

Baghawad Gita, Class 196: Chapter 15, Verses 15 to 20

Shloka

15:15:

And I am seated in the hearts of all. From Me
are memory, knowledge and their loss. I alone am the object to
be known through
all the Vedas; I am also the originator of the Vedanta, and I
Myself am the
knower of the Vedas.

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said, with this 15th shloka, which we completed in the last class, Sri Krishna completes the important topic of Brahmana sarvatmakatvam. **Brahman sarvatmakatvam means Brahman alone is in the form of everything. This is the essential teaching of all the upanishads.** In the Mundakopanishad we saw a shloka that says, what is in front is Brahman, what is behind is Brahman, what is on the right, on the left, above and below, everything is Brahman, just with different names and forms, which causes only a superficial difference. So the world is superficially different, but in essence the whole is Brahman; there is nothing other than Brahman. And Sri Krishna has mentioned this in the 4th chapter; shloka 4.24 also conveys the same idea. Brahman alone is everything. And this topic Sri Krishna started from the 7th verse and he concluded this in the 15th verse, and we should remember that the ultimate discovery is that Sarvatmakam Brahma is nothing but myself. It is not enough that we say Brahman is everything; then the sadhana is incomplete; I should finally say that, "That Brahman I am". Then the statement would be reworded; instead of saying Brahman is everything; we say I am everything. Aham Annam, Aham Annadaha, Aham Slokakrt, Aham eva idagum sarvam. This is called sarvatmabhava and we completed that in the last class.

Now in the following three verses, 16, 17, and 18, Sri Krishna gives the definition of the word purushottama and based on this word alone, the very chapter is called purushottama yoga.

What is purushottama and who is purushottama, Sri Krishna tells us in these three verses.

Shloka

15:16:

15.16 There are these two persons in the world-the mutable and the immutable. The mutable consists of all things; the one existing as Maya is called the immutable.

First I will give the gist of these three verses, so that you will

get a total picture, then understanding these verses becomes easier. To reveal

Purushottama, Sri Krishna divides the whole universe into three portions

or three components or amsa trayam.

The first portion is the visible universe, which is accessible, perceptible to our sense organs. This sensorially visible, tangible universe is one component and this we can call the manifest matter. Manifest matter is this visible universe; is made up of matter, that we know of. Scientifically it has been shown that the world is made up of matter and even scripturally we know that the world is made up of pancha bhutani, akasha, vayu, apaha, prthvi, and all of them are matter, inert-matter principle. Therefore, the first component is manifest matter and Sri Krishna gives it a technical name and calls it Kshara purusha.

Normally,

matter is indicated only by the word prakrti. or referred to as prakrti tatvam,

but this is an exceptional context in which the manifest matter is called kshara purusha.

Then Sri Krishna talks about the second component. When matter is destroyed; what happens to matter? We know scientifically, logically and shastrically that matter cannot be totally destroyed due to the law of conservation of matter and therefore when matter is destroyed, it will get converted into an unmanifest form, you may call it energy form, but it goes to the invisible intangible, unmanifest form and therefore at the time of total destruction of this universe, at the time of pralaya, the matter will continue but not in the form of manifest matter, but it will survive in the form of unmanifest matter and therefore the second component of the universe is matter in unmanifest form. So unmanifest matter, which is also inert in nature, is the second component. Sri Krishna gives it the name of akshara purusha. This is also an exceptionally rare usage because normally, the word akshara purusha is used for Nirgunam Brahma or consciousness. That is the general usage; but in this exceptional context; the unmanifest matter, you may called it energy; is named akshara purusha; it is also called Maya, because in Vedanta, Maya is unmanifest universe, and that maya tatvam, the unmanifest matter principle, in this context, is called aksharam purusha. So we have manifest matter; unmanifest matter; kshara purusha and akshara purusha.

Consciousness principle, chetana tatvam, is the third component, because according to our scriptures, consciousness is distinct from matter. Remember, consciousness is not a part, product or property of matter. Consciousness is a distinct and independent entity; it is neither a part of matter; nor a property of matter, nor is it a product of matter. Material sciences think that consciousness is a product or phenomenon in matter; Vedanta strongly rejects that view and vedanta says consciousness is independent of matter and this independent consciousness is the third component or part of this universe. And this consciousness principle, Sri

Krishna names it Uttama purusha.

Now, if you make a comparative study of these three components, we will see certain important differences among them. The three are: manifest matter, unmanifest matter and consciousness. Of these three, the first two components being matter, both of them are achetana tatvam, inert principle, whereas the third one being consciousness, it is chetana tatvam. The first two, are inert, the third one is sentient. Then the first two principles being matter, or material, it is full of varieties of properties or attributes or qualities. In Sanskrit, we call it guna; therefore the first two components are sagunam in nature, whereas the consciousness according to vedanta is free from all the attributes; hence nirguna tatvam. So one is chetanam, the other is achetanam; one is sagunam and the other is nirgunam.

Then the third difference, both manifest and unmanifest matter is subject to modification and or violent changes. Matter can never remain the same. It is constantly undergoing changes. In fact, manifest and unmanifest matter themselves are inter-convertible.

Manifest matter can be converted into unmanifest matter; unmanifest matter can be converted into manifest matter. In scientific language, we say matter and energy are inter-convertible.

The whole $E=mc^2$, the equation, is only revealing the fact of the

inter-convertibility of matter and energy. In fact, at the time of creation, unmanifest matter is getting converted into manifest matter and at the time of pralaya or dissolution, the manifest matter is getting converted into unmanifest matter.

We had seen a parallel idea in the 8th chapter.

Therefore the first two are savikaram, whereas consciousness is nirvikaram. You cannot say that manifest consciousness getting converted is into unmanifest consciousness. You cannot say that because if you talk about the transformation of consciousness into manifest and unmanifest matter, consciousness also will be subject to change, but it is not so. So achetanam, chetanam, sagunam, nirgunam, savikaram, nirvikaram are the qualities.

Then the fourth difference is, the matter principle, both manifest and unmanifest are subject to divisions. They are subject to divisions; it is divisible principle. This body itself can be divided. This carpet can be divided. In fact our body gets divided; teeth is missing after some years; After some time, hair will disappear; one by one it will disappear; whereas consciousness principle is indivisible. One is savikalpam as matter, savikalpam is divisible; nirvikalpam is consciousness.

And

finally and most importantly, matter does not have an independent existence of its own. It does not have the svatantra satta. Therefore it is called mithya

Therefore kshara purusha and akshara purusha both are mithya whereas uttama purusha, the consciousness principle alone has independent existence and therefore it is

called satyam and therefore uttama purusha alone lends existence to kshara and akshara purusha; Just as the screen lends existence to the movie drama going on; similarly, the uttama purusha lends existence to the kshara, akshara purusha drama going on which is called creation and destruction. Matter manifests, then matter goes into unmanifest form; and this drama, is sustained by the screen called uttama purush, the chaitanyam.

And therefore of these three components, Sri Krishna says that the third component is the supreme one. Why? Because that is sarva adharam; Vishvadharam gagana sadrsham is uttama purusha.

And having said this much, Sri Krishna adds that the uttama purusha, the consciousness alone, is my real nature; this chaitanya tatvam alone is my real nature and therefore I would like to claim myself not as kshara purusha, I won't claim myself as the akshara purusha also, but I would like to claim myself as Uttama purusha, which is chetana nirguna, nirvikara, nirvikalpa tatvam. And since I am the uttama purusha, whole world knows me as Purushottama.

This is the saram; the essence. Now we will go to the verses.

In this cosmos, in this creation; firstly there are two purushas. The third one will be introduced later. First he talks about two purushas, and they are known as; kshara purusha and akshara purusha. Sri Krishna himself defines them as all the things and beings, which are visible matter, the visible material universe. The word 'beings' represent our physical body, and the word 'things' represents all the objects. Both the body as well as the objects, comes under visible matter.

Remember the body also comes under matter principle, because

the

body is made up of iron, sodium, carbon, nickel, cobalt, etc. You will know it when there is deficiency.

It is made of all those things; and therefore, sarvani bhutani, the entire visible matter is kshara purusha and kutastha, the unmanifest matter.

In this context, the word kutastha means unmanifest matter or maya tatvam. And since this maya is relatively eternal, it is kutastha. kutastha means relatively eternal.

Kutastha, the unmanifest matter, is also called akshara purusha. So in this shloka He says; manifest matter is kshara purusha; and unmanifest matter is akshara purusha. After that:

Shloka 15:17:

15.17 But different is the supreme Person who is spoken of as the transcendental Self, who, permeating the three worlds, upholds (them), and is the imperishable God.

Anyaha: means there is a different principle, a third principle, other than kshara and akshara purusha. Other than the manifest and unmanifest matter, there is a principle, which is called chaitanyam. Since we used the word consciousness, we have to supply anyaha that means the chetana tatvam.

And what is the chetana tatvam? Uttama purusha is the third component of this creation. And what is its nature? The uttama purusha or chaitanyam is nirgunam, nirvikaram, nirvikalpam and satyam. That satyam must be remembered very well.

Even though we have enumerated three tatvams, kshara, akshara and uttama, still we say advaitam because two of them are mithya; mithya means unreal; and therefore, those two cannot be counted. Satyam is only one. And therefore it is uttama purusha that is the satya tatvam.

And this uttama purusha, the chaitanyam, is known as paramatmetyudartaha. In all the upanishads, this consciousness principle is called paramatma.

What is the function of this uttama purusha?

We know the functions of manifest and unmanifest matter, because all the sciences are dealing with matter and energy. And all the advancements are in the field of matter and energy.

Sri Krishna says: This uttama purusha pervades (pervades, penetrates, inheres) all the three universes; all the three worlds.

And here the word loka trayam represents kshara and akshara purusha.

What does the uttama purusha do? Bibarthi, means sustains; supports, and lends existence; exactly like gold pervades all the ornaments and lends existence. Wood pervades all the furniture and lends existence. Water pervades all the waves and lends existence. Minus gold, no ornaments. Minus wood, no furniture; minus water, no wave; minus uttama purusha, there can be neither kshara purusha nor akshara purusha. No matter or energy is possible without consciousness principle. Consciousness is the substance behind both matter and energy. Even though the consciousness pervades the changing matter, consciousness itself does not undergo any change. In the movie, the characters may move, the vehicles may run, but the screen does not run. In fact, in the presence of the

stationary screen alone, all the movements are possible. **Similarly in the presence of the motionless consciousness alone, all the changes of the universe are possible. That anchor of the universe is consciousness.**

Therefore

avyayaha; avyayaha

means

changeless it also means Ishvara.

Ishvara means this

consciousness, even though it pervades the changing matter, the consciousness

is not affected by, not tormented by, whatever happens in the material

universe. The body may be born; it may grow old, and it may die at the

individual level; upheavals may take place in the cosmos; there may be atomic

explosions; whatever happens to matter, consciousness is unaffected;

Therefore

it is called master; Ishvaraha means master of

matter; not the slave of matter. Consciousness is not a slave of matter; that

means whatever happens to matter, consciousness is asangaha.

All the navagrahas may affect the body; Navagrahas cannot affect the chaitanya atma tatvam. Therefore, Consciousness is the real God or Ishvaraha.

Shloka 15.18:

15.18 Since I am transcendental to the mutable and above even the immutable, hence I am well known in the world and in the Vedas as the supreme Person.

This third component, viz., the consciousness principle is

ksharam. Consciousness is superior to manifest matter. Consciousness is superior to even unmanifest matter. It is superior to even all forms of energy. That is why **we should remember that consciousness is not a form of energy.**

Consciousness

is a principle, distinct from and superior to all forms of energy, because

energy is only unmanifest matter. Therefore Sri Krishna says consciousness is superior to manifest matter and unmanifest matter.

And

in Sanskrit, the word *uttama* means superior most.

Being

the superior most, the consciousness, is known as *uttama purush*, and if you reverse it, it is *Purushottama*.

The consciousness is well known as *Purushottama*, both in the world of people as well as in the scriptures.

Here

Sri Krishna does a small mischief, instead of saying Consciousness is superior,

Sri Krishna quietly identifies with that consciousness, claiming it as His real

nature. And therefore Arjuna, that consciousness is myself. Do not look at my

body. My body is *kshara purusha*. I am the

consciousness principle behind the Sri Krishna *shariram* and therefore that is

My real nature and therefore I would say I am the *Uttama purushaha*. And therefore

I am called *purushottama*.

Therefore

Sri Krishna says: Aham That is myself, instead of the word chaitanyam. Sri Krishna is purushottama.

We are referring to the nirguna Sri Krishna, who is chaitanya svarupa. And therefore, I am Purushottama.

So with this, Sri Krishna concludes the definition of the word Purushottama. And because of this reason alone, this chapter is called Purushottama yoga and now Sri Krishna says the aim of every spiritual seeker is the knowledge of Purushottama.

Shloka 15.19:

15.19 O scion of the Bharata dynasty, he who, being free from delusion, knows Me the supreme Person thus, he is all-knowing and adores Me with his whole being.

So here the Lord says all the intelligent people of the world will

not go after kshara purusha; they will not go after akshara purusha, they will

go after uttama purusha; purushottama, the nirgunam brahma.

Whereas

deluded people alone will be materialistic people. What do you mean by

materialistic people? The one's going after manifest matter or unmanifest

matter; are the deluded people, whereas a viveki, a sadhana chatushtaya

sampanna will go after uttama purusha, or Purushottama, by following karma, upasana and Gyana yoga.

Ultimately they will come to know purushottama; the nirguna, nirvikara, nirvikalpa, chetana, brahma tatvam. So intelligent people who know the purushottama,

they are called the omniscient ones, because by knowing

Brahman, they have known everything because Brahman alone is everything. And therefore, knowing Brahman is knowing everything. And thereafter he will continue to worship me, but his worship will be of a higher order. So Sri Krishna says such a Gyani will worship me in totality; wholeheartedly and fully.

And what do you mean by wholeheartedly or fully worshipping? Shankaracharya says the worship will be in the form of the knowledge that that purushottama is none other than "I", the atma chaitanyam. It is the all-pervading consciousness residing within my body-mind complex. And therefore, Gyani worships in the form of advaita bhakthi. So sarva bhavena means advaita bhavena, abheda bhavena.

And in the 7th chapter, Sri Krishna talked about four layers of bhakthi: artha bhakthi, artharthi bhakthi, jignasu bhakthi and Gyani bhakthi; and there Sri Krishna says Gyani bhakthi is the highest bhakthi and that is advaita bhakthi.

Sri Krishna now concludes:

Shloka

15.20:

15.20 O sinless one, this most secret scripture has thus been uttered by Me. Understanding this, one becomes wise and has his duties fulfilled, O scion of the Bharata dynasty.

This teaching about sarvatmakam brahma, this teaching about purushottama, both are one and same; sarvakatma brahma, or purushottama, are same. This teaching about Brahman or purushottama, is the greatest secret that is not easily available. You may go all over the world, there may be so many

universities giving varieties of courses and there may be additions of newer and newer courses, but all those courses will be dealing with either kshara purusha or akshara purusha. All the researches in the world happening are dealing with kshara or akshara; all objective sciences are material sciences, all the material sciences are kshara, akshara purusha vidya, and Mundaka upanishad calls them, अपरा विद्या, they are all inferior sciences; whereas para vidya is that which is the study of purushottama, the nirguna chaitanyam. In fact some of the scientists claim that the material sciences can never study consciousness.

Therefore, that rarely available knowledge, O Arjuna, I have told you. And why did I choose you for the teaching? Firstly, because you asked, that is important; and secondly you deserved the teaching as well as you are anagha or pure minded. Agam means papam, anagha means papa rahithaha or shuddha purusha. Since you are a pure one, I choose to give you this teaching.

May you receive this teaching and assimilate this teaching; and how should you assimilate it, by practising that uttama purusha, I am. I am neither the body, which is the kshara purusha, nor the mind, which is also kshara purusha, nor even the karana shariram, which is akshara purusha. I am the Turiyam of Mandukya Upanishad, which is the Uttama purushaha. May you become buddhiman. May you become a wise person.

Then you will ask the fundamental question what will I get out of it? Sri Krishna says, there is a practical benefit that this knowledge alone will give fulfillment in life. Krita

krithyaha bhava. Nothing else will give you fulfillment; even if it gives fulfillment, it is a fake and temporary fulfillment. Sooner or later, you are again ready for next thing. Therefore the journey of fulfillment ends only when you get this wisdom.

Thus

ends the fifteenth chapter named purushottama yoga in Srimad-bhagavad Gita which is the essence of the upanishads, which deals with Brahman-knowledge as well as the preparatory disciplines, and which is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Sri Krishna and Arjuna.

Take Away:

We

should remember that consciousness is not a form of energy. Consciousness is a principle, distinct from, and superior to, all forms of energy, because energy is only unmanifest matter.

Brahman sarvatmakatvam

means Brahman alone is in the form of everything. This is the essential teaching of all the upanishads.

Mandukya

Upanishad, the last chapter, shloka # 79, says that the benefit of this knowledge is that one will not develop Raga and Dvesha towards material world.

He will not run after material objects. (not from Gita).

**With Best
Wishes,**

Ram Ramaswamy