

# Taitreya Upanishad, Class 4

Greetings All,

**Chapter 1, Shikshavalli.**

**Paragraph # 1:**

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, Taittiriya Upanishad is written in prose. The first chapter that we are getting into is called Shikshavalli and it has 12 anuvakaha's. Anuvakaha means a paragraph. It can also sometimes mean a chapter. Shikshavalli's first and the last or twelfth anuvakaha's are both shantipatha's.

The content of Shikshavalli occurs between these two shantipatha's. The entire chapter # 1 is Sadhana pradhana and relates to preparation of the seeker. It does not have any Vedantic teaching. Many Sadhanas are mentioned for preparation. The Sadhanas are:

1. Kayika Karmani: Here the physical body plays a role. It is also called Karma Yoga or Pancha Maha Yagnaha. All these are required to purify our mind and beat Tamoguna or laziness. Tamoguna exists at the intellectual as well, however, physical activity makes one alert.
2. Vachika Karmani: Many karmas are prescribed at the verbal level. They include: Japam, Parayanam, etc. Parayanam is chanting of shlokas. It can be performed knowing the meaning or not knowing the meaning of the shloka. Chanting, knowing the meaning, is considered more effective. Japa is repetition of a mantra several times. Some mantras are chanted even 108 times. In Parayanam, however, one does not repeat the mantra.

There are two types of Japas.

1. Gyana Yogyatha Sidhi Japas and
2. Gyana Sidhi Japa.
3. Manas Karmani: These are mental activities. The organs of speech and organs of body are not involved in this activity. It is a purely mental activity or Upasana. Five Upasanas are mentioned in Shikshavalli. They are, however, not practiced anymore as such they are only of a theoretical interest to us.

Thus, the three karmani's, two Japas and five Upasanas are all part of Shikshavalli.

### **Paragraph # 2:**

The second paragraph starts with the word Shiksha, which gives the name to the chapter. Mere chanting or parayanam of scriptures is sacred. During chanting we are in touch with the Mahatmas who created them. Among parayanams, Veda parayanam is considered the highest. All others are smriti's. Vedas come from God. In this paragraph Veda parayanam is glorified. It is very important to chant the Veda parayanam correctly. There are rules established on how one should chant. There are sign rules used for chanting. This science of chanting is called Shiksha Shastram or science of phonetics or proper pronunciation. Mundaka Upanishad talks about 6 Vedangas. They are Shiksha (Phonetics), Vyakarana (grammar), Chandas (Prosody), Nirukta (Etymology), Jyotisa (astronomy) and Kalpa (sacrificial lore). The rules for pronunciation described in Shiksha shastram are six in number. They are: 1) Varna, 2) Swara, 3) Matra, 4) Balam, 5) Sama and 6) Santanaha.

**Varnaha:** It tells us how every letter of the alphabet is pronounced. It describes from which part of the body the pronunciation comes out. Eight parts of the body are recognized. Based on this the alphabets are categorized as vowels (swaras) and consonants (vyanjan). Consonants are categorized according to source of body part from which sound emanates. Thus we have: Kanta, Talu, Murdha, Danta, Oshta,

Nasika, etc.

**Swaraha:** This describes the accent or intonation or pitch of sound usually as high, medium or low. The pitch is very important in Vedic chanting and is usually marked in the text. The pronunciation is very important as the wrong pronunciation can change the meaning of the word.

Narrating a story in this context, there was a Devapurohita named Vishwarupa. Secretly he liked asuras. Indra got angry with him because of this and killed him. Vishwarupa's father Twashta wanted to revenge his son. He wanted a son who would kill Indra. He performed a Yaga and got a son named Vitrasura, an Indra Shatru. Instead of him killing Indra, Indra killed him. The father was very upset about this. He learnt that the chanting of Indra Shatru was performed in wrong manner. It was chanted as a Bahuvrihi Samas. The difference between Tatpurush and Bahuvrihi samas is the pronunciation. Here Tatpurush became Bahuvrihi and came out, as "I want a son for whom Indra is the killer". Thus, due to a wrong pronunciation his son was killed. It is for this reason that Veda mantras are not chanted en masse or even from a book. These situations can lead to wrong chanting of Vedas resulting in results that may be different from the originally intended one. In mass chanting errors are covered up by others. Such errors are acceptable for Nish Kama Karma mantras but not for Kami kama mantras.

**Matra:** The measure or length of a vowel. Consonants are uniform and are of ardha matra. For Swaras (vowels) there are three measures: Short (hrishwa), Long (dirgha) and very Long (plutha). A Plutha can be three or more matras long.

**Balam:** The stress or effort involved in uttering a letter. Some require more emphasis such as the difference between Ka and Kha. Effort comes from two sources, the mouth (abhyantra prayathna) and throat ( bahya Prayathna). Abyantras are of five types while Bahya antra are of eleven types.

**Sama:** The pace or speed of chanting. It should not be slow or fast, usually medium pace is suggested. Sama is governed by certain rules. It is considered Chanting only when one can chant from memory. One has to learn the chant from a Guru. To memorize one must chant regularly. While performing Brahma Yagya, a part of Pancha Maha Yagya, one can chant fast. However, in a ritual chanting one has to chant the letters clearly and at a medium pace. When teaching some one to chant it should be done at a slow pace.

**Santanaha:** Continuity of words. This is a combination of words and letters. Chanting rules do not allow splitting and joining as one likes. Compound words can't be split. During teaching one may split but later, it must be compounded. When you combine, the word can change.

Thus: Sham Naha Mitra becomes Shannomitra. These rules for combining are called Sandhi rules and are very important.

Usually one learns chanting from a Guru by imitating him. The above are the six factors to be followed in chanting Vedas. One should avoid Veda chanting, as wrong chanting may give adverse results. For Chitta Shudhi non-Vedic mantras can be chanted as well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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**Baghawat Geeta Class 72,**

# Chapter 5, Verses 10 – 13

Greetings All,

**Shloka # 10:**

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.१० ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.१० ॥

**Reposing all works in Brahman, he operates without attachment;  
he is not stained by sin as a lotus is not by water**

Continuing his teaching of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, we saw in the beginning of chapter 5 that Sri Krishna talked about the two lifestyles of Pravrithimarga ( Grihasthashrama) and Nivrithimarga ( Sanyasashrama) and that one has freedom to choose any one of the paths. Sri Krishna himself prefers Grihasthashrama as it is less risky and one can change over to Sanayashrama later, if one wishes. In Sanyashrama one cannot revert back to Grihasthashrama.

Now, Sri Krishna takes up the topic of Sadhanas. Sadhanas are applicable to both ashramas. First, one has to obtain Gyanayogyatha and then one has to go to Gyanam. Gyana yogyatha can be obtained only by performing Karmas. Three types of Karmas are available to a person to follow. They are:

Kayika (by body),

Vachika (verbal) and

Manasa(mental) Karmani.

Physical body or mind can perform Puja. Shankaracharya has written several manasa Puja shlokas. Mental visualization is manasika puja. Chanting is Vachika Karma. Karma alone purifies a person and gives him Chitta Shudhi. After that one comes to Vedanta Vichara and then comes to Gyanam. So, follow karma yoga and purify the mind; then follow scriptures and

acquire knowledge and then obtain Gyanam and be liberated.

Mechanical performance of Karma is not enough. The attitude while performing the karma is very important for purification. **Karma performed with proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.**

Karma Yoga purifies. What makes a Karma, Karma Yoga? The following make Karma, a Karma yoga:

1. The Karma should be dedicated to God as a Samarpanam. This will bring a change in personality. It is a Sankalpa that converts Karma into worship. What ever I do, I will do with purity, wholeheartedly, and do my very best for God.
2. When remembrance of God is there in the karma, it becomes a Puja.
3. Nishkama karma: means our attitude towards results of our karmas should be one of dedication to God or Samarpanam. Sandhyavandanam, going to temple, Japas, Pancha Maha Yagna, are all exclusive Karmas for purification. They are dedicated to God and meant for Chitta Shudhi. The results of these karmas will not disturb me.
4. Sakama Karma: Examples of this include when one is working for a salary or building a house etc. The activity here too should be dedicated to the Lord and one accepts the results as a prasadam. That is why the monthly salary check or a new sari is placed in front of God. Therefore, the karma is performed as an Ishwararpanam and the results of the karma are taken as Devaprasadam.

In this manner in both Nishkama and Sakama Karmas, the anxieties over actions go away. My life goes on smoothly as there is no violent reaction. I accept everything as God's gift to me. I accept everything as my karmaphalam, as what I deserve and not as what I desire. Everything is accepted as prasadam.

Sri Krishna says give up anxiety over future (Sangam Tyaktva). This is Bandha Tyaga. The sign of a devotee is that he is calm at all times.

What is the benefit of all this?

Such a Karma Yogi will not be affected by papam even if there are some defects in it. Karma Yogi has no papa bhayam. His life is like a lotus leaf in water that is not tainted by the water. The karma yogi too, amidst all his responsibilities, is not tainted by society.

### **Shloka # 11:**

शरीरेण मनसा बुद्ध्या चैव कर्मभिः कुरुते कर्मयोगिनः  
शरीरेण मनसा बुद्ध्या चैव कर्मभिः कुरुते कर्मयोगिनः 5.11

**With body, mind, intellect and mere senses, Yogins perform work without attachment, for the purification of the Self.**

Here Sri Krishna says Karma yoga can be performed at any level such as Kayika, Vachika or Manasika according to one's convenience. Even patram, pushpam, phalam and toyam are all acceptable. Our Vedic religion alone offers so many options to us. Bhakti is also important. Thus, everybody can perform Karma yoga.

Kayika karmas are physical actions. Vachika karmas are verbal actions such as nama-japa and parayanam.

One of the benefits of kayika karma, is beating laziness. One of the worst enemies of the human being is laziness and kayika karma helps us overcome this laziness. Manasika karmas include meditation, upasana, manasa japa and puja. Budhi karma includes understanding Gita and the scriptures with help of Indriyas.

Kevalaihi in the shloka means we tend to claim success as our own while failure we tend to disown. This can lead to arrogance. Even in success we must remember that it is due to

the organs given to us by God. Be humble even in success, exhorts god. Do all activities without stress and in calmness. All these sadhanas are meant for Atma or Chitta Shudhi. In this shloka Atma means mind.

Because of the many meanings of scriptures there is a special way to learn scriptures. It is called the Mimasa method that is used to extract the meaning of the scripture.

Karma Yoga is only to purify the mind it cannot give us Gyanam.

### Shloka # 12:

कर्मयोगी कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा योगीन्द्रो भवति सुखी  
कर्मयोगी कर्मफलं च्छेत्तुं योगीन्द्रो भवति सुखी 5.12

**Giving up the fruits of works, the Yogin attains disciplined peace; the non-Yogin, attached to fruits by the force of cravings is bound.**

Both Karma yoga and Gyana yoga will give us peace of mind. The mental peace resulting from Karma yoga is relative while the one obtained from Gyana Yoga is permanent. It is like a first aid versus a permanent treatment. The first aid is important, but it is limited. It indicates the need for more aid.

In the shloka Yuktaha means Karma yogi. Karma Yogi obtains peace of mind. Money can never gives us peace

of mind. Material objects can give us physical comfort but not mental comfort. Dropping concerns for karma phalam or the anxiety about future will certainly help in this area. Planning for future is useful as it makes me more efficient. However, worry about future will make me inefficient.

It is the same with the past. Regrets about past become a burden. On the other hand, if I learn lessons from the past, it makes me more efficient in the present.



**not the body mind complex.** When the body dies my transactions stop. In sleep too our body stops transacting. We know sleep is not my end, but it is only end of transactions.

Therefore, "I" am the consciousness who is behind the body. The body may end, but "I" do not die at all. Not only I-am-the pure-consciousness, I am akarta and abhokta; I do not perform any action at all.

Like the light on the hand, the light cannot move, as it is all pervading. Similarly the Gyani discovers the fact that I am the action-less Atma. Therefore, all the actions are transferred to the body mind complex; **it is a shift in the identification; and therefore instead of claiming the actions as mine,** I hand over the actions to the body-mind-complex; the body-mind-complex will have to act in the world and it will have to reap the result also. It is the body mind complex that acts, not the "I".

Thus, the Gyani renounces all actions. How does he renounce the actions? Shankaracharya quotes this shloka often. It is one of the very important shlokas of the Gita. So, how does he renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. He does not physically renounce the action. Actions will continue at the body and mental level. He, however, does not claim the actions as his actions, because he is detached from the body mind complex and therefore he says I do not act rather in my presence the body-mind-complex acts. Previously I said I act, but the new perspective is that, in my presence, the body-mind-complex acts. It is also a fact that the body-mind-complex cannot avoid action.

Thus, the Gyani renounces through knowledge. Physical immortality does not exist. "I am not the mortal body" is the true knowledge. Once I know the immortal Atma and I know the body is mortal then my biggest fear is gone. With this fear of death gone, the mind becomes light.

This knowledge removes the weight in my mind. He remains a man of control without involving in any action directly or indirectly because he does not perform any action. In his presence the body mind complex acts.

**Take Away:**

1. Only Karma performed with a proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.
2. Once one goes through Gyana Yoga, you discover that I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the consciousness. It is the consciousness that is transacting through the body-mind complex.
3. How does one renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. Through a shift in identification he becomes detached from the body mind complex and he does not claim the actions as his actions.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Taitreya Upanishad, Class 3**

Greetings All,

Continuing his introduction to the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the last class he pointed out that among many Upanishads ten are most important due to Shankaracharya writing commentaries on them. All of them are

chosen from the Vedas. Taittiriya Upanishad is from Yajur Veda. Yajur veda has two branches. Krishna Yajur and Shukla Yajur veda. Katho and Taittiriya Upanishads are from Krishna Yajur Veda. Ishavasa and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads are from Shukla Yajur Veda. Taittiriya Upanishad occurs at the end of of Taittiriya Aranyakam. This Aranyakam has 10 chapters. The last 4 chapters are philosophical ones. The famous Suvara namaskra or Aruna Prashna occurs in Taittiriya Aranyakam. Last four chapters 7,8, 9 and 10 of the Aranyakam are called Taittiriya Upanishad. Shankaracharya has commented on chapters 7, 8 and 9 only. He did not comment on the last chapter 10 called Mahanarayanam. Taittiriya and Ishavasa Upanishads have an uniqueness to them. They are used for pararayanam due to their swaras or intonation. They were preserved in the sampradaya of chanting. Mundako and Keno upanishad's were not preserved in the sampradya of chanting. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also has swaras but they are not very popular.

Two reasons are given as to how the name Taittiriya Upanishad has come about.

**The first story** comes from the Puranas or is of mythological origins and is considered more a symbolic one. Once there was a sage by name of Vaishampayana and he had a great disciple by the name of Yagnavalkiya. Yagnavalkiya was a brilliant student. On one occasion he insulted one of his classmates. Vaishampayana came to know about it. He knew Yagnavalkiya had a big ego. He wanted to punish him. He asked Yagnavalkiya to return all the Vedas taught to him. Yagnavalkiya vomited all the food he had eaten and in that vomit all Vedas were surrendered as well. He lost all the wisdom he had learnt. In the vomit was also all his well-digested knowledge. A bird also digests its food and feeds that to its young. All the Rishi's who were with Yagnavalkiya thought it would be a great idea if they could become birds and eat his vomit, so that they would get the wisdom very quickly. So all Rishi's converted themselves to Tittiri birds (partridge) and they ate

up his vomit. The Tittiri bird is small but it can consume a lot of food. Thus, all the Rishi's gained wisdom. It is said that because the vomit was mixed with some blood it had become dark or "Krishna", hence this knowledge is known as Krishna Yajur Veda. Later, Yagnavalkiya learnt the Vedas from Surya Bhagavan and he created the Shukla Yajur Veda. All the Rishi's who got their wisdom from the vomit, taught others the Krishna Yajur Veda and thus the Veda spread.

The symbology in this story is that Yagnavalkiya's vomit was like teaching the students a second time. Brilliant students usually grasp information very fast or the very first time. Others, slower students, need more time. It was not unusual for a teacher to ask his brilliant student to teach the slower students or his Co-brahmachari's. So, Yagnavalkiya is supposed to have taught the students who were also very eager to learn. The Tittiri bird also symbolizes a desire to learn quickly. Thus, like a Tittiri bird they received their teaching.

**The second story** is a simpler one. There was a Rishi named Taittiri. It was an Acharyas name not that of a bird. He was from Yajur veda paramapara. Hence, the name of the Upanishad.

This Upanishad has 3 sections that were commented upon by Shankaracharya. He did not comment on the fourth section. The last or fourth section (chapter) is the Narayanavalli and it is usually chanted while welcoming a Sanyasi. Each of the three chapters or sections is named after the very first word used in the chapter.

Thus, chapter 1, beginning with word Shiksha, is called Shikshavalli.

The chapter 2 begins with Brahma and is called Brahmavalli.

Chapter 3 begins with Brighu and as such is called Brighuvalli.

Fourth chapter is called Narayanavalli but it is not studied.

First and third chapters are not dealing with Vedanta. Vedanta occurs only in chapter 2 and is the most important one. Shankaracharya's commentary on this chapter is very famous. Chapters 1 and 2 are about preparation for gaining Gyanam and deal with Karma Yoga and Upasana.

These two subjects are discussed in chapters 1 and 3. Between these three chapters they have two shanti pathas. First chapter has a Shanti patha and chapters 2 and 3 together have another shanti patha. The invocation Sahana Vavatu comes from this shanti patha.

### **Shikshavalli or chapter 1:**

#### **The Shanti patha:**

**May Mitra be propitious to us. May Varuna bless us. May the blessings of Aryama be with us. May the grace of Indra and Brihaspathi be upon us. May Vishnu, the all pervading (wide-striding) be propitious to us. Salutations to Brahman. Salutations to Thee O Vayu! Thou art the visible Brahman. Thee alone shall I consider as the visible Brahman. I shall declare: Thou art the "Right"; Thou art the "Good". May that protect me; may that protect the speaker. Please protect me. Please protect the speaker.**

Through shanti patha students are asking for Gyana Yogyatha prapthi. All of my organs must be in a fit condition to receive knowledge. The 17 organs (The karmendriyas, Gyanendriyas etc.) should also cooperate. During Sravanam my gyanendriyas must be active, not Karmendriyas. I must obtain Karana Yogyata prapthi. Each organ has a Devata. I invoke these devatas so that they keep my organs fit. Various Devatas are mentioned in prayers. Prayers ask that there be no obstacles. Parthibandha Nibhadhyathi.

In this shanti patha following seven gods are invoked. They are:

**Mitra:** God of exhalation (outbound breath)

**Varuna:** Apana: God of inhalation

**Aryama** or Surya: God of the Eyes.

**Indra:** God of the hand.

**Brihaspati:** God of wisdom, intelligence and communication. The ability to communicate and ask questions is important. Precision and brevity in communication is required.

**Urukrama** or Vishnu: Is God of the feet or the ability to move and sit. Urukrama means one with big strides.

**Vayu:** is the Hiranyagarbha Devata or the Total subtle body. It is not visible. The visible part is Prana or Vayu. Samashti Prana is Vayu. It is total Sukshma shariram.

He is the Mangala Karta perceptible through the breath in our nostrils.

Students invoke these seven gods for auspiciousness, strength and Mangala Karta. This prayer includes prayer for fitness of teacher as well. It prays for teacher's organs and memory as well.

**Naha:** Student and teacher.

**Namaha:** Prostrating to Hiranyagarbha Tatva as it includes all Devatas or the Totality.

Hence, we worship the Pancha Maha Bhutas of Prithvi, Jalam, Vayu, Agni, and Akash Tatvam. All are worshipped during Sandhya Vandanam as well.

You are the perceptible God. I want to spread the good news.

**Ritum:** Living a life according to my studies. Not being a hypocrite.

Satyam: Since I should act according to my knowledge, my knowledge should be the right understanding. My knowledge should be right. It should be Right knowledge in keeping with Shastra, Reasoning and my Experience. When these three sources of knowledge are right, I have right knowledge. **Satyam is Right knowledge.**

Ritum and Satyam are embodied in Hiranyagarbha. All these are prayers for Yogya Prapthihi.

Prathibandha Nivriithi: means May god protect me. Let the obstacles go away. May God bless the Guru (Vaktaram) as well.

The Shantihi is chanted three times for removal of obstacles. These obstacles are Adhidaivika (of divine origin), Adhibhautika (originated in the physical, material beings) and Adhyatmika (created by ourselves).

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note:

### **Karmendriyas:**

#### **1.pāyu – the excretory organ.**

Is the organ of excretion. Associated with the mooladhara chakra and the earth element.

#### **2.upastha – the sexual organs**

This is the generative organ.

#### **3.pāda – the locomotion organ**

Legs are the locomotory organs.

#### **4.pāni – the organ of apprehension**

Hands are the most complex organ of action as they can express, feel and touch.

#### **5.vāk – the speech organ**

**Gyanendriyas:** are the five sense organs :1. ghrāṇa – nose  
2.rasanā – tongue 3.cakṣu – eye 4.tvak – skin 5.śrotra – ear



Grihastashrama.

After this clarification, now Sri Krishna talks about Sadhanas. He says one has to go through the rituals of purification. Both ashramas prescribe purification rituals called ashrama dharmas.

Following one's own ashrama dharma can purify everybody. After chitta shuddhi one then goes to Gyana Yoga.

This is the content of shloka # 7. Here, Sri Krishna is talking about Grihastashrama, as he prefers this ashrama. Yoga Yuktha here means Karma Yogi. Chapter # 3 talks of the factors that affect a Karma Yogi. The factors are:

- He is one who gives priority to inner growth although he also knows value of material possessions.
- He considers spiritual growth more important.
- He thinks, what I am is more important than what I have.
- His security depends on what I am and not what I have.
- His happiness too depends on what I am and not what I have.
- He dedicates his life to God.
- All his actions are an offering to God and all his experiences he takes it as prasadam.

He is a Karma Yogi. This sadhana changes the personality of the individual. Vedanta measures by personality changes and not changes in possessions. The transformation is to become pure minded. What is this purity about? It is freedom from all unhealthy ways of thinking or from Kama, Krodha, Mada, and Moha. It is removal of Asuri sampathi and allowing Daiviha sampathi to come in. He develops positive virtues and gives up negative ones.

In the words ,in the shloka,Vishud-Atma (pure minded) and Vijith atma , the word atma has two meanings. One means mind and the other the body. Vishudh atma means one who has purified his mind. Vijithatma means one who has mastered the

sense organs. It is like damming a river. While damming the river saves water, if you do not channel it properly the water will flood. Therefore, it is important to store and direct the physical, mental, emotional and intellectual energies in a proper manner and this is called mastery over sense organs.

Therefore, one who has purified his mind and mastered his sense organs, he is now qualified for knowledge or he is Gyana Yoga. Purity of mind and mastery over organs is essential before Gyanam. Vedapoorva is Gyana Yogyatha and then comes Vedanta or Karma Kanda or Gyana Kanda.

Sarvabhutatma means the active person is converted to a quiet person or one transforms from an extrovert to an introvert. He says following are the stages of Gyana Yoga:

- "I" am consciousness, different from the body. It is like the light is different from my hand. The light continues even after removal of the hand. It is independent of the body. Shloka 12-25 in chapter 2 describe them as well.
- "I" the consciousness behind this body is the same behind every body. Just as the same light is in everything a book, a mike, me etc. **It is the one indivisible, one formless light that is illuminating all forms. Thus, the one formless Consciousness is pervading every formed body.**

So, the first stage is I-am-the-consciousness behind-my-body.

The second stage of knowledge is I-am-the-consciousness behind-every-body.

The third stage of Gyanam, Swamiji said, he will describe at a later time.

Gyana Yogi is one who knows I am the Atma behind my body as well as all bodies (Sarvabhutatma). This is repeated in chapter 6 again. Because of this knowledge what benefit



## **their objects.**

In these shlokas a wise person's way of life is discussed. He is one who has gone through Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga, He can be a Grihasta Gyani or a Sanyasi Gyani. He may be an active Gyani or a quiet Gyani. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi was a quiet Gyani, while Shankaracharya moved around the whole of India several times and did so much work. Yet, both were detached.

The real "I" does not do anything at all. It is an Akarta and as such an Abhokta. It does not perform any action. It is exactly like when the hand moves, the light does not move at all; the light appears to move; but it does not. Even while understanding he is an Akarta, he still allows body to function according to his designation in life. He functions according to needs of society. His motivation in life is love and compassion towards the ignorant society. This love is a natural part of Gyanam. Ignorance suppresses Love and compassion. When abhimana goes, natural love and compassion automatically express themselves. He helps the needy, the one requiring knowledge and thus allows the body mind complex to function according to the requirement without Dehabhimana. He does not have selfishness. In this state he is identified totally with creation. In this state, I am with God. All his actions are Dharmic.

The five Gyanendriyas of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling are allowed to function. The five Karmendriyas of breathing, talking, excreting, taking, opening and closing the eyes, breathing in and out and even sleeping (svapan, svasan, pralapan, visarjan, grhnan, unmisan nimisan) continue to function. The gyani functions just like a normal person. The only difference is that he has Gyanam. This, nevertheless, brings about a radical change in his attitude. This also changes his responses to situations. Citing the story of lottery winner, the Lottery Company wanted his doctor to convey his winning to him, as they were concerned he may not be able to bear the shock. The doctor contacted him and asked him

what he would do if he won five lac rupees in a lottery? The man replied, O great Doctor, you are the reason I am still alive and I really planned on leaving you half my lottery prize. The Doctor was so shocked by his comment that he died. For a Gyani

there is nothing called shock, even if it arrives, it does not take much time, for changing from "what !", to so what? That is Gita; Gita is going "from what" to "so what"?

My body is made up of matter. Interaction of body is inevitable. One may consider staying away from the world for peace of mind. Sri Krishna asks how long can you escape the world? Your Prarabhdha Karma will make you act. Gyani acts knowing sense organs and objects will interact creating sensations. So, Gyani remembers this through all such interactions in an alert manner. He is a Yukta. " I have a higher Self" in front of which the lower self is insignificant.

### **Shloka # 10:**

ब्रह्मणि सर्वं कर्माणि समाहृत्य न संशयः  
न च तत्र संशयः कश्चिद् भवेत् ॥ ५.१० ॥

**Reposing all works in Brahman, he operates without attachment; he is not stained by sin as a lotus is not by water**

What happens to a Gyani was discussed in previous shlokas. He has discovered a higher "I" in front of the lower "I". Citing an example, during freedom struggle many Indians were sent to Andamans. What made them put up with this severe punishment? They too had two I's. The physical I suffered but the Indian I was predominant and therefore suffering was insignificant. You discover something far superior. Citing another example, Swamiji says, when we add water in salt and keep diluting it until salt is not felt at all. Gyanam does not give freedom from biological pain. Gyanam, however, frees you from the psychological pain. The "I" becomes insignificant. So,

discovering the higher "I" is very important. Sri Krishna says, until you discover the higher "I" till then you should develop a love for God. Thus: From World Dependent>God Dependent>Self Dependent.

Here Sri Krishna comes back from Gyana yoga to karma yoga again. In Gyana yoga one is dependent on higher "I", while in Karma Yoga one is dependent on God.

Until you discover your higher Self, stay in Saguna Brahman or Ishta Devata. I discover Bhakti and surrender to the Lord. I dedicate all actions to that lord. Kama karma and Nish kama karma , both are dedicated to God. In kama karma, when you get results, accept them as prasadam.

### **Take Away:**

1. Gyani is one who is able to objectify his own body as a part of creation. He looks at it just like another body. We are normally objective with respect to other bodies but not our own.
2. Our problems in life are based on two abhimanas. They are:
  1. Identification with body (Dehabhimana)
  2. Identification with properties of the body.
3. The one formless Consciousness is pervading every formed body.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Bagawat Geeta, Class 70: Chapter 5, Verses 3 to 7

Shloka # 3:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.३ ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.३ ॥

**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.**

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said that the teaching of previous three chapters was that there is no choice between Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. The Spiritual Sadhanas are:

- Gyana Yoga for liberation and
- Karma Yoga for preparation of mind.

All forms of sadhanas including Patanjali's yoga of meditation come under these sadhanas. Even Bhakti Yoga, depending on the type of practice, comes under one of these two sadhanas. When Bhakthi yoga is understood as pooja, or any type of saguna dhyanam it will come under karma yoga. When bhakti yoga is performed as a Shastric study, it becomes Gyana Yoga, a higher level of Bhakti Yoga. Thus, Bhakthi yoga is common to both karma yoga and gyana yoga. Lower level of bhakthi yoga is called karma yoga. Higher level of bhakthi yoga is called Gyana yoga; there is no exclusive bhakthi yoga, separate from Karma yoga and Gyana yoga. Therefore, all the sadhanas will fall within these two alone.

Regarding life style, Sri Krishna says, there is a choice. We can be in society and follow both sadhanas or be out of society and follow both sadhanas. There is even a third choice in lifestyle. One can follow karma Yoga as a Grihasta then

become a Sanyasi and follow Gyana Yoga. This third option is the one preferred by the Vedas.

The question is asked, how can one follow spirituality in Grihasthashrama where there are so many distractions? Sri Krishna says, in itself there is nothing wrong with Grihasthashrama. **The primary problem for a Grihasta is Raga and Dvesha.** We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. We need to manage our Raga Dvesha. Such a person is a Nithya Sanyasi.

The advantage of Sanyasahrama is that the Sanyasi has no attachments. Therefore, he usually has a light mind. Even a Grihasta can enjoy a light mind if he does not have Raga and Dvesha.

Citing king Janaka as a model of Grihasthashrama, once the king was with his Guru amidst other Sanyasis. The Sanyasis looked down upon the King, as he was a Grihasta. The Guru wanted to teach the Sanyasis a lesson. He created an illusory fire in the ashram and immediately all Sanyasi's ran to protect their possessions. When they came back they found the king still sitting alone listening to the Guru's teaching. Swamiji says, wearing a saffron robe does not guarantee Sanyasa. Therefore, even a Grihasta can be a Sanyasi internally.

Swamiji clarified that Sri Krishna is not saying that one should not have Raga Dvesha. Human beings will have likes and dislikes. Even Gods have their likes and dislikes. See how Sri Krishna loves his flute and Saraswathi Devi loves her Veena and Sri Ganesha loves his carrier, the Mouse. Preferences in life will be there. Our personality is actually defined by our preferences or likes and dislikes. Sri Krishna, however says, do not become a slave to Raga and Dvesha. If you can fulfill them fine, if not convert it into a non-binding desire. What



the ashramas.

In both ashramas Gyanam is possible. Sri Krishna advises that one should take the ashrama most suitable to one's inclinations and Prarabhda Karmas.

Many factors influence the type of ashrama one chooses. But once a choice is made one should follow the requirements of that ashrama implicitly. It is very important that finally the inner transformation occurs. Gyanam is also the goal of a Grihastha Sanyasi.

**Shloka # 5:**

संन्यासोऽथवा योगोऽथवा कर्मयोगोऽथवा  
संन्यासोऽथवा योगोऽथवा कर्मयोगोऽथवा 5.5

**The status won by the Samkhyas is attained by the Yogins also. Only he perceives who perceives that Samkhya and Yoga are one.**

Here again Sri Krishna reinforces the same ideas.

Samkhya Sanyasi's do attain moksha following Karma Yoga and then Gyana yoga. Purificatory sadhanas are many including the Sanyasi's Danda. A sanyasi does not have sacred thread he uses a danda instead. A danda puja is also performed daily. Both Sanyasi and Grihastha attain moksha through purification.

While both ashramas are equally efficient each has its plus and minus points exactly like having your own house versus a rented house. The one who sees this fact, that person alone, sees that other people have wrong perceptions.

Sri Krishna says all this so that Arjuna does not run away from the battlefield. Arjuna, on the other hand, somehow or the other wants to run away. There is a tension between the two. If Sri Krishna says sanyasa ashrama is superior then Arjuna will run away; therefore he says that the one who sees both as equal, he alone has got the right vision.

## Shloka # 6:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥  
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ५.६ ॥

**Indeed, renunciation, mighty armed! Is hard to win without Karma Yoga. With Yoga, the silent sage attains Brahman without much delay.**

Sri Krishna now adds some new information. He has already said that both ashramas are equal and efficient. This is like asking which subject is better, physics or chemistry? All sciences are equally important. Now, if I have to choose one of them it is because of my mental make up and inclination. One of them may be more conducive. Some places are humid and others very dry. Some may prefer one or the other. In this context, a prepared mind is better for Sanyasa. An unprepared mind may feel very lonely in Sanyasa. There will be nobody to ask him how he feels.

Citing an example, an Indian couple was residing in a small town USA. The lady was a housewife and was often left alone. Due to loneliness she gradually became clinically depressed. Her house was a not a silent ashrama rather it was the silence of an Shmashana (cremation ground). After some time they came back to India. Here, now, she feels much better although it is very noisy.

So, to enjoy Sanyasahrama one needs a level of mind that is different. So, only a contemplative person and one who likes Maunam, a Muni, will find it compatible. Such a person, by practicing Yoga, will attain moksha before long. So, Sri Krishna says, for majority of people, Grihasthashrama is the best choice. Sanyasahrama should be taken up only with advice of a Guru and consent of the shishya.

It is when this is not followed that one reads of the many problems with Sanyasi's today.



Vishudhatma in the shloka is one who depends less on external factors. Dependence is Samsara. Independence is moksha. Thus, less dependence psychologically is Vairagyam. Thus, detachment is purity. Raga Rahit Atma is same as Vishudhatma, which is same as Vairagyam.

**Take Away:**

We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. This is Raga Dvasha. We have to overcome this.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## **Taitreya Upanishad, Class 2**

Greetings All,

**Introduction:**

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, we saw in the last class that Self-knowledge can be gained through shastra pramanam. It is a mirror that I need, to reflect my Self. It can, however, communicate its message correctly only with the help of a Guru. That Shastra Darpanam gives me knowledge of myself. It is also called Gyana Yoga. This Gyana Yoga has three specific exercises. They are Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam.

Thus,

**Sravanam:** means consistently listening to teachers six fold clues that are used to extract the core teaching of Vedanta. The six fold clues or six *pramanas* are the correct means of accurate knowledge and to the truth. They are:

- 1) *Pratyakṣa* (perception),
- 2) *Anumāṇa* (inference),
- 3) *Upamāṇa* (comparison and analogy),
- 4) *Arthāpatti* (postulation, derivation from circumstances),
- 5) *Anupalabdi* (non-perception, negative/cognitive proof) and
- 6) *Śabda* (word, testimony of past or present reliable experts).

Without these clues one cannot get to the core of the teaching. Now, there are several interpretations of Upanishads. They include:

3. I am different and God is different.
4. God and I are only partially different and that I am part of God;
5. I am neither part nor different from God. Rather, I am that.

These several interpretations indicate the need for analysis of scriptures or a reverential enquiry into scriptures also known as Mimamsa. This process of enquiry is known as Sravanam. **Here, I learn that I am Brahman and that there is no second thing other than Me. I am the whole. I am All.** This process is called Sravanam.

**Mananam:**

It is meant to remove doubts about teaching. **These are the**

**obstacles between knowledge and conviction.** Doubtful knowledge is as good as ignorance. Citing an example, you see a power chord and don't know if it is live. Someone says it is not live. As you are about to touch it, he says, he is only 99% sure it is not live. In this case, you probably will not touch the power chord. Here, even one percent ignorance is ignorance.

The main Vedantic teachings are extraordinary and unswallowable. "I am infinite" is difficult to swallow. I am very sure that I am a mortal human being who is growing old and will die one day. My lifestyle is based on the fact that "I am aging and I will die". The statement I am infinite is not acceptable to me.

With respect to the world, Vedanta says, this world that we are experiencing solidly is not there at all, rather it is a mistaken version of the formless Brahman. Formless Brahman alone exists. Form-full world does not exist. Vedanta tells me, I am something I don't experience. So, with respect to Jiva, Jagat and Brahman, all three of them, I find Vedanta's position difficult to swallow. Therefore, I am full of doubts. The reason for the doubt is that my sense organs reveal a world contrary to the Vedanta. My eyes, ears, nose etc., reveal a world of plurality or Dvaitam, while Vedanta asserts that there is only Advaitam. When there is a clash between direct experience and scriptures, we tend to believe the direct experience. Scriptures are, after all, words written a long time ago by some unknown person(s). So, How can I trust this knowledge while I am experiencing something different everyday. This conflict is called **Prameya Virodha**, or object revealed only by scripture (Advaitam) rather than by direct experience (Dvaitam).

Dvaitam and Advaitam are directly opposite to each other. This intellectual problem can be resolved only through thinking. This process of removing doubts is called Mananam. It alone can give me conviction. Only thinking can validate Vedantic

teaching. Many think scriptural teaching has to be proved. It is not possible to do so. No experience can remove an intellectual problem. All intellectual problems arise from non-thinking or wrong thinking. Only right thinking can solve it. We think meditation and Samadhi will remove these doubts. This is wrong. It is said that Patanjali never got his intellectual conviction through his Yoga Samadhi. Samadhi cannot remove doubts. It can only be removed by the thinking, "I am Satyam and Jagat is Mithya".

### **Nidhidhyasanam:**

This consists of different types of exercises. Central aim is dwelling on teaching for assimilation and internalization. Here, I am soaked in Advaita Gyanam. Nidhidhyasanam can be performed in different ways. They are:

1. Repeated Sravanam. Keep listening to teaching again and again. Be reminded of the teaching again and again.
2. Repeated reading.
3. Writing on the teaching.
4. Students of equal knowledge share their knowledge.
5. Teaching some one who does not have the knowledge.
6. Try to imitate the behavior of a Jivan Mukta. I try to imitate life of a Gyani, until I get Gyanam. As they say, fake it to make it. Citing example of namaskara to elders by children, this should be encouraged. Although it is initially a mechanical process one can hope that after some time they will discover the inner reverence too. Thus, fake namaskara becomes reverent namaskara. Chapter 2, shlokas 54-72 and other chapters of Gita deal with Jivan mukta and how they behave. It is called an alert life.
7. Samadhi Abhyasaha: This is different from other forms that you can practice any time and at any place. In this, a sitting meditation is performed in a proper posture, as per scriptures. The goal is focusing on any aspect of the teaching or behavioral problem of the

individual. Some people have Kshama, Depression, Kama, Madha, Krodha, and Matsarya. One focuses on his or her area of weakness and meditates on poornatvam.

We don't insist on a type of meditation. During meditation we should dwell on the Shastra. **Purpose of this meditation is not Moksha.** Moksha is not a future event. It is an eternal fact. It is the knowledge that " I am free in spite of the situation". Nidhidhyasanam is not for Gyanam. For Gyanam one performs Sravanam. Nidhidhyasanam is not meant to prove the knowledge. Proving is only through Mananam. Nidhidhyasanam is not meant for any extraordinary experience. All experiences belong to Anatma. They come and go. Mystic experiences have no connection to Self Knowledge. A Gyani may not get any mystic experience. A Gyani may not have any Sidhi.

In this context four types of people were cited:

- 1) Gyani and Sidha;
- 2) Gyani and not Siddha;
- 3) Sidha and not Gyani;
- 4) Neither Gyani nor Sidha.

Among these four, only the Gyani is liberated. An Adharmic Sidha is also possible as known from stories of Rakshasas. Therefore, Nidhidhyasanam is only for assimilation of knowledge. What are the signs of assimilation?

Samasric reactions to life situations will change. Reactions will be healthy. You will not get a halo. Unhealthy reactions should come down. As you practice Nidhidhyasanam, there will be a gradual reduction in unhealthy reactions. This assimilation can be measured by the following:

1. **Frequency** of unhealthy reactions will be reduced. There will be more shanti or Brahmagyana phalam anubhavam.
2. **Intensity** of reaction is lower. The reaction is usually

felt in mind, body and speech. Now, there will be no physical reaction. While mental reaction may occur, I can control it. I do not respond verbally as well.

3. **Recovery** period is reduced. In the past it could affect one for years. Now, it comes and goes in minutes.

Vedanta does not say we should not have a reaction. It just says we should have a reaction that is healthy. Citing another example, it is like the bouncing back of a rubber ball versus the lack of resilience in a clay ball. Thus, psychological resilience comes from Nidhidhyasanam.

From these three exercises we get Gyana Phalam or Jivan Mukti. This teaching is called:

1. Vedanta or the end part of the Vedas
2. or Gyana Kandam (Karma is not discussed)
3. or Brahma Vidya
4. or Atma Vidya.
5. or knowledge of myself as the ever-free one and it is also called Upanishad.
6. Upanishad: Shankaracharya has defined Upanishad as a teaching in which the freedom is hidden. You are discovering freedom in yourself.

### **Take Away:**

Vedanta says, this world that we are experiencing solidly is not there at all, rather it is a mistaken version of the formless Brahman. Formless Brahman alone exists. Form-full world does not exist.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Taitreya Upanishad, Class 1

Greetings All,

## Introduction:

Starting his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, as a general introduction he wanted to recollect from his previous discussions on Upanishads. Basic scriptures are called Vedas also known as sources or instruments of Knowledge. They are four in all. They are further divided into two parts. First part is known as Veda Poorva while second part is known as Veda Anta.

Veda Poorva, also known as Karma Kanda, is dedicated to a wide variety of karmas or rituals. All these karmas are broadly classified into three categories. They are:

1. Kayika Karamani: Physical body plays a big part in them.
2. Vachika Karmani: Are in the form of Japas and Parayanams.
3. Manasika Karmani: It is purely through meditation.

All these karmas are also known as Upasanas. Scriptures prescribe these three karmas for obtaining different types of karmaphalams. Therefore, these three karmas are also known as Sadhanas or means of obtaining different aims in life. Karma Kandas also calls them as Sadhana Trayam. These Sadhanas can produce end results called Sadhyams for our benefit. While there are many goals, these goals have been classified into three or the Sadhya Trayam. They are:

- Upadhi Prapthihi: Goals of improving our organs of pleasure, better health, better sense organs, improved mental faculty (intelligence and memory) etc. Thus, the

Samidadhanam required to be performed by a Brahmachari is for improved memory and intelligence. It is also for improved emotional health, (shantihi), for intellectual health (shradha) etc. Overall purpose is to improve instruments of living and enjoyment or improving oneself.

Now, once you feel further improvement is not possible, due to age, health etc., then one can pray for another good body in the next birth as well. This too is Upadhi prapthi.

- Vishaya Prapthi: Is to improve objects of enjoyment. Thus, to obtain a good family, wife children, friends are all wishes that fall in this category. Each of these is important else life can become miserable.
- Lokaha Prapthi: The environment of interaction between Self and objects should be favorable. It should be peaceful. It means improve present atmosphere or replace existing atmosphere. An atmosphere of violence, anger, hatred etc., is after all not very conducive for happiness.

All above are the Karmas or the three means and their respective three ends. Even if a person is lucky to enjoy all of the above three, such a Satvik person will learn from Life's Lessons. Important lessons learned are that all three goals are wonderful, however, inherent in them are deficiencies or Doshas. While these Doshas are relatively good (Preyaha) they are not absolute good or Sreyaha. Thus, there are three Doshas or Dasha Trayam. They are:

1. Dukhamishritatvam: This includes desire for acquisition, preservation and loss. All three of them can also cause pain.
2. Atripthi: They will not give us total satisfaction. You will always crave for more. You will tend to compare and there will always be someone with more than you.
3. Bandhatvam: When we have them and use them, we soon also

become dependent on them. One becomes attached or addicted. You become more dependent without your own knowledge.

Most of us do not think of these Doshas. Many of us do not worry about it. A slum person prefers his slum even if a better place is offered to him. He will rent the new place and come back to his slum.

However, some people start exploring some goals that are free from these Doshas. To such intelligent people, Vedas say, there are such goals, but they cannot be obtained from Karma Kanda. Karma Kanda only deals with Preyaha. If you want Sreyaha you have to go somewhere else. Such an intelligent seeker is called a Mumukshu. Others are called Bubhukshu. Karma Kanda cannot serve a Mumukshu. Mumukshu has to go Vedanta for this.

So, what is this defect free goal? That defect free goal is Brahman or Moksha. It is not mired in dukha, atripthi and bandhaha.

Where is this Brahman and how to acquire it? Vedanta says you can never obtain it because that defect free one is in the form of the "Seeker" in you. You are that. I also have a very difficult time swallowing the idea that I am that defect free Brahman. Everything I have, has defects, including my body, mind and intellect. They all have limitations. All my experiences, so far, have proven my limitation. Even my children tell me that I was a terrible parent. In this context I have a big doubt if I am a defect free Self. There is a very big gap between what I think of myself versus what Vedanta thinks of me. I sometimes feel like dropping the Gita, Upanishads and the Guru.

If I am born in a culture where Shraddha in scriptures is important, I will not drop the Upanishad. A boys Upanayana ceremony lasts four days and on the last day the Brahmachari

worships Shradha Devi. To such a person the Shradha comes that the Vedas cannot go wrong. I develop deep faith in the Vedas. So, I need to question my conclusions. I have taken it for granted, "I am finite". I need to re-analyze my conclusion. Therefore, I have to start a Self Enquiry to verify if my conclusion is valid or not. For a long time human beings thought the Sun went around the Earth. Then came a person who said that the Earth went around the Sun or that we are not in a Geo-centric universe. This scientist was harassed and rejected.

When I enter into Self Enquiry, I find, I don't have the instruments for such an enquiry. Just as we have a telescope to study the stars and a microscope to study bacteria, I don't have an instrument to study the Self. Here I am enquiring into the Enquirer. Regular instruments are not useful for such an enquiry. Such regular instruments are also known as Pauresheya Pramanani because they are extrovert in nature and not useful for such an enquiry.

I need a special mirror, one to reveal my real "I". This is known as Shabda Pramanam or a verbal mirror. When somebody tells you, "you look jaundiced" (yellow) it is a Shabda Pramana or a Shabda mirror. When I try to study the Upanishad by myself, I find they use peculiar methods that are different from objective science. Shastra has to use words to reveal my Self.

Other methods will only give us an intellectual and in-direct knowledge. Other methods tend to objectify. Description of the Brahman is not one of an object rather it is one of my own Self. If not, Student will say he has understood but not experienced the Brahman. This knowledge and experience dichotomy (or division) does not occur in Brahmagyanam. The student should not come to a definite conclusion. Therefore, a Guru alone can make the Upanishad speak to you. What is the method used by the Guru? He uses six factors in the primary teaching also known as Tatparyam. It is " You are what you

want to be in life". It will teach that you are a secure and immortal being. This teaching has to be provided consistently, again and again until the student nods his head in understanding.

### **Take Away:**

There is a very big gap between what I think of myself versus what Vedanta thinks of me. It is very difficult to believe that I am that defect free Brahman.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# **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:**

शुद्धं कर्म कुरुष्व मे तत्रैतन्निश्चयः ॥  
कुरुष्व मे तत्रैतन्निश्चयः कुरुष्व मे तत्रैतन्निश्चयः ॥5.1॥

**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 opposites. I cannot follow both, life of seclusion and life of activity, at the same time.

In fact, the grihastha is supposed to be the pillar of the society. He is the one who nourishes all the other three ashramas because all the three ashramas live on Bhiksha. Thus, a brahmachari has to live on Bhiksha; a vanaprasthi has to live on Bhiksha and a sanyasi also has to live on Bhiksha alone. So, if the three ashramas have to receive Bhiksha, somebody has to give it. So, he is the one who gives Bhiksha.

Some other monastic religions glorify Sanyasa. Ashrama is a place of spiritual sadhana. Ashrama can happen in family life too. Such a person is unaffected even in his family life. Janaka Maharaja is often cited as an example of a Grihastha Gyani.

Thus, says Swamiji, it is not a choice between Sadhanas rather it is a choice between lifestyles.

Shloka # 2:

**Sri Krishna said:**

कर्म कर्मयोगोऽपि

कर्मयोगोऽपि कर्मयोगोऽपि कर्मयोगोऽपि

कर्मयोगोऽपि कर्मयोगोऽपि कर्मयोगोऽपि 5.2

**Both renunciation and Karma Yoga promote the supreme good; but of the two, Karma Yoga is superior to the renunciation of works.**

Sri Krishna says, both ashramas are equally good for both sadhanas. In Vedanta the term Dvanda is used. It means everything in creation has a good and a bad aspect to it.

Both ashramas are equally good for following karma yoga sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. Karma yoga can be efficiently followed in grihastha ashrama; but for Gyana yoga the obstacles for Grihastha are many while you require an 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



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

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## **Saddarshanam, Class 24**

Greetings All,

### **Shloka # 41:**

**When there is the sense of bondage, anxiety for liberation is there. By the inquiry "for whom is the bondage?" one's own Self, the ever free, is itself established. Then where is the thought of bondage and where is the concern for liberation?**

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, all the

Darshanas are systems of philosophy. They all have one goal and it is Moksha. They all say our Bandhas (attachments) are the cause of human problems. These Bandhas are also known as Samsara or Universal bondage. Every Darshanam also presents a solution for Bandha Vimukti. However, contradicting all this now, Vedanta says, there is no such thing as Moksha. It says moksha is neither possible nor required. The problem of bondage is an assumed problem. In Vedanta, Bandha itself is non-existent. If so, then where is the question of Moksha? However, the whole of humanity has been programmed and wants Moksha. They also want Moksha Sadhana(s) or solutions. Therefore, Vedanta has to present them solutions for liberation as well. It is more a marketing tool with the purpose of getting attention of a seeker. So Vedanta compromises and says I have moksha Sadhana. It asks the question Moksha from what? It asks us to look at bondage first and then discuss Moksha later. Upon enquiry, we find the nature of bondage as "I". Who is this "I"? Then, we realize that "I" has no bondage. This negation of bondage after seeing the irrelevance of Moksha is figuratively called Moksha.

Citing an example, Swamiji narrated a story. He and others were getting ready to go to airport to receive Dayananda Swamiji. The person, a devotee, who was to pick them up, did not show up. They all panicked. One tried calling a taxi. Another tried contacting the devotee. Another went inside the Ashram and called the airport and learned the flight was delayed. When he came out to communicate the delay, others were so engrossed in their actions; they did not listen to him. He had to shout. This is the state with humanity as well. They don't listen to a wise person.

So, the solution is Shravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam to know that there is no need for Moksha.

If there is the idea of bondage of the Self, who is bound? We know body is mortal. We know Atma is immortal. If so, who has the bondage? This is the enquiry. This is a systematic enquiry

of Vedanta also called Guru Shishya Vichara. We will clearly understand that Svatma, our real nature, is ever free. If so, where is the thought of bondage? Once body is negated, where is question of liberation? No Gyani ever says, " I am "now" liberated". A Gyani's perspective will be that I am beyond bondage and liberation.

Shloka # 42:

**The knowers say that liberation is of three forms- with form, without form and of the nature of both. The destruction of that "I" notion which analyses these three is supreme liberation.**

In Vedanta we say that duality and division are the cause of all problems. Transcending duality is called Moksha. However, people study Vedanta and then divide it into several types. Mukti by its nature is division-less, but is now divided, a contradiction in itself. The three types of Mukti are:

1. Rupini mukti
2. Arupini Mukti
3. Ubhayatmika Mukti

Rupini is embodied mukti. It is attributed to Sage Jaimini. Thus, Moksha is obtained while body is in existence. This is also called Jivanmukti.

Arupini Mukti is Mukti without a body. This is attributed to Sage Badrihi. This is also known as Videha Mukti.

Ubhayatmika Mukti is referencing both types or Jivan mukti and Videha Mukti.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi says people have analyzed different types of Mukti. However, if you ask me about Mukti, it is the end of that Ahamkara that enjoys dividing Mukti into several types.

I am the all-pervading Consciousness with many bodies in me.

Mithya body does not make a difference. Jivan Mukti and Videha Mukti are all fictitious differences. Ahamkara manages to continue, in the name of classifying Mukti. Let the classifying Ahamkara go away. Any classification means Dvaitam.

When the phrase “destruction of Ahamkara” is used, it means understanding it is Mithya. Without Ahamkara we wont be able to perceive this world. Ahamkara is required. Thus, if a Gyani loses his Ahamkara, he will die. So, destruction of Ahamkara means it is only a Vyavahrika Satyam. Let Vyavaharika Ahamkara continue to function. “I” am Paramarthika Satyam. This is Saddarshanam. To summarize the teaching:

1. Ahamkara is the cause of all problems.
2. It is not the world or people who are the cause of all problems.
3. Tackling Ahamkara is the only solution. Realizing Ahamkara will always be with us, what is the poisonous part of Ahamkara? Our “attachment” of “reality” to Ahamkara is the poison. Once you realize it is unreal, you can then wear it as an ornament. (We need detachment from Ahamkara).
4. Ahamkara can be tackled only by knowing Atma.
5. Atma is of the nature of Sat or pure Existence. It is not a part or product of the body. It is eternal, independent of everything, all pervading, ever the Experiencer and free from all modifications. It is Sat. Hence the name Saddarshanam.
6. Atma darshanam is possible only through Atma Vichara. It has to be performed in a systematic manner under a qualified Guru. It is the study of Vedanta.

This is essence of Saddarshanam teaching.

Shloka # 43:

**Vasishta Muni composed this “Sadshana” in the language of the**

**immortals (Sanskrit), having translated the pure and superb composition written by Sri Ramana maharsi in the Dravida language (Tamil).**

This shloka is one of the concluding notes about the two authors.

- Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi wrote this text in Tamil. It was called *Ulladu narpadu*, “Forty Verses on Reality”.
- Vasishtha Gapanathy Muni translated this text in Sanskrit.

It is considered a pure work without any defects such as Shabda (grammar) or artha (logic) dosha. It is dealing with Para Vidya or the greatest knowledge or Utkrishta.

#### **Shloka # 44:**

**The words of the Muni shine like a wall reflecting the rays of the divine utterances of Sri Ramana, conveying the essence of the Truth in simple form and giving joy to the seekers of Liberation.**

Here glory of the Sanskrit version is described. It is also an excellent work. It is giving teaching of Reality in a simple form. Normally the word “Existence” is used as an adjective. Here, however, it is used as a noun indicating that it means the Ultimate Reality. The teaching gives one the great joy of Moksha Ananda. It gives joy only to a prepared person or Mumukshu. A Mumukshu is also one who is Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampana. Ganapathy Muni says his work is only a mirror reflecting the teachings contained in Ulludu Narpadu. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is described as an extraordinary human being or an Avatara.

This concludes Saddarshanam.

#### **Take Away:**

*Our attachment to Ahamkara* or ego-consciousness or “I-this

awareness" is the root problem. We need to detach our self from this attachment.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# 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. Swaroop, 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 Ishwara 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 Ishwara, 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.

Ishwara '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 asangha 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 Grihastha and Sanyasi Gyani's. Brahmachari is a householder or Grihastha Gyani. Therefore, liberation is not dependent on Ashrama but dependent on Wisdom.

One who takes Sanyasa should pursue Gyanam. Chinmayanandaji 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