

Bagawat Geeta, Class 49

Greetings All,

Shloka # 33:

एतन्मनुष्योऽपि ज्ञानवानपि कर्मात्मनोऽपि ॥
प्रकृत्यैः कर्तव्यं तस्यैव तत्प्रकृत्यनुसृतम् ॥ 3.33 ॥

“Even a man of knowledge behaves according to his nature. All living beings conform to nature. What can repression do?”

Continuing his teachings, Swami Paramarthananda said, after talking about karma yoga Sri Krishna is summing up karma yoga in verses 31 through 35. In the last two verses he discussed the benefits and losses of following karma yoga.

Benefit includes: One who follows Karma Yoga will get his mind purified and then proceed to Gyana Yoga which will lead him to knowledge and then liberation.

Losses include: One who does not follow Karma yoga faces spiritual loss and destruction.

Now, in shloka # 33, Sri Krishna discusses our innate nature. Everybody has an innate nature based upon his or her Rajas, Tamas and Sattva Gunas. This is called Svabhava. One's life should be based upon one's Svabhava. Even a Gyani's life is based upon his Svabhava. Each Gyani has a different Svabhava, thus we have writing, speaking, and teaching Gyani's. Even the Gods have their own svabhava; Brahmaji is sṛiṣṭi karta, using rajo guṇa; vishṇu is sthithi karta, using satva guṇa; and Shiva is laya karta using tamo guṇa. It should be noted that Shiva is using Tamo guna but is not under its spell. So, Arjuna, don't violate your Svabhava. You are Rajoguna Pradhani. So accept your nature, your duty and convert duty to karma yoga. Karma Yoga is the attitude one brings to work, be it a Brahmin or Kshatriya. All types of work can become

worship. Karma yoga is not dependent on the type of action, rather on our attitude towards it. A commercial minded brahmana would not be a karma yogi; whereas non-commercial business man; a business man who conducts business as a worship of God is a karma Yogi. To the Karma Yogi Chitta-shuddhi is more important than say making profit. Sometimes even the noblest of jobs may not suit Karma Yoga. Therefore, Arjuna, why should you change your profession. You are a warrior, so fight. Offer it to the lord; purify your self and become free. All this was covered in last class.

Shloka # 34:

संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च
संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च संज्ञानां च 3.34

“Senses have attachment and aversion to their respective objects; none should be swayed by them. They indeed are obstacles”

Previous shloka can create doubt in mind of student. If everybody is to act according to one's svabhava why control svabhava at all? If one cannot control one's svabhava we don't have control on nature meaning we do not have free will. Trying to control it is futile, says Sri Krishna. Citing example of an onion, a man wanted to change the smell of an onion. He placed the onion in a camphor bath and applied a lot of scented waters on top of the onion. Even after immersing the onion in this environment for a long time when he peeled the onion it still smelled the same. Onion's svabhava cannot be controlled.

So the question is, can we transform ourselves?

Answering this question, Sri Krishna establishes free will. Animals do not have free will. Humans, however, do have it and we can control our nature.

We all have certain basic characteristics that dictate our

mind. These thoughts saturate us, then translate into words and then finally into action.

Thus:

Svabhava>Thought>Words>Action.

The thoughts are Raga and Dvesha. We divide the world into likes and dislikes based upon our Svabhava. Swamiji says, if you place a group of children in a room and give them a variety of toys, you will see Raga and Dvesha in action. Svabhava produces Raga and Dvesha Vrithihi and we cannot control it. Some thoughts are attractive while others are not. We are all bundles of Raga (likes) and Dvesha (dislikes). Even in TV interviews of stars one common question asked is what are their likes and dislikes. Even Gods have their likes and dislikes. Thus, the huge Ganesha likes for his vehicle the small mouse while Kartikeya likes his peacock. With regard to every sense object we have preferences. In fact you cannot define a person without his likes and dislikes; you define a person in terms of his likes and dislikes.

Arrival of thought depends upon Svabhava. One has no control over it. However, whether to let a thought remain or not is in our control. Here, there is free will. Those thoughts that are nourished, become stronger, then they become words. Every word is based on a build up thought. We can control perpetuation of thoughts and thus control words. Those thoughts then convert to action. Action is the grossest product of the subtlest thought. If I can control thought, I can control action. This is free will. So Arjuna, don't feel guilty about thoughts that arise in you, do not allow them to linger on, ask yourself if they are worthy of nourishment? If not, nip them in the bud. Don't allow them to become a tidal wave. Don't fall under spell of thoughts.

Two things must always be destroyed at source. One is a shatru (enemy) and other is disease. Our inner enemies are Kama,

With this Sri Krishna concludes Karma Yoga.

Now Arjuna has a question.

Shloka # 36:

ॐ श्री कृष्णाय नमः । अर्जुन उवाच ।
अज्ञानं विवर्धयति कर्मणोः । अज्ञानं विवर्धयति कर्मणोः ॥३.३६॥

“Now, impelled by what does man commit sin? O Krishna! Though loath to sin, he is driven to it forcibly, as it were.”

Arjuna asked: Oh Sri Krishna , scriptures are there for direction. I agree following Karma yoga is healthy while not doing so is harmful. God has given us the power of discrimination between right and wrong. Dayananda Swamy used to say that every human being knows what is right and what is wrong. Even the thief knows what he does is wrong, that is the reason he does it in secret.

Citing a story of two thieves, who after stealing in a house began dividing the loot and in this process fell asleep. One thief got up in the middle of the night and took off with the entire loot. When the second thief got up in the morning he was very upset that the second thief stole from him. Ignorance of value is not the problem. Ravana is quoted as having said: I know values, but I cannot follow them.

In spite of knowing what is right or wrong how do humans commit such mistakes or adharmas? There is some force in us that pushes us towards adharmic action. What is that force Oh Sri Krishna?

Sri Krishna now answers this question.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

