma Gyanam. This will destroy Agyanam and thus destroy Ahamkara. Ahamkara “I” is replaced by Atma “I”.

Ahami is when Ahamkara is destroyed. Atma is Layasthanam or Adisthana Chaitanyam. It is Atma Chaitanyam. This Chaitanyam now shines.

Shloka # 20:

When the “I” thought perishes, then another I, I springs forth as the Heart, spontaneously. It is the Existence in all of its fullness.

After Atma Vichara Ahamkara is eliminated. And the new I

shines. A serious seeker wants to know what this means? How do I know if this event has occurred, that is the elimination of Ahamkara, replaced by Shining Atma?

What will life be before it and after it? How will I feel when the event occurs? These are questions from serious seekers. Will I experience the Infinite I? Now I experience a finite I. Will I have the experience of a new infinite I?

Many people have the misconception that they will experience a new I. We should know that there is no specific experience of the new I or infinite I? Any specific experience requires Triputi or experience of dualities (experiencer-experience-Object or knower-known-act of knowing, seer-seen-act of seeing etc) and is thus limited. Any specific experience of infinite is a logical contradiction. All specific experiences are in finitude. In waking and sleep states also we have specific experiences. Another is a general experience. There is absence of any experience in deep sleep and Samadhi states. Triputi is absent in Sushupthi and Samadhi states. Thus the two experiences are:

- One is specific experience of finite.
- Other is absence of any experience like in Sushupthi.

Other than these two experiences there are no other experiences of infinitude.

So, what does this shloka mean? When the limited "I" is gone and is replaced by infinite Atma. It is more a specific understanding. During a transaction in the waking state I am enjoying status of experiencer. Through Upadesha I understand that experience is not my intrinsic nature while consciousness is. My experiencer status is Mithya but not my intrinsic nature, that I am a conscious being. The color of my Angavastram is not mine. The experiencer comes with waking and dream but goes away in Sushupthi. The experiencer comes and goes, hence he is a Mithya. So also all experiences of

Experiencer are also Mithya.

I am a Conscious being now, but if I doze off I lose it. So, there is a transient state. Limitation is not my true nature, meaning, I am limitless. This sense of localization does not belong to me. The understanding that I am without localization is the true nature. Experience will be finite, however, understanding will be of infinite.

The experience of the earth is of flatness but we know it is a globe. We feel the stationary status of the earth but we know it is rotating very fast. This wisdom is not shaken by experience. Even though I experience myself locally, I know this is not true. This is wisdom. There is no change in experience, only falsification of it.

Shlokas 21:

This, the Heart, is the true import of "I". For it exists, when the " I" is not.

The Ahamkara I says I am limited. There is another Consciousness that says I am limitless. How do I know which is real and which is fake? Should we say experience is right or knowledge is right? We say knowledge alone is powerful. We know several experiences that are not fact based. (Stationary earth, flat earth, rising sun etc). There are illusory experiences at every level. In Self-experience I avoid the experience. In Nirvikapla Samadhi Patanjali did not discover Advaita Gyanam. Yoga is Dvaita. Only knowledge is reliable.

Experienced I is limited in nature. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishu says limitless I is my true nature. The limited I is subject to arrival and departure. During waking and sleep too we can experience arrival and departure.

The limitless is the real I while Ahamkara resolves during sleep every day. Dress is changed every day. Dress is not my real nature. Ahamkara is removed every day and put on as well

during sleep and waking states respectively. Consciousness never comes and goes. It has a continued existence without resolution. Consciousness continues even in sleep. That we are able to talk about sleep is proof of witness consciousness. Hence Consciousness is the real meaning of the word "I".

I am the eternal consciousness in which Ahamkara rises and falls. During sleep Ahamkara goes away. In waking state it comes back. In death Ahamkara goes away but I continue. Knowing is also a manner of transaction. "I am" without transaction is my real nature.

The enquiry into this has to be systematic through Pancha Kosha Viveka. It is discussed in Taitreya Upanishad. I have to see consciousness in every Kosha. I am not the Kosha, but I am the consciousness pervading it. Kosha is separate from Consciousness. Citing an example: Fan is the instrument with the invisible electricity. One is visible while other is not. The invisible electricity is not part of the fan.

So also our body is of five layers with the sentiency principle or consciousness principle. One is invisible while other is visible. Because of sentiency the body functions. Sentiency is not part, product or property of the body. It is not limited by boundary of the body. It is non-material consciousness that survives the end of body. It is the real I.

Shloka 22:

The body, the sense, the vital force and ignorance, all these are insentient. They are not the consciousness, which "I am".

The five fold Koshas are described. Vighraha means Annamaya kosha. First line of shloka is Vedanta Shastra. I am none of these material objects. I am the eternal witness.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 44

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching Swami Paramarthananda says, after shloka # 20, Sri Krishna talked about Karma or doing one's duty. Arjuna has to do Karma to purify his mind. Only a wise person can obtain liberation. Once liberation is obtained he does not need to do Karma. This was conclusion of shloka # 20.

Shloka # 21:

[illegible]

Whatever is done by the best of men, others also do; the world conforms to the standard that he sets.

Here Arjuna may raise an argument that he is a wise person, as such he not need to perform Karma. He could claim that as a Gyani that he does not need to do his duty, which is unpleasant one in this context. It is a plausible argument from Arjuna. To this, from shloka # 21 onwards, Sri Krishna, answering his objection says, even a Gyani has to do Karma. You don't need Karma for purification, knowledge or liberation; however, as long as you are in the society you have to be a role model. Since others need Karma, you need to do Karma to teach them about it.

There are several ways to learn the Dharmic way of living. If not, one will go along his Raga & Dvesha and lead a life of a Prakrita. He needs to change to a Samskrita way of life. Dharma Pramanani, dharmic way of life has three sources. They are:

Veda: Original source

Smrithi: Secondary source

Lifestyle of ideal models or led by elders of society.

Of these three, life style of elders is most effective way of communication. One action equals a thousand books.

A man teaches his son Satyam Vada. Then one day a person from his office comes to the door. The father does not want to see him. He tells his son to tell him my father is not home. The son tells the visitor my father told me to tell you, he is not home. What is the use of teaching Sayam Vada to his son? The actions of elders speak louder than all scriptures.

Mother is the most important influence for a child. Then come father and then the schoolteacher.

So, Arjuna, whether you like it not you are a hero in society. Along with this status comes responsibility. It can be crushing. Therefore do your duty, not for your sake but to lead society. Sri Krishna gives himself as an example. I am an avatar, as such a born Giyani. I will still follow my duties as your Sarathi as a part of my Svadharma. For Kuchela, I had to perform Atithi puja. Even as I accept my duties, so also, you have to do yours.

Shloka # 22:

॥ अहं अर्जुन! कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह
कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह कुरुष्वेह ॥ ३.२२ ॥

I have Arjuna! no duty whatever to discharge in all the three worlds; there is nothing I have not won, and nothing remains to be won by Me; still I ceaselessly work.

Sri Krishna says I need to perform my duties even though I have nothing to get from my actions. There is nothing for me left to accomplish. All four Purushartha's are a part of me. Hence in the word Bhagawan, Bhaga means six fold wealth

possessor. The six fold wealth's are: Aishwaryam (power, ruler, Ishwarabhava), Veeryam (courage), Yashaha (fame), Sree (Prosperity), Gyanam (Knowledge) and Vairagyam (Freedom from dependence). All these are present in full measure. Each is in absolute measure. Such a person is Bhagawan.

Even though I have nothing to accomplish, still I am busy doing my duty as per my Varna and Ashrama. If I can't escape from my duties, how can you?

Shloka #23:

॥ अथ श्रीकृष्ण उवाच ॥
॥ अर्जुन! यदि कदाचित् न मे कार्यं कुरुते श्रमेण,
॥ तदा सर्वथा न कर्तव्यं मे कार्यं कुरुते श्रमेण ॥३.२३॥

Indeed Arjuna! if at any time, I do not work tirelessly, men will in all possible ways , tread that path of mine.

Here Sri Krishna says: O Arjuna, What will happen if elders are irresponsible? Society wants to follow sheepishly the role models. If role model's are not good, there will be confusion. Violation of harmony occurs at many levels.

If I don't discharge my duties enthusiastically, sincerely, whole heartedly, I am teaching others as well. Whole society is waiting to follow me. If I go wrong it, will affect entire society.

There was a Brahmin who went to Rameshwaram to take a bath. He took along a copper vessel. He was worried it would be stolen. He buried it in the beach sand and erected a Shiva Linga over it as an identifier. Another Brahmin came along saw the Shiv Linga and thought it was custom to erect one. He also erected one. Soon everybody who came erected a Linga. The Brahmin when he came back saw Lingas all over the beach.

The whole world is sheepish. No human being likes to think. So, if children follow you, it is an advantage as well as a disadvantage. You can teach them more by your actions, which

is an advantage.

Shloka # 24:

सर्वलोकानां भूतानां च सर्वानामपि भूतानां भूतानां
सर्वानां च भूतानां सर्वानां भूतानां भूतानां 3.24

If I don't work the worlds will perish; I may cause confusion, and may ruin these living beings.

Here Sri Krishna says, once I violate my Svadharma (Pancha Maha Yagna included), others will also do it. Consequences won't be immediate. Consequences will come slowly, after some time. Even ecological disharmony will not happen immediately. When trees are cut and cars increase on the road the result will deteriorate slowly and sometimes irreversibly. There is in Bombay a phenomenon called the Chembur fog, caused by pollution. People live with it. We will be destroying the creation gradually. Nowadays "natural" food costs more. Many diseases are caused by our unhealthy way of living. If I do not set an example I will destroy by creating confusion in society with respect to their duties.

What should be the basis for choice of a profession? Varnashrama has an answer. All areas such dance, music, etc., must be protected. Shastra says, when one chooses a profession it should be based upon:

1) One's inclinations or Guna Anusari karma.

Here I will enjoy what I am doing and money is incidental. I look forward to Monday. When I hate what I am doing, I look forward to Friday. Many teachers come for salary without any love for the job. This affects the children.

2) Janma: Based upon caste or birth. If you can't choose based on Guna this is an option. The child is exposed to father's profession at an early age. It is the same with a musician's child. Advantage is all professions are protected.

Shastra says preference of a profession should preferably not be based on money. In many professions people want less work and more money. Brahmins today have taken to many professions such as those of Vaishya and Kshatriya. Increasingly Brahmins are walking away from their own profession of learning and teaching Vedas and Sanskrit. If this will continue, both Vedas and Sanskrit will die and with it the religious mantras as well. So, money based preference is not good. Svadharma should be based upon Guna or father's Profession.

Arjuna, your Guna is of a warrior. You are a Kshatriya. So, stand up and fight.

Shloka # 25:

[illegible]

Prince of Bharatha line! Just as the ignorant work with attachment to that work, so should the wise work, unattached, seeking the world's integration.

Sri Krishna has pointed out that Arjuna and Gyani both should perform Karmas. Their reasons though are different. Agyani wants purity and liberation. Gyani should perform Karma to be a role model to society. If both are performing karma what is the difference in their respective attitudes.

Sri Krishna says, since Agyani has not got liberation, he is not happy with himself. So all his actions are to discover fullness and happiness. In these actions there is anxiety. Everything is done out of incompleteness. Thus, actions are performed because of a lack of wealth, money, children etc. In all actions there is attachment.

A Gyani is one with knowledge. His nature is of fullness and freedom. I am free. Aham Purnaha Asmi. He performs actions with happiness (not for happiness). This is the only difference.

When I do it for happiness, it is a struggle. When I do it in happiness it is a Leela. This is the attitudinal difference.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 43

Greetings All,

Shloka # 19:

कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति श्रेष्ठतमो भवति
कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भवति श्रेष्ठतमो भवति 3.19

Therefore, unattached, always do the work that has to be done; for, doing work with detachment, man attains the supreme.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita and refreshing our memory of the last class, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna talked about the important topic of Karma Yoga from Shloka's 8 through 18. The essence of Karma Yoga can be described as giving more and taking less. A life of contribution need not only be monetary. It can even be in the form of knowledge, one's energy or even kind words. Sri Krishna looked at this way of life from different angles. They were:

Agya: Command

Yagya: Worship

Chitta Shodhakam: Preparation of mind

Dharma: Means of maintaining harmony at all levels. This includes at the individual, family, societal, and ecological

levels.

So, You have to take to a life of Karma Yoga. Since it is required for all people for spiritual progress, you, Arjuna, should also follow it. Through this you will attain the highest progress, that of Moksha.

Note that Karma yoga has to be followed by Gyana yoga to attain Moksha. Karma yoga prepares one for Gyana Yoga. Karma Yoga involves doing one's duty and maintaining harmony. As a Kshatriya you need to remove obstacles to harmony and hence you need to fight the battle.

Shloka # 20:

कर्मण्येवाङ्मत्तमं कुरु कर्मज्ज्ञानसंभारम्
कर्मण्येवाङ्मत्तमं कुरु कर्मज्ज्ञानसंभारम् 3.20

Janaka and others achieved perfection through works alone. At least to promote the welfare of the world, you ought to do works.

After hearing this Arjuna may still feel diffident. Many people say being tied to a family life makes liberation impossible. They say only Sanyasa can help us. Arjuna is also in a similar state of mind. Right now, he also wants to take Sanyasa. How can a ruler think of spirituality? Sri Krishna tells Arjuna, don't feel diffident. Even a Grihastha can attain liberation. Grihastha has the advantage that he can become a Sanyasi, while a Sanyasi cannot become a Grihastha. That is why in our culture every stage is called an Ashram. You can convert a house into an ashram. What is difference between a house and an ashram? It is the attachment that makes a difference. If attached, it becomes a house. If detached, it becomes an ashram. It is a difference caused by the person who resides in the house. Even a ruler with responsibility can attain liberation. Sri Krishna gives example of Janak Maharaja. In Brihadaranyaka Upanishad it is a dialogue between Gargya (a Brahmin) and Ajata Shatru (a Kashatriya). Ajata

Shatru teaches Brahma Vidya to Gargya. Ajat Shatru and Janaka are examples of Grihastha Ashrami's attaining liberation.

Therefore, Arjuna, continue to be a Grihastha Gyani.

And with this example, Krishna has given confidence for Arjuna and with this example the topic of karma yoga is over. Now from the 2nd line of this verse, Sri Krishna is changing into another topic. Karma yoga topic is over, with the 20th verse 1st line.

Now, a new topic starts with Shloka # 21. In Shloka's 17 and 18 respectively, Karma Yoga is shown as important for purification of mind and attaining knowledge. After liberation one does not need Karma yoga. Gyani may or may not perform Karma Yoga. He does not need to perform Karma Yoga; he can be a passive Gyani.

So, Arjuna too wants to get out of this painful Karma or duty. He can claim to be a Gyani. There is no test for a Gyani. Gyanam is the only criteria and it is not a visible one.

Anticipating this objection, Sri Krishna says, Arjuna, even if you are a Gyani, you should continue doing Karma Yoga. Even though you do not require Karma after Gyanam, for the sake of society and Dharma you need to follow Karma yoga.

In our tradition there are three sources of knowledge to know if a situation is Dharmic or not. If not we will have a let-go Philosophy (Laissez faire) or a Raga Dvesha based life also called Prakritha Purusha. It is not a life of a cultured person called Samskruta Purusha. So one goes back to Dharma Adharma life. So, how to know if it is Dharma or Adharma?

If I have to be a refined person, I should not do what I like to do; I should do what is proper. Propriety is more important. Naturally, I should know what is proper. And

I should know what is improper. So the question, what is the

source of knowing dharma and adharmam? Poorva Mimamsa sutra says Vedokilam Dharmamulam or that the entire vedas are our scriptures and are the primary source of dharma-adharmajnanam..

Thus :

1) Sruthi: The Vedas are the primary source of Dharma/ Adharma Gyanam. The human being can never know totally because, human beings' knowledge is Limited.

- Smrithi: All secondary literature based upon Vedas are also a source. They have to be interpreted according to the times. The interpreters have the freedom to interpret. They must, however, have no axe to grind. Ramayana and Bhagawatham are examples of Smrithi's.
- Shishta Achara: A life led by cultured elders who show by example. They serve as role models of Dharma. They are called Shishta's. Of the three sources the Shishta Achara is the most important. Sruthi and Smrithi are only literature. Live models have greater impact on society.

Shloka # 21:

[illegible]

Whatever is done by the best of men, others also do; the world conforms to the standard that he sets.

Who are Shishta's? The most powerful person is the mother. She is the greatest influence on a child. Even in the womb the child knows mothers' thoughts. It knows if it is wanted or not. Ceremonies such as Simantham are meant for welcoming the child. The child knows the atmosphere in the house.

Next role model is the father. A father should perform noble things in the house. He should not swear. A child is deeply

influenced by a father's action as well. Others will follow a good man's actions.

Shloka # 22:

मम कर्तव्यं हि धर्मस्य सदाचरणं ।
तस्मात्तु कुरु धर्मं त्वैव हि मे भवति ॥3.22॥

I have Arjuna! no duty whatever to discharge in all the three worlds; there is nothing I have not won, and nothing remains to be won by Me; still I ceaselessly work.

Here Sri Krishna cites himself as an example. A society that gives healthy models to children is a healthy one. One example is Anjaneya. His story is full of morals. His attitude of respect towards women is taught. Human ingenuity alone is not enough; the grace of God is essential to succeed. Hanuman's Bhakti is an example of this devotion. Lakshmana was another exemplar. He could only recognize Sita's anklet, as he never looked above her feet. They had healthy attitude towards women, wealth and society.

Elders are responsible for the next generation. So, Arjuna you too should act.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 42

Greetings All,

Shloka # 15:

मया कृतं कुरु कुरु धर्मं त्वैव हि मे भवति ॥

मया कृतं कुरु कुरु धर्मं त्वैव हि मे भवति ॥3.15॥

Know that this work is born of the Vedas, and that the Vedas are born of the imperishable Reality. Therefore, the all-pervading Veda is eternally rooted in sacrificial work.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita and refreshing our memory of the last class, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna was talking about the importance of Karma Yoga. He was looking at it from different angles such as Agya, Yagya, Chittashudhi, and now Dharma. Dharma is a way of life that maintains harmony of creation. Sri Krishna says everything in the universe is a cyclical process. Giving follows receiving. If I only receive, the cycle is not complete and this results in a violation of the harmony. This violation is not good for society, our body, our psychology and our financials as well. If I take food only in and if I do not expend energy, again I am violating the harmony. Imagine a person who only eats. There will be stagnation through fat accumulation, increased cholesterol etc. The doctor will prescribe walking or jogging so that he expends energy and thus maintains harmony. This example can be expanded at all levels. The same can be said of knowledge. I should share the knowledge I receive. If you learn an art and do not share it with others they say you will become a Brahma Rakshasa. Whatever I take, I should give back.

It is the same at emotional level. Give love if you receive it. This is the cyclical process. If there is a stagnant pool and a river close by as well, most will choose the river. I should share money, energy, love etc. Each one of us must share. This will maintain harmony. We need to give, to maintain harmony. Giving is not natural. Grabbing is natural. Whatever is free, we take. Shashtra's need not teach us how to take; they need to teach us to give.

Among hundreds of people, you can find one courageous person. Among thousands of people you can find one true scholar; among lakhs of people, you may find one good communicator. But, how about a true giver? In the entire creation, to find a true giver is difficult. They are rare.

So, Karma Yogi's are rare. So, Karma Yoga is all about giving. If I train myself to give, only then can I give up Ahamkara. I must give up Mamakara to become a Karma Yogi and give up Ahamkara to become a Gyana Yogi. God gave out Vedas. So, Vedas, given to us by God, taught us this life of sharing.

Shloka # 15 says Vedic teaching is all pervading. Especially wherever Yagya is going on or Danam is going on the Vedic teaching predominates.

Shloka # 16:

यत्किञ्चिद्विद्वान् कुरुते धर्मात्तदा तदा
कुरुते धर्मात्तदा तदा कुरुते धर्मात्तदा

यत्किञ्चिद्विद्वान् कुरुते धर्मात्तदा तदा कुरुते धर्मात्तदा 3.16

He who fails to conform to the cycle of functions thus established is, Arjuna! a sinner; he revels in the sphere of sense-life; he lives in vain.

Sri Krishna pointed out that while Karma yoga is giving oriented, Karma itself is taking oriented. The more a Karma Yogi gives, the more he feels he is a success. However, a Karmi considers accumulation of wealth as a sign of great success. Karma Yogi is glorified as he gives away everything. The essence of Gita is found in reversing the word to read Tagi or Tyagi. All people who take in more and share less are great sinners. One is a sensualist who is given to sensory pleasures. Such a person lives in vain. Eating, drinking and procreating cannot be considered as great achievements. Having many children is also not a great achievement. All these actions, animals also perform very well. Real accomplishments are achieved in field of dharma and moksha. Life of a sensualist is a useless one. He does not contribute anything to society. Many animals are useful alive and even in death. Humans while living are useless and so are they even after death. Life is useful only when I share and thus get Dharma and Moksha.

Shloka # 17:

आत्मैक्यं प्राप्य तत्र स्थित इति चेन्न तत्र न कार्यं

तस्मात्कर्मसमूहो यः प्रारब्ध इति चेन्न तत्र न कार्यं 3.17

For the man who delights solely in the Self, who is content with the Self, who finds satisfaction alone in the Self, there is no duty to perform.

In following two verses Sri Krishna talks of the benefits of Karma Yoga. Karma Yoga is not an end in itself. It is not an ultimate Sadhana. It cannot give us liberation or self-knowledge. Yet, at the same time, it is extremely important in beginning stages as it alone can give purity of mind. Karma Yoga will not lead to Moksha. After contributing to society and purifying the mind one has to go from Karma Yoga to Self-enquiry. Our problem now is self –ignorance, hence, we have to withdraw.

Follow karma yoga; purify the mind and grow out of karma yoga and go to the next stage of spiritual sadhana; it is like a child entering the womb of the mother and for nine months the child remains in the womb and then comes out. If it stays in the womb longer, it becomes a problem for both mother and child. In the same manner karma yoga is like the womb to purify the mind during Brahmacharya and Grihastha ashrama and later one goes to Vanaprastha and Sanyasa ashrama or grows out of activity. After Karma Yoga or purification of mind one grows out

of activity and begins Nivrithi or withdrawal. He starts asking who am I? What is life? What is my nature? Why this human struggle? Then, in Gyana yoga via Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam discovers the real I. Discovery of complete Self is Gyana Yoga. Only then struggle of life will be over. Consider the example of Puri in oil. It runs around in oil until it fluffs up. Once the Puri is full blown it is Poornathvam. Gyana is incomplete without Karma yoga. Without Karma Yoga, Gyana Yoga is not possible.

Sri Krishna now discusses the essence of Gyana Yoga.

Dayananda Saraswathi used to say:” Problem is you. Solution is you too.”

Changing things outside is not going to help. Everything is inside us. This intelligent person comes to self-enquiry. He then makes the pleasant discovery that whatever I am seeking, I am it. Security, peace, and all basic needs of life are all in me. What is his nature? So, previously he was happy because of external conditions, after self-knowledge, he is happy, not because of external factors, he is happy because that is his very nature. He has discovered himself as the infinite. Even people who are number # 1 in their field, if you ask them, even they will tell you they want to exceed even more. In self-knowledge this problem is not there anymore. He is self-sufficient. He is not dependent on outside sources. There is no struggle. Whatever he does is out of fulfillment. Most of us act out of a need for fulfillment.

At present, I am incomplete. My action is not enjoyable. There is tension, there is anxiety, and this is Samsara. Action out of fulfillment (poornathvam) is like bathroom singing or is also called Lela. For a Gyani everything is a Leela or action out of fulfillment.

Shloka # 18:

कर्म कर्मफलं न प्राप्नुयान् कश्चिदपि
न कर्मणोऽपेक्षते न कर्मणोऽपेक्षते

॥ कर्मणोऽपेक्षते न कर्मणोऽपेक्षते ॥ 3.18 ॥

He has nothing to gain from work done or left undone. On no beings does he depend as regards any interests of his own.

Here Sri Krishna says Gyana Yogi is one who has found internal freedom. Physical freedom, we cannot totally have. We need food, clothing, shelter etc. Physical freedom, one should not ask for. Accept external restrictions. However,

we can have total psychological freedom. He does not depend on actions or in-actions. A workaholic can't stop working. He is addicted to action; inaction is a nightmare for him. Others, they find excuses not to do anything. Gyani is neither addicted to action or inaction. He enjoys both. He expects no result from his action or inaction. He is independent of "people" also. Long life means I will see others die. It requires emotional independence. Some seniors are very dependent on their spouses. Gyani has no such dependence. He does not depend on anyone in creation.

Some people have pets and they depend on them. In fact one husband used to tell me in next birth I want to become my wife's dog. Whenever my wife comes from the class, the first question she asks is: did you feed the dog; she never asks if I have eaten. Therefore, if not people, we are addicted to pets; something or other, we want to hold on to.

A Tamil saying is "Even dependence on God is dependence".
World dependent is Samsari.
God dependent is Bhakti.
Self-dependent is a Gyani.

Therefore our progress is from world-dependence to God-dependence and from God-dependence to Self-dependence.

Shloka # 19:

कर्मण्येवाङ्मयात्मा संन्यस्तो भवति श्रेष्ठः

कर्मण्येवाङ्मयात्मा संन्यस्तो भवति श्रेष्ठः 3.19

Therefore, unattached, always do the work that has to be done; for doing work with detachment, man attains the Supreme.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna " Arjuna, you must have emotional independence. It can only happen by Self-discovery. Independence requires self-knowledge. Self-knowledge requires freedom from Raga and Dvesha (happiness or unhappiness with

the external world).

Misunderstood I is source of unhappiness. Understood “I” is source of happiness. Until I recognize this there will be delusion. This delusion goes away through Karma Yoga.

The path is:

Karma Yoga: Purification of mind

Gyana Yoga: Discover Self sufficiency and Be Free.

Sri Krishna says, Arjuna, start following Karma Yoga right now, by following your duty. Here Arjuna’s Karyam is to live in the present doing what he has to, without anxiety of the future or brooding over the past. If you keep doing what you have to, with a healthy attitude, you will ultimately attain Moksha. So, Arjuna, go and fight, do your duty.

Take away from the class:

Swamiji reminded us, again and again, that the essence of Karma yoga is giving. All of us need to give more than we take.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Gurupurnima Lecture

The discussion was about Advaitam (Ad), Vasishtadwaitam (Va) and Dwaitam (Dw)—majority of Hindus follow one of these Darsans.

The three Darsans do not have the same goal.

Jiva is atom according to Va and Dw. But Ad says it is Sarvagathaha.

Iswara Swarupam is Saguna according to Va and Dw. But Ad says it is Nirguna.

Jagat is different according to Va and Dw. But Ad says there is no Jagat at all

Bhandaha –according to Va, I am dependant as Dasa eternally.

But Dw says Bondage is a misconception

Ad says it is a misconception I am a Dependent—I am a Swami—Soham

For our intellect we have to accept one path.

Ad does not look upon Va and Dw as opposed to it but as promoters—at the end Va and Dw is rejected.

All seekers are at the level of:

Mandha Adhikari— good student

Madhya Adhikari—better student

Uthama Adhikari—best student

Dw takes a student from Mandha to Madhya. Va takes a student from Madhya to Uthama.

Uthama will have intellect to appreciate teaching of Ad.

In short, Dw looks at Jiva and Jagat as two separate entities.

Va looks at Jiva as a small part of God and Jagat is different

Ad says Everything is Brahman— Aham Brahmasmi

Thanks

Ramanathan

Kaivalya Upanishad

Namaste:

Please click on the link below for my notes on Kaivalya Upanishads. These notes are based on the teachings of Swami Paramarthananda.

Notes-KaivalyaUpanishad

Kaivalya Upanishads Chanting

Please click on the link below to chant along Kaivalya Upanishad. This is a recording of Kaivalya Upanishads chanting by Sri Ganesh Gurukul of the Gayatri temple in Lockport, Illinois.

<http://www.advaiddam.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/MP3KaivalyaUnanishad.mp3>

Bagawat Geeta, Class 41

Greetings All,

Shloka # 13:

“सर्वज्ञोऽहं सर्वभूतेशः सर्वभूतहिते रतः”

सर्वज्ञोऽहं सर्वभूतेशः सर्वभूतहिते रतः 3.13”

Continuing his teaching and refreshing our memory of last class, Swami Paramarthananda says, Lord Krishna was looking at

Karma Yoga from different angles. He says Karma yoga is a way of life.

The first angle was that of a commandment of lord. If a person does not follow it, he incurs Pratyavaya Papam.

The second angle was as a request to lead a life of harmony. I have given you a world that is in harmony. You should maintain harmony for the sake of other living beings. It is a form of gratitude to the Lord or Ishwara Yagya.

The third angle is not Agya or Yagya but as a spiritual Sadhana by which I purify my mind. I am not doing any favor to the Lord. I am favoring myself. The benefit described in shloka # 13 is that, one who looks at the consequences of worship of God as yagya prasada, for such a person, all papam's of inner personality goes away. The consequence of worship can be in the form of food that remains after a Yagya or even can be taken as Karma Phalam.

As per Vedas, anything that obstructs Self- Knowledge is considered a Papam. Even money is a Papam, if I am lost in it. On the other hand, poverty is considered good, if it leads one to spirituality.

What is primary obstruction to spirituality? As per Vedanta, it is Mohaha or delusion. It means seeing the external world as the cause of happiness or unhappiness.

If a particular music is played, a teenager is very happy while his parents are unhappy. They don't like it at all. So, is the music the source of happiness or unhappiness? As long as you are finding fault with the world you are in delusion. This delusion has to go away. It is my attitude towards the world that causes sorrow or happiness. It is not a change in the world but a change in my attitude that is required. Knowledge alone changes my attitude. Once I search for knowledge it makes me a seeker.

Shankaracharya's Bhaja Govindam is called Moha Mudgara (Hammer

to shatter illusion). Here he analyzes all causes of happiness and unhappiness. He discusses all aspects of delusion. Only Karma Yoga can remove delusion. What is required is knowledge, not changing of the world.

In shloka # 13, Sri Krishna criticizes those who are selfish, who cook only for themselves and don't share the food. Pancha Maha Yagya requires sharing my money or food with others. Every day when you cook rice keep some aside (raw rice) and donate it every month. Give to others, exhorts Swamiji. Such selfish people are eating concentrated papam. They are moving away from spiritual knowledge.

Shloka # 14:

“ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.१४ ॥”

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३.१४ ॥”

In previous shloka Karma Yoga was shown as a purifier. We have seen Agya, Yagya, and Chitta Shodhakam as different versions of Karma Yoga. Now, Sri Krishna describes a fourth angle to Karma Yoga. Here Karma Yoga is presented as Dharma.

What is dharma? That which maintains the harmony of the creation is called Dharma. We are not isolated beings; we are all integrated and interconnected with other beings. Beings include humans, animals, plants, rivers etc. As said before all beings, other than humans, are programmed to live in harmony. Only human beings have been given free will and budhi shakthi. Humans can destroy this world or create a heaven out of it. If earth is destroyed, it will be due to human beings alone. Even a tiger cannot do it, but humans can do it.

Arjuna, you may not believe in God or my commandment, even then you have to lead a life of Karma Yoga to maintain harmony of this creation. Science shows we are all interconnected. Sri Krishna says, everything that happens in creation is cyclical, indicating harmony. Thus, we have the Water cycle, Carbon dioxide cycle etc., all required for conservation of matter

and energy. Sri Krishna then cites one such cycle as an example.

All living beings are born out of food. Food in turn comes out of rain. Rain comes from Yagya, also called adrishtam, the invisible favorable factor. Yagya can also be called Punyam or Apoorvam. How can Punyam produce rain? Punyam is nothing but cosmic balance or harmony. Only in balance does rain come. Rain is considered an acid test for ecological balance. When we cut trees, the balance is lost. How to maintain this balance? Sri Krishna says, one maintains this balance only by Karma Yoga. In Karma Yoga, by revering creation, by revering nature, balance is maintained. I should avoid disturbing the harmony. Some serve by doing, while others serve by non-interference. Don't interfere by polluting nature.

Vedas even tells us how to use a tank or river. One should pray to the river first. Then, enter the river. One should not pollute the river by urinating etc., in it. Do not spit. Respect the river, ocean, air and fire. A life of reverence will maintain the cosmic balance. Even if one person has this reverence, rains will come for him. This reverence is called Karma Yoga.

Therefore, food comes from rain, rain comes from harmony and harmony comes from Karma Yoga.

My very existence and I come from Karma. Karma is also born out of me. So, we have to keep contributing to society. Live a life of contribution.

Karmabhutaha means Karma is born out of living beings.

Shloka # 15:

“कर्मणो यमनिर्मुक्तोऽस्मिन् कर्मणि कर्मणि”

कर्मणो यमनिर्मुक्तोऽस्मिन् कर्मणि कर्मणि 3.15

How do you know which karma maintains balance and which

violates balance? Human beings have a limited intellect. We do not always know what is good or bad for humanity. We produced PFC's, refrigerants that react and deplete the ozone layer. Ozone protects us from UV rays of the sun. Similarly, with increase of cars it causes greenhouse gases that in turn melt the polar ice cap increasing the flooding of our shorelines. We do not see the connection between increased cars on the roads and our receding shorelines. This is because of the limited capacity of our minds.

Shastras say do not depend on human intellect rather depend on scriptures. Scripture is not a product of human beings. They are revelations to Rishi's. So, follow the life style prescribed by scriptures says, Sri Krishna. We have been using Tulasi leaf, neem leaf etc for a long time while now Americans are taking patents on them. Sri Krishna says, harmonious life is taught by Vedas.

In this shloka, Brahma means Vedas.

The question comes how do Vedas know? Sri Krishna says, Vedas are not a product of human intellect. They have withstood the test of time. They can stand the challenge of science as well. A defect in Vedas is we do not understand them well enough. Coconut oil was once criticized and today it is praised. It is the same with Ghee.

Vedas have come out of Aksharam or Ishwara.

Then, how come we say Rishi's gave us the Vedas? Rishi's have served as a medium to receive Vedic knowledge. Just as a TV is a receiver, so also Rishi's were receivers. To receive such knowledge one has to prepare our self by Tapas or Dhyanam. So, study Vedas and get its benefits.

Take away from this class:

Swamiji says, it is not a change in the world but a change in my attitude that is required.

This is a topic often discussed by Vedanta group. How can we impact the world? Vedanta says, rather than focusing on changing the world we should focus on changing our self or our attitude to the world.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 40

Greetings All,

Shloka # 11:

“कर्मणो यो नान्तरहितो भविष्यति न च कर्मफलान् अशङ्कते”
3.11”

Continuing his teaching of Gita and recapping last week's lesson, Swami Parmarthananda said, Sri Krishna is looking at Karma Yoga from different angles. The general definition of Karma Yoga is:

Proper Action + Proper Attitude=Karma Yoga

Proper action means giving more and taking less. It also implies self-less action.

Selfish action and selfless actions both are allowed, however, selfless action should predominate in life. Harmful action, however, is to be totally avoided. The attitude must be appropriate. Dedicating selfless actions and selfish actions with an attitude of Devarpanam to God and anything I receive in life must be with Prasada Budhi.

Sri Krishna is looking at it from different angles.

First angle is as a commandment from God. If a person refuses a life of Karma Yoga then he gets Pratyavaya Papam, a special papam, where he is imprisoned in Samsara. So, out of fear, one should follow Karma Yoga.

Second angle is one of love and worship. Swamiji says, in the first angle fear is used, but fear is not a healthy emotion. Fear is the darkroom in which all negatives are developed. Psychologists say, " Never try to discipline your children through fear". In fear a child's mind will not grow. They end up becoming terrible fathers, husbands, and teachers. In such cases it is the mistake of the parents who raised them in fear. In extreme cases punishment may be used, but as per Shastra's it is to be used sparingly.

Sri Krishna also used fear, as a method, to follow Karma Yoga. He, however, prefers love and worship rather than fear. Karma Yoga performed out of love is called Yagna. What God has given you, this body, this life etc., is his gift. When we get a gift we should reciprocate. What you do with the God's gift is your gift to the Lord. The body is a gift. I can enjoy the body living a life of indulgence or I can use it for Paropkara. Trees produce lot of fruits, as a gift. Even if one throws stones at them they still keep giving their fruits. The cow produces milk all for sacred purposes, our coffee and our tea. The rivers carry water, all for blessing the society. From looking at nature, we can easily understand why God has given this body; therefore "Paropkarartham Idam Shariram". It means this body's purpose is to help others. Therefore, when I utilize my body to serve the world; when I utilize the mind to give love to others; when I utilize my intellect to share my knowledge with others that will become the worship of the Lord. And for this worship of the Lord, I am going to get the greatest benefit and what is that benefit? Sri Krishna says that when I lead such a life I get all four purusharthas that is Dharma, Artha , Kama and Moksha without asking for it.

So the second angle is to convert life into worship of Lord.

Shloka # 12:

"□□□□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□ □□□□□□□□
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□□□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□ □□□□3.12□□"

“The Devas nourished by sacrifices will give you the enjoyments you seek. Verily he is a thief who enjoys without giving back to the Devas (a share of) the gifts given by them.”

Here, Sri Krishna says, when you lead such a life of worship, God will give you everything. Such a Karma Yoga gives both material and spiritual benefits. It is a two for one program, says Swamiji. Which one you want is your choice. All people are not interested in moksha. He says, some people tell him that they have young children and have to work for them and are not interested in moksha. Sri Krishna says, there is nothing wrong in a material life. He only cautions that one should use Karma Yoga to fulfill one's material goals. Don't take short cut methods. God's will give you everything. All deities will bless you when they are worshipped through karma Yoga.

Citing an example Swamiji says, When I follow Karma Yoga I don't exploit nature to feed my greed. The natural harmony is maintained. The seasons are maintained. Our lives are dependent on rains. " When green goes from city, it is red", meaning air pollution increases and it becomes dangerous. A society is a healthy one when Dharmic people are allowed to follow dharma.

Follow Karma Yoga and God will grant you all blessings.

Swamiji points out that a question can come up. When I perform action I will get the Karma Phalam. Why should I ask God for the Phalam?

The answer is, phalam is the result of my work. I have worked hard for it. However, per scriptures phalam is per nature's laws. Citing an example, a microphone was discovered because the law for such a device was already present in nature. Human intellect discovered TV, but its mind cannot discover these natural laws. God has given us intellect. He has given us natural laws. My glory is only to tap into such a law. When you tap into such a law, please thank that God. Hence we thank God when we eat. Why do we do this? After all, I have worked for it, right? The production of food is possible due to laws created by God. Just remember God for a few minutes. Even our physical health is based on bio-chemical laws. The food is digested, transported and waste removed. Every disease is possible due to bio chemical laws. When my body temperature rises it is due to a natural law to fight a disease. I have never produced any law. I am only tapping into a law. Never forget this. If you do, you are a thief. Hence you should worship Devathas. If you don't thank them, you are an ungrateful person. It is the worst kind of papam. Ungratefulness has no Prayaschittam. Even in western cultures that is why you thank some one.

Citing another example Swamiji says he read recently that many temples have lands and properties assigned to them so that the temple can be maintained. However, unscrupulous people rent temple lands for one paisa. They are educated people too and they are abusing it. Many have not even paid their rent in a long time. Sri Krishna says one who enjoys without reciprocity such a person is a thief.

In our culture, whatever we cook, we should offer it as a Naivedyam or as an acknowledgement. It is not an offering. God does not take it anyway. He just wants thanks.

In Hinduism every moment of our life is a life of reverence. Others have secular work and non-secular work. In Hinduism every action is sacred action. Every car driver before starting his journey prays; before starting construction of a

building a Bhumi puja is performed. Swamiji says Non-reverential work is Karma while reverential work is Karma Yoga.

Shloka # 13:

“ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ भक्त्यै कर्मण्येवाङ्गमया ॥ यज्जन्तुर्मायया कृतमनुजिह्वयति ॥ तस्यैवाङ्गमया ॥”

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 3.13 ॥”

“ Good men who partake of what remains after offering sacrifices are liberated from all sins; whereas the sinners who cook for their own sake live on their sins”.

Sri Krishna now looks at karma yoga from a third angle.

The first angle was as God’s commandment

The second angle was as God’s worship or Yagna.

The third angle is as a spiritual purifier or Chitta Shodhakam.

A seeker of moksha can appreciate this angle. When I am a seeker, there is only one path and that is by Atma Gyanam. Without this Gyanam I cannot obtain Moksha. Gyanam occurs only with mental purity. That is why before installing a God in temple purification is performed. Similarly, before study of scriptures one has to go through Upanayanam; to cleanse the body and mind to install the Veda Mantra; else I will pollute the Vedas. Upanayanam is very important for Vedic chanting. Even a pucca Brahmin cannot learn Vedas without Upanayana samskara. To paint a wall one has to sandpaper the wall first. Atma Gyanam occurs only when Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya (lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride and envy) are removed. So, Karma yoga is the sand paper to cleanse the mind. The seeker of Karma Yoga is not interested in material prosperity. The whole world may consider him a failure because it considers material prosperity as the basis of success. Karma Yogi does not consider material success as important.

His focus is on inner purification irrespective of whether material prosperity comes or not. Hence the shloka:

Isvararpitam necchaya krrtam
cittasodhakam muktisadhakam

If you dedicate your life to the Lord, and if you consider material prosperity as Subservient to spiritual growth then your karma yoga will lead to mental purity.

This mental purity may promote mukti sadakam. And therefore the third angle is Karma Yoga as an inner purifier. And that is why we say there is no failure in karma yoga.

Failure is usually in terms of material accomplishments. In karma Yoga inner purification takes place irrespective of material prosperity.

And therefore Krishna says, those people who convert their life into worship, receive the consequences as Ishwaraprasada or as yajna shistam. Yajna Shistam means left over from Yajna or Ishwaraprasada. Thus, one who considers all the karma phalams as yajna shistam (prasada) and eats it (means enjoy it), such a person becomes free from all the papams.

Citing an example, suppose you buy a book, and something is written on the book, the book is called a second hand book. The same second hand book signed by a mahatma becomes very valuable.

So if you do not offer to the Lord and enjoy without offering to the Lord, without acknowledging the Lord's grace; it is papam. Even medicine is a law of the Lord, if a medicine has a curing property, it is God's gift; therefore I consume medicine as Ishwara Prasada. If you do not do that, Sri Krishna says you are a papi.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy