

Bagawat Geeta, Class 4

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 1:

Swamiji started his talks on the Gita today. He says: Chapter 1 is an introduction to the Gita. It is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. The main theme of Gita starts at Verse #11, chapter 2. Even Shankaracharya's commentaries start from this point. The introduction in chapter 1 however is very important. It serves two purposes.

First purpose is to present the basic human problem known as Samsara. This problem is a universal one irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion and sex. It is also a problem that occurs at any time in history. We also face similar problems as Arjuna did and future generations will also face the same. The presentation of Samsara Rogaha is the basis of chapter 1. The other 17 Chapters of Gita are dedicated to specifying remedies to this problem and is also called Moksha Shastraha. Unless we know the disease we cannot appreciate the remedy.

Second Purpose:

Is to introduce the Guru and Shishya whose whole dialogue is the Gita.

Discussing Samsara Varnanam, Swamiji says, the diagnosis of a disease can vary from doctor to doctor. Similarly, different scriptures have different diagnosis of this problem. Our scriptures diagnose that this Samsara disease is in reality three diseases. They are: Ragaha. Shokhaha and Mohaha.

Ragaha: is the emotional and psychological attachment we have. Love is glorified in our scriptures while attachment is not. Vedanta is for Love but not for Attachment.

Elaborating on Love versus Attachment, Swamiji says:

- Attachment is based on selfishness. What do I get out of this relationship? What the other person gets is not in our mind. This selfish dependence is Ragaha. Love is based upon Selflessness. Here, I am not only interested in what I get, but I am also interested in what the other person gets.
- Attachment is always a form of Taking. Love is always a form of Giving.
- Attachment is always conditional. So long as it helps me, I stay in the relationship. Love is not based on condition. It is unconditional.
- Attachment comes from a weak mind. Love does not come from weakness; rather it comes out of strength.
- In attachment, intellect is clouded and violation of Dharma occurs. In Love, intellect is always clear, thus there cannot be any violation of Dharma.
- Love is freedom. Attachment is bondage.

Shokaha:

Attachment leads to shokaha. When the attached person leaves there is sorrow. When the object of dependence goes away there is sorrow. Swamiji says, it is a psychological crutch,

The object of attachment (person, object etc.) is always impermanent. At any time I may lose them. How can one prepare for this situation is the question raised by Vedanta? The Psychological depression caused is due to loss of the attached person or thing. Preparation for this has to be done well ahead of time. This preparation should be done when you are still in good health and well situated. Be far sighted, advises Swamiji.

Mohaha:

Mohaha is delusion. When Ragaha and Shokaha are there it clouds the intellect. Clouded intellect takes decisions that

are wrong ones. This will usually lead to Adhrama. We may think we are making the right decision, while we are in fact making wrong ones. This then leads to the Ragaha>Shokhaha>Mohaha cycle. This is the human suffering or Samsara. How to get psychological independence is the question of Mokshaha?

Context: The Mahabharata war is between Pandavas (dharmic) and Kauravas (Adharmic). Pandavas wanted to avoid war. They tried Sama, Dana, and Bheda without success. As per our scriptures, Ahimsa is wrong. Ahimsa is a conditional value. So, as a last resort, they took to war. Scriptures allow Ahimsa under certain conditions. It is like a Doctor performing amputation of a limb when the medicine did not work. Similarly in society when Adhrama occurs, a Kshatriya may take to violence if non-violent methods did not work.

When both armies are face to face, Arjuna wants to survey the two armies. The people he sees in front are Bhishma and Drona, to both of whom Arjuna is attached. His thinking becomes clouded due to this attachment. After 13 years in exile and thinking about this he came to the conclusion that he had to fight a dharmic war. Once decided, a Kshatriya does not run from war or renounce and run away from his family. Arjuna sees his original Dharma Yudha now as an Adharma Yudha. Thus, Arjuna has Ragaha that is leading to Shokhaha and further leading to Mohaha. Arjuna realizes his dilemma and turns to Krishna for his guidance. Thus Arjuna realizes or discovers the problem.

Shloka # 1:

Kauravas army is larger with many great warriors on their side. Pandavas though weaker have Lord Krishna on their side. Drithrashtra, the blind parent of Kauravas, asks Sanjaya to describe the scene at war. His inward blindness is also a metaphor for attachment. Sanjaya is given a special power of being able to see what is beyond or tele-vision. Vyasa blessed Sanjaya with this power.

Shloka # 2:

Seeing the well organized and arranged (vyuham) army of Pandavas Duryodhana approached his Acharya, Drona, his Guru in warfare and addressed him as follows:

Shloka # 3:

Duryodhana says: O Acharya you may see the huge army of Pandavas. Drishtadyumna, son of Drupada, heads them. Your clever and cunning disciple has assembled this army and is trying to destroy me. Swamiji says Drishtadyumna was destined to kill Drona. Drona was also aware that Drishtadyumna would come after him. Nevertheless, so long as Drishtadyumna was a qualified student, Drona could not refuse him as a student.

Suggested Practice:

The difference between attachment and love is an important concept. We should all consider approaching all our relationships especially with our close ones more with Love rather than with attachment.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy