

Bagawat Geeta Class 63, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 24:

ब्रह्मसंज्ञासंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं ब्रह्मसंज्ञितं
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The means of the sacrificial offering is Brahman; Brahman is the oblation placed in the fire of Brahman and by Brahman is the sacrifice made. This scarificer, who concentrates on the act that is Brahman, reaches Brahman alone.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in Shlokas 18-24 Sri Krishna dealt with Gyana Yoga. In the 24th shloka he concluded Gyana Yoga. In the 24th shloka he was teaching the highest philosophy of the Upanishads. This Teaching can be summarized as follows:

1. Recognizing that the Consciousness principle is different from the body, mind and thought complex. This is similar to the electricity that while it illumines the bulb, is distinct and separate from it. Thus, Consciousness is a also separate entity. That is who I am. I am not the body-mind-thought complex. Body-mind-thought complex is only an incidental tool. In it's absence I stop transacting but continue to exist. "I" am existence and it does not require a body-mind-thought principle.
2. This "I" the Consciousness principle is behind all the bodies not just mine. There is only one Consciousness enclosed in many bodies. This Consciousness is same in everyone. From Consciousness' point of view we are all one.
3. This "I" behind all bodies is the essence and truth. The

body-mind-thought complex is not independent of Consciousness. Consciousness is Satyam.

Upanishads say Consciousness (Karana) is the cause and everything else is the effect (Maryam). Once I see that Consciousness is the cause and matter is the effect then I also become aware that there is no matter separate from Consciousness. This requires an attitudinal change in me.

This is similar to gold that is the cause of an ornament. There is only one gold while ornaments are many. Even in science while all elements are superficially different, they are all still energy. Vedanta says even the energies are different, only the Consciousness is one.

How can the invisible consciousness become the visible creation, if you ask, the science answers that the intangible and invisible energy can manifest as tangible matter. If that is possible for energy, Vedanta says, that the intangible formless consciousness alone is appearing as the tangible form-ful matter. And the one, who has this vision, sees the one truth behind all the superficial plurality; this is called Sarvatra svarna

darshanam. In the case of ornaments, bangles, chain, ring, etc. there is sarvatra ekasvarna darshanam; behind rivers and oceans and lakes, there is sarvatra eka jala

darshanam; behind all furnitures, there is sarvatra eka wood darshanam; similarly, behind the pluralistic universe Gyani has got ekathra atma darshanam. This is called Atma Ekatva Darshanam.

The man who sees this non-duality is called Brahma-Karma Samadhi Gyani. Samadhi here means being absorbed. Thus, gold samadhi means, gold is the essence in all ornaments. Not losing sight of Brahman in all transactions is Brahma Karma Samadhi.

Transactions are deliberately performed, like travelling, eating, buying etc. But during all this a part of the mind is absorbed in Brahman. Subconscious mind is aware of all Nishtas. Here Sri Krishna is talking of a Grihastha Gyani. One of the duties performed daily by a Grihastha in the past was Agni Hotra Yagya. Such an Agni Hotri Grihastha knew the Sarvam Brahmamaya Jagad. He knew there is only one Brahman and all others are forms and names only.

In shloka: Brahmamarpanam means wooden spoon for offering.

Shloka # 25:

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे गुरुव्योमहो
ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे गुरुव्योमहो 4.25

Some Yogins offer sacrifices to deities; others sacrifice in the fire of Brahman by means of the sacrifice itself.

With previous shloka Gyanam topic is concluded. Now Sri Krishna praises Gyanam or Gyanam Stuthi. He praises Gyanam in a particular manner. Here he enumerated various Sadhanas. Scriptures offer many sadhanas. They include: Nama japa, dhyanam, yoga, pilgrimage and danam.

Every sadhana is called a yagna; thus we have japa yagna; dhyana yagna; upavasa yagna; yatra yagna; pranayama yagna; all these are called yagna. Why are they called yagna? Because in all these different sadhanas, the one common factor is God. All these yagnas are dedicated to God, for superior growth. In all of them I pray: ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे गुरुव्योमहो mamopatta samasta duritakshayadvara Sri Parameshvara prityartham, that all my impurities must go away; and I must become spiritually pure. That inner purity is sought from God. So, since the God is involved; prayer is involved; spiritual purity is involved; all of them are called yagna. Even sweeping temple, sweeping your own home are all yagna's, if you look upon the house as a temple. Therefore, what we require is only an attitudinal change, it makes everything a pooja,

It purifies the person spiritually; therefore all of them are called yagnahas.

Even eating is a Yagnam, hence the name Pranagni Hotra Yagnaha. Thus, from the grossest eating to the greatest yaga Sri Krishna calls them all Yagnaha. To this he also adds self-knowledge as a yagnaha. So even the study of scriptures come under yagnaha.

These are all Gyana Yagnahas. He then points out that Brahma Gyana Yagna is the highest of all of them. Why do we say so? It is not that other Yagnas are useless, but none of them lead to the Lord or Brahman. Any puja can only lead you to Gyanam. They are indirect means. Gyana Sadhana is the only direct means.

The oil, the wick, the lamp etc., don't remove darkness. Only the flame from the lamp will remove the darkness. Oil, wick, lamp are made meaningful by the flame. Gyana Yoga validates all other Sadhanas through Gyanam.

Suppose you say you don't like Gyanam, nothing wrong with it, continue with all other Sadhanas. Then, at some point in this life or other, you will be ready for Gyana Sadhana.

In the Shloka: Paramatma is fire (Brahmagni); Lower self is oblation. The lower, limited "I" should be resolved in the higher, unlimited "I". The wave resolves in the ocean. The wave is worried about its life and death. The wave family is worried too. Then the Guru wave comes and tells them to identify One's self with the water and not the waves. The moment the wave recognizes the truth it realizes that I am the water; I continue to exist in water vapor, in rainwater and in rivers. I am the immortal water. This is called offering of the wave-I, into the water-I.

The word Yagya in the shloka means Jiva-atma. It is the smaller, finite "I" or ego. It is offered into Pramatma "I". It is not a physical action. It is a change in understanding.

It is an intellectual change. This is Gyana Yagna and Jivaatma performs it.

Shloka # 25: Jivatma offers itself in fire of Paramatma. There are nine types of Bhakti or devotion. They are : Sravanam, Kirtanam, Visno padasevanam, Arcanam, Vandanam dasyam, Sakyam, Atma nivedanam etc. Of these the highest one is Atma-nivedanam. In all others ego is retained. In this Bhakti, ego itself is offered. Finally, offer the "I"(ego) to God. Once "I" (ego) don't exist, what do I have left to offer?

Note: first line of shloka says everybody cannot perform this Gyana Yagnam. Therefore, others perform Daiva Yagnam. Here one invokes Gods.

Shloka # 26:

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Others sacrifice the senses, hearing, etc., in the fires of restraints; yet others sacrifice objects like sound in the fires of the senses.

Here two more Yagnas are enumerated.

First line of Shloka: Describes sensory discipline and sensory control. It is not suppression of senses. Suppression is as dangerous as indulgence. They have to be controlled through understanding. Suppression involves force. Here I myself decide to watch my senses. This is also a Yagna. A man, who performs sense control, is in a way he is making an offering of his undisciplined sense organs. This is also known as Dama Yagnaha.

Second line of Shloka: It describes Vishaya Bhoga Yagyaha. When I become a slave to sense organs, I say no to it. Citing example of coffee, currently I am slave to it. I should be able to say no to it at any time. Within my control, I enjoy

legitimate sense pleasures. This enjoyment is Yagyaha.

Here the oblation is forms, colors, sounds, taste etc. Homakunda's are seven. They are: the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth. This Yagya is called Vishaya Bhoga Yagyaha. In this all our experiences such as Shabda, Sparsha, Roopa, Rasa and Gandha are all converted to Yagyaha. Every work, every word I utter all are offering to you. Here Lord is Consciousness. He is Me. So, Shabda offering becomes Shabdagyanam and so with Sparsha Gyanam as well. etc.

Shloka # 27:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.27 ॥

Yet others sacrifice all sense-activities and all activities of vital breaths in the fire of self-restraint, kindled by knowledge.

We have complete four Yagyas. This is the fifth one called Atma Samyama Yagyaha or mental discipline. Through this discipline the 10 organs, five of knowledge and five of action are controlled. The five organs of knowledge are: Shabda, Roopa, Rasa, Gandha, and Sparsha. While five organs of action are: vak, pani, pada, payu and upastha; the organs of speech, the hand, the leg, the organ of excretion and the organ of reproduction. These ten can be disciplined only by our mental discipline.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddharshanam Class 17

Greetings All,

Shloka #27:

The ghost of the ego is born amidst forms, based on a group of forms, the eater of forms, who has given up and held forms, is by itself formless and runs away at the time of inquiry into itself.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi deals with the anatomy of Ahamkara. It is not an independent substance; rather it is a mixture of Atma's features and Anatma's features. If these features are given back to Atma and Anatma respectively, Ahamkara will disappear. When we introduce ourselves we say, "I am" so and so. The "I" indicates the Consciousness (Atma) and "am" indicates Existence. Both "I" and "am" are borrowed features from the Sat (existence) and Chit (Consciousness) of Atma. Having borrowed two features from Atma, other features following "I am", such as my biographical qualifications such as my age, are borrowed from Anatma. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi calls these features Rupani or qualifications. Many of them are borrowed from Annamaya, Pranamaya and Vignanamaya koshas. These features are all roopams or properties borrowed from Anatma.

Thus, features of both Atma and Anatma exist in Ahamkara. Of them, the Atma feature does not change. The "I am" or Sat Chit does not change. At all ages you say "I am" and it remains same. Atma's features do not cause the variety in Ahamkara. Variety is caused by Anatma features such, as I am old or young etc. They are borrowed from the four Koshas. So,

Ahamkara is born out of Anatma's features. Since Anatma's features are constantly changing Ahmakara also changes with it.

In sleep, Ahamkara does not exist. "I am " is nirvikara, while other features are vikara. So dismiss all those vikara attributes and reach Atma.

Ahamkara =features of Atma + features of Anatma.

Ahamkara does not have intrinsic features of its own. When these features are removed from both, there is no more Ahamkara left, it is a myth. Therefore, it is considered Virupaha (disfigured). It lives on borrowed life. Citing example of a Reflected face in a mirror, it is a third entity, which is other than the original face and the mirror. Upon enquiry we find that reflected face experienced by me, has some features of the original face and some of the mirror as well. When these features are removed there is no reflected face anymore. Even the motion of the reflected face is borrowed from the mirror. Even though it does not have its own existence it is still available for experience. Hence it is called Mithya or Maya.

Because it is a mythical and mysterious substance it can be destroyed only by enquiry. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gave example of the man who attended marriages uninvited. The bride's side thought he belonged to the groom. Groom's side thought he belonged to the bride. He got away with it until someone enquired about him. Then he disappeared altogether. So also, upon enquiry, Ahamkara disappears.

Shloka # 28:

In the being of the ego, all this shines. In the dissolution of the ego, nothing at all shines. Therefore, all this is of the form of ego. The search for it is the way to all victory.

The mythical Ahamkara can be ignored if it does not make

problems. Our own shadow or reflection is also mythical. Unfortunately, Ahamkara is the cause of all problems in life. It is the Karta, Bhokta and has all Karmas including Prarabhdham. This Karta Bhokta status is because of Ahamakra.

As long as you are fighting prarabhdha karma, you are fighting it with your hands tied. You can't see it, but it can see you. It can punch you at any time. This is the lot of Ahamkara. There is only one way to uproot Ahamkara. Only Atma-Anatma Viveka can uproot it.

Citing an example, in the waking and dream state, Ahamkara is present and we have suffering. In sleep state there is no Ahamkara and there is no suffering. So, the "Wakeful sleep" state is the state of wisdom. In this state you are awake but Ahamkara does not appear. This wisdom is called "wakeful sleep".

So, Ahamkara prapancha is Mithya Jagat and Mithya Ishwara. So, don't struggle changing the world or the situation. It is like shifting load from one shoulder to another. You may get a respite but pain will come back. So, enquiry into Ahamkara is the only path for total victory. Punyam, Papam, Dharma, Artha, Kama are all only temporary solutions to Ahamkara.

Shloka # 29:

That is true Being, where the ego does not rise. That again will not perish without a search for its place of emergence. If that does not perish, can there be the Being in the form of oneness with one's self.

Here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi tells us what is a temporary solution and what is a permanent solution to the Ahamkara dilemma.

Temporary Solution:

Here Ahamakara is suppressed or evaded. In sleep, Ahamkara is

dormant or evaded. Listening to music or admiring a work of art can also place Ahamkara in a dormant situation. All sense pleasures, moral or immoral, can suppress Ahamkara. Music and alcohol can suppress Ahamkara, placing it in Layaha state or state of dormancy. Even in Maha Pralaya, Ahamkara is dormant. It comes back to life at the next creation. So, death is also not a solution.

Permanent Solution: is Ahamkara nasha. Ahamkara should not rise again. This is possible only by removing the root of Ahamkara. The cause of Ahamkara is Ignorance. Ignorance of what? It is ignorance of Adishtana Atma. This can be accomplished by only one method. It is through Atmagyanam. This can only come through Atma vichara. Until this is performed Ahamkara may become dormant but it will continue to rise again.

Satya sthithi or Moksha is that state wherein Ahamkara can never raise its hood again. Ahamkara will never leave us permanently without enquiry.

Suppose a man does not want to destroy Ahamkara. After all, shatras impose detachment as an essential for this Vichara. But detachment is difficult to achieve. This is acceptable if you accept Prarabhdha Karma. Therefore, insure yourself with Gyanam against Ahamkara. Moksha is security. Therefore go to advaita nishta. Insure yourself when things are going well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta Class 62, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 20:

कर्मफलमोक्षोऽयं कर्मण्योऽभिधीयते
कर्मण्योऽभिधीयते कर्मण्योऽभिधीयते 4.20

Giving up attachment to the fruits of works, eternally content, independent, the man, engaged in works as he is, does nothing at all.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in shlokas # 18-24 Sri Krishna is giving us the essence of Gita and the Upanishads or the Atma Swaroopa Gyanam. Once a person gets this knowledge, Karma, action and action-less, both do not shackle him. Both action and inaction don't affect him. If this knowledge is not there (Agyani), when he is lacking any action, he starts thinking of work again. When an Agyani does not work he will want to work and vice versa. The problem is in our mind. Therefore, never try to change the external world or your action. Rather change your self.

Once a person gets this knowledge as Grihasta or Sanyasi, there will be freedom. It is the knowledge that gives the freedom.

A Grihasta Gyani is liberated in spite of an active life. Sanyasi is also liberated by his way of life.

Grihasta Gyani is liberated because of his Gyanam not due to his work. Work comes to him in waves, one after the other. He finds rest despite it all. He is a Nithyapatya. He is a Nirashayaha. He does not depend on people. Even in action he is free. The popular saying, " When shoe fits, you don't feel

its presence. You feel it when it does not fit" fits him perfectly. For Gyani Karma is not a hurdle.

संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥
संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥ संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥ 4.21 ॥

Free from expectations, controlling mind and self, renouncing all possessions, one who does an exclusive form of bodily work incurs no sin.

In this shloka Sri Krishna talks of a Sanyasi Gyani. This person is also free. He has renounced everything including relationships. Renunciation does not mean suppression. He does not lack anything. He has mastered the body-mind –thought complex. His body is made fit for this renunciation as well. He has to keep himself fit, as there is nobody to take care of him. In this shloka Atma means body. Since he does not have responsibilities he also does not have possessions.

In Grihastha ashrama the advantage is that one has security from children, money, wealth etc. The disadvantage is he has to take care of all of them.

In Sanyasa Ashrama the advantage is that there is no responsibility, no wife, no children and no property. The disadvantage is that there is no security. He is in the hands of God.

Both ashramas have positives and negatives. Sanyasa Ashrama is a civic death. He does not even vote. He has a body given by God. He has to take care of it as hard as possible till the very end. He has to accept whatever is given to him as food. However, since he has no ego, he also does not have Karmaphalam.

संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥
संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥ संन्यासि ग्यानि कर्म न बाधते ॥ 4.22 ॥

Content with what is gained by chance, beyond dualities, rid

of competitive spirit, equanimous in gain and loss, one is not bound in spite of working.

This shloka can be for both Grihastha Gyani as well as Sanyasi Gyani. Shankaracharya says it is for Sanyasi gyani. Swamiji says he will interpret it as for Grihastha Gyani.

He welcomes everything in life as a result of his actions. Events in our life are not totally controllable by us. My future is not in my total control. Some claim, " I can control my future". This is arrogance until one is hit by a misfortune. Even God cannot claim it. Other type is the fatalistic one who says I have no control over my future. This approach is also wrong. Gita says I am one of the important contributors to my future. I do have control to some extent. All other factors that control (war, weather, etc.) are called Daivam. The whole world is interconnected. All such external factors are called Daivam or Prarabdham. I prepare to do my best and accept whatever happens as Karma phalam.

If the karmaphalam is a failure, accept it. I still have to work for the future. Accept the present and work (hard) for the future. Worry cannot change the present; worry cannot change the future also. Worrying does not help.

Such a Gyani is one who is beyond the pairs of opposites. Life is facing a series of opposites. What does it mean? It means you cannot physically go beyond the pairs of opposites because, wherever you go, there will be pairs of opposite. Therefore, what is going beyond the pairs of opposites? It is nothing more than not allowing the pairs of opposites to disturb the mind. Making the pairs of opposites incapable of disturbing me too much.

You can strengthen yourself. The protection is Gyanam that will protect you from the pair of opposites. He is one who has gone beyond competition. Current thinking is that competition brings the best in people. Shashtra says competition is bad.

Body, mind-and-world is matter. Unfortunately, this knowledge is not complete. The knowledge that “ I am Atma” and everything else is “Anatma” is still Dvaitam.

Next Stage: The next stage of Vedanta is knowing that there is no matter other than consciousness; matter is a myth; matter is non-substantial; even though it appears as tangible solid substance; matter does not have a substantiality of its own. The substance is consciousness alone. Atma alone is the substance. Matter does not exist separate from consciousness. There is no material world separate from me, the observer.

How can I swallow this? Vedanta now gives an example. In dream you experience an external world that is so real that you have nightmares. It comes from within you, in you and resolves in you. On waking up you understand it was a dream.

So also in waking, it is another dream state. Vedanta says this world is also dream of another level. We have got two levels of dreams; one is called pratibhashika dream; another is called vyavaharika dream; and when we look at this from the body's standpoint, it has got a reality. It is a prathibhashika and Vyvaharika dream. Vedanta says you are in a dream state even in waking state. Therefore Sri Krishna wants to say that everything is nothing but Atma; there is no anatma separate from atma. This is the essence of this shloka.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 16

Greetings All,

Shloka #26:

The body does not know. Of the Truth, there is no birth. In the middle of these two, another of the size of the body rises, which is of the names ego, knot, bondage, subtle mind, mind, the realm of becoming and the individual.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, from shloka # 23 onwards Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is analyzing the mysterious and mystical nature of Ahamkara. He wants to show us that it is a false entity created by features of both Atma and Anatma. In creation there is the Chetana Atma and the Achetana Anatma. Ahamkara is a mysterious third entity with features of both Atma and Anatma. The sentiency of Ahamkara is a feature borrowed from Atma. Modifications of Ahamkara such as Kartritvam are a feature borrowed from Anatma. Thus, a new mythical Ahamkara is created. While my face is reflected and the mirror reflects my face, the Reflected face itself is a third entity. It is a false entity. It has features of the original face as well as the mirror as well. Thus, while the mirror moves, my face does not move. Motion is a feature of the mirror. This motion is transferred to the reflected face. The motion property is borrowed from mirror. Thus, the reflected face has a location not determined by original face. Location is determined by mirror. Location and motion are both borrowed from mirror. Now, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says, Ahamkara is similar to this mirror, with features borrowed from Atma and Anatma. Thus, you have the changing features of Ahamkara. Attributes like young, old etc. are features borrowed from the Anatma Body. Ahamkara is neither Shariram nor Atma. It is a mysterious and fraudulent entity. Ahamkara has birth and death although it is sentient. It is like Narasimha, who has features of man as well as a lion. When you

try to get to the reflected face it disappears. Whatever disappears on enquiry is a fraudulent entity.

Ahamkara has the size of the body but is different from the body. Body is insentient while Ahamkara is sentient. It arises only in proximity of the Atma (face) and Anatma (the mirror). If you separate the Atma and Anatma, Ahamkara does not rise. Because it is a fraudulent entity, like a cheat, Ahamkara assumes different names. These names include:

- Ahamkara: Or one who says Aham Karomi Iti. Who says this? Anatma cannot say it. Body is matter. It is inert. How about Atma? Atma does not have a mouth. It is all pervading, like space. Neither say this. So, Ahamkara alone says Aham Brahma Asmi.
- Granthi: Knot. Ahamkara is a knotty entity. It cannot be easily disentangled. It has been there since time started. Actually time itself is a concept generated by Ahamkara. In sleep, Ahamkara dissolves, so time dissolves as well. Even time transcendence requires Ahamkara. Even Bhakthi cannot remove Ahamkara. A Bhakta can still feel he is a great Bhaktha. Thus, we have Narada Bhakthi Bhanga story. Hence it is called Granthi.

Knot also means combining of two things, Atma and Anatma. A wedding also has three knots.

- Vibhanga: means strong bondage or strong Samsara. Here Ahamkara is the problem. Moksha cannot happen if Ahamkara or individuality remains. In some philosophies they say individuality can be retained. Vedanta however says individuality and Moksha cannot go together. Moksha cannot happen, if one still has individuality.
- Sukshma Shariram: It is a thought arising in the subtle body. It is the "I" thought. In sleep, the "I" thought gets resolved. Thought is Sukshma Shariram.
- Cetaha: It is the Mind. Ahamkara is also known as the Mind. When mind is active, Ahamkara rises. It is,

however, passive in sleep. So, the mind is figuratively called the Ahamkara.

- Bhava: means Samsara. It can also mean God Shiva, although here it not used to denote Shiva. Individuality is Samsara. Individuality and freedom cannot go together. Individuality means differences, gradations, and resulting jealousies. In some philosophies the individual soul sits in front of God with other souls. This is sure to lead to jealousies. Jealousy can never get us Moksha. Therefore, individuality has to be falsified.
- Jiva: The individual. The one who is born, lives and dies. This is also Ahamkara.

Shloka # 27:

This ghost of the ego is born amidst forms, based on a group of forms, the eater of forms, who has given up and held forms, is by itself formless and runs away at the time of inquiry into itself.

In previous shlokas it was said that Ahamkara is an entity produced from Atma and Anatma. The expression “ I am “ means sentiency. A Conscious entity alone can say so. It is a borrowed sentiency from the Atma. Ahamkara comes in when you say: I am so and so. The “ I am” itself is Atma. However, when an attribute is attached to the “ I am” it becomes Ahamkara. Thus, we say: I am fat; I am angry; I am sleepy etc. The fat, angry, sleepy are all attributes borrowed from Anatma. Attributes from Anatma keep changing. The “ I am” does not change at any age. It is the attribute alone that changes. Ahamkara has many manifestations depending on properties of Anatama. It becomes a Karta and Bhokta. Ahamkara exists due to Anatma.

Ahamkara rises with rising attributes of the body, mind and thought complex. In sleep it gets resolved. Ahamkara moves in the field of attributes such as: Body is fat, body is thin,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, by way of introducing the nature of karma, Sri Krishna is discussing the essence of the Upanishads in shloka's 18 to 24. Of these shlokas, 18th is considered a key shloka; wherein Sri Krishna talks about atma-anatma viveka; the difference between the higher-I in me, and the lower-I in me; the higher-I is called Atma; and the lower-I is called Ahamkara.

The higher-I atma has been talked about in the second chapter, where Sri Krishna pointed out that this atma is of the nature of consciousness, distinct from the body and all pervading. It is an akarta as it does not perform any action. It is only a witness. And this akarta-atma, this eka-atma; this poorna atma is my higher nature; and I have got a lower-I also called ahamkara; and this lower-I is nothing but the mind. The mind-principle is called the lower-I. Mind by itself is inert. It becomes sentient through the blessing of Atma. Citing example of a bulb, it is similar to the filament in a bulb that needs electricity to energize it. Such a mind when blessed by Atmatvam becomes sentient and is called Ahamkara. This finite Ahamkara is my inferior "I" or ego. Ahamkara has to perform action, as it is its nature. Ahamkara, thus, accumulates Punyam and Papam. And this ahamkara alone takes another body and again exhausts the punya papam and in the process acquires fresh punya papam; and thus the punarapi jananam; punarapi maranam, samsara cycle continues for ahamkara. There is no way of stopping this ahamkara, because this ahamkara is motivated, activated, because of our identification. Sri Krishna says, by self-knowledge, we learn to own up to the higher-I, rather than the lower-I.

The moment the shift to higher "I" happens, the lower "I" loses momentum and it will stop. A Gyani is not a patron of Ahamkara. This shift from lower "I" to higher "I" is called wisdom. I own up to my Akarta nature, even while Ahamkara is active. This detachment from Ahamkara is the benefit of the

wisdom. The question comes up, as to who is leading the dog? Is it the owner or the dog? Right now Ahamkara is leading me. Ahamkara has a function, but I should not be enslaved by it. The word Swamy means one who is master of his own Ahamkara. The word Aswamy means the opposite of Swamy.

What drives human beings to accomplish things? What is the driving force? In human beings the driving force behind any pursuit is that without those accomplishment(s), I feel small; That is why people always say, I want to be somebody in life; because he or she feels that right now he or she is a nobody.

And therefore I have a sense of smallness. Through accomplishment, I am trying to be somebody, I am trying to become full and complete; fulfillment or poornatvam is the goal. Unfortunately such a person never gets the poornatvam as the finite ahamkara plus finite accomplishment is still equal to finite ahamkara. Previously I was a miserable BA; then a miserable MA; and now a miserable Phd. The misery continues because finite plus finite is equal to only finite and not infinite. It is the finite ahamkara struggling to become poornaha and life becomes a failure.

Gyani knows everything is finite. Ahamkara can never be poornaha. He accepts Ahamkara and lets it perform. He, however, seeks Poornatvam in the higher I. It is ever Poornaha. He enjoys poornaha at higher level, while performing action at lower level. He does not feel fulfilled in completion of projects. Thus, he is ready to quit the world at any time.

Shloka # 19:

विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान्
विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् 4.19

Him the wise call a man of discrimination, all of whose undertakings are free from desire-prompted imaginations and all whose works have been consumed in the fire of knowledge.

Once a Gyani has discovered poornatvam , will he be motivated to work? Generally activities are born out of necessity or dissatisfaction. If all people are satisfied then there will be no motive to work. The general belief is that discontentment leads to action or work. This is a misconception, says Swamiji. Sri Krishna says a person can also work out of fullness. Such a person has no axe to grind. A gyani can contribute with contentment. What drives him? Compassion drives him. He has universal identification and universal compassion. It becomes his nature.

Heat can't be separated from fire or light from the Sun. So also, compassion is intrinsic to a Gyani. It is compassion without motives. Backed by compassion, he acts according the need of the situation. It is like a mother with a child. Compassion crystallizes into action.

His actions are not due to lacking anything or loneliness. Without performing activity too he is full. He is free from the desire to fulfill himself. He is free from future projections. Thus, we are not comfortable with ourselves. Thus, one asks: How will I look in this dress; with this girl; with this house; etc? There is a big gulf between the small "I" and the higher "I" in such a person. This causes restlessness in him. I am not happy with the present, I am a dissatisfied "I". That is why Swami Dayananda Saraswathi says: I have rejected myself and when I cannot accept myself, I cannot accept the world also; I find fault with every person, every job, every set up and every house. The problem is not with the world rather the self-rejection expresses itself in the form of world rejection. Conversely, self-acceptance, expresses itself in the form of world acceptance. Again Swamiji beautifully says: a Gyani is at home with himself as he is and therefore at home with the world as it is. There is no dreaming and projections. He lives in the present. I am fine as I am; and enjoy doing whatever I can do, and whatever I have to do. He does not travel from unhappiness to

happiness. He is always in a state of happiness.

There is no connection between set up and poornatvam. Set up belongs to the lower level, egoistic level and poornatvam belongs to a higher level. To put it in Upanishadic language, the set up belongs to vyavaharika satya; poornatvam belongs to paramarthica satya; he does not mix up order of reality. And another interesting thing happens to such a person, the Gyani. When he dwells in the lower "I", the karmas, the actions, do not produce punyam or papam. Only when I am identified with ahamkara or when there is a sankalpa, only then punyam and papam are produced. Since Gyani does not have the crystallized-ego, it does not

produce punyam and papam. That is why in Tatva Bodha, we saw, Gyani does not generate agami karma. All his karmas are destroyed. Citing example of a roasted seed although it looks like a normal seed it cannot germinate anymore. So too a Gyani cannot produce any more karma's.

For roasting Ahamkara you need the Gyana Agni. By this fire Ahamkara is burned down. Such a person is called Pandita. Panda means self knowledge. Chapter 2, shloka 11, also refers to Pandita.

Shloka # 20:

सर्वकर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा तत्त्वज्ञानं समाधाय
सर्वकर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा तत्त्वज्ञानं समाधाय 4.20

Giving up attachment to the fruits of works, eternally content, independent, the man, engaged in works as he is, does nothing at all.

Sri Krishna pointed out that a Gyani is free from karma and sankalpa. He is a free person. Citing analogy of Thermometer (slave of surrounding) and thermostat (controller of surroundings), Agyani is like a thermometer while Gyani is like a thermostat. Therefore in one, he is a slave of the set

up, in

the other, he is the master of the set up and what makes you a master is only Gyanam. Sri Krishna says any person of any status can obtain Gyanam. A gyani is at peace even amidst society while an Agyani is miserable even in an Ashrama. Varna, ashrama, religion, sex, profession and nationality do not matter for obtaining Gyanam. There two types of Gyani's:

- GrihasthaGyani: A householder can also become a Gyani. Shlokas 20,22,23 and 24 discuss Grihastha Gyani.
- Sanyasi Gyani: Shloka # 21 talks of Sanyasi Gyani.

Shloka # 20, second line:

Grihastha Gyani:

He has to perform pancha maha yagyaha. He is also extremely active. The difference is that he does not feel fulfillment through activities. Gyani does not connect fulfillment with his pursuit. His fulfillment is in the higher "I". Gyani's satisfaction does not come from the set up. He is equally happy without it. If I give support, it is love. If I seek support, it is attachment.

Once he has poornatvam he does not lean on any external factor. Strength comes from knowledge. He does not have any psychological dependence although he may have physical dependence. He expects results from his actions but he is not concerned about them. In effect he does not worry about results. If expectation is not met what to do? Swami Dayananda Saraswathi used to say, " Success in life is preparation for failure". With such a healthy mind a Gyani performs his actions. In philosophical sense, he remembers his higher Self. In a psychological sense, he is free, as his actions do not create any anxiety in him.

With Best Wishes,

Bagawat Geeta Class 60 – Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 15:

ॐ कर्मणो भव्यते भाव्यते ॐ कर्मणो भव्यते भाव्यते
ॐ कर्मणो भव्यते भाव्यते ॐ कर्मणो भव्यते भाव्यते 4.15

Knowing thus was work done by ancient seekers after liberation. Therefore you too do only work, as was done by the ancients in bygone days.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Arjuna wanted to escape his Sva-dharma that is killing his own kith and kin. It was causing him great mental distress. And also it is said in the scriptures “By actions one is bound”. Whenever we take up any action there is a strain on our personality. Will we succeed or not is a question that bothers us. This causes anxiety. Also the result of action is not fully dependent on our efforts. Result depends on other factors some of which are not in our control. So, future is uncontrollable. Also, results may not be up to our expectation.

Arjuna is experiencing all this on the battlefield. He wants to escape his Karma. Sri Krishna, however, is teaching him not

to escape karma. Maximum you can do is you can change the karma from one action to another action; and often you find that when you change

the field of action, it ends up like falling from the frying pan into the fire. While you can change the action you cannot give up the action. Therefore Krishna wants to teach Arjuna how to be involved in action but not be affected by the action.

Sri Krishna says, only through Gyanam can one insulate his or her mind from the tyranny of action. Once insulated, the action will appear like a game, a leela. For a Gyani it becomes a sport while for an Agyani it is a major undertaking. This method of insulation is available to every being. The method is not a new one. Your own forefathers have used it. Why don't you use it as well?

Shloka # 16:

कर्म कर्मणो कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि
कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि कर्मणोऽपि 4.16

What is work? What is non-work? In respect of these questions the sages even are deluded. Therefore, I shall elucidate the nature of work, by knowing which you will be delivered from evil.

Sri Krishna presents Gyanam as armor. Once you say Gyanam, the question arises Gyanam about what? It is knowledge of the nature of Karma. Where does it arise? Who does it belong to? This enquiry is important, as we have taken it for granted. Once we thought everything went around the earth. Then science discovered that everything goes around the sun. Thus, when we take action we feel "I am" doing the action. Sri Krishna says "you" are not doing the action.

If you want to get out of stressful situations you need to know about the nature of Karma. It is a very subtle topic.

Even great philosophers are confused about what is action and what is inaction? He says I will deal with this topic now. It is not an academic discussion. It has practical value. By this knowledge you will be freed from all types of Ashudha's (samsara) or negatives. Do you want to be a thermometer (one that measures a situation) or a thermostat (one that controls a situation)?

An Agyani is enslaved by situations.

A Gyani is master of situations.

Shloka # 17:

कार्यं कर्म कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं च कर्मण्येवमाद्यं
कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं 4.17

Indeed you ought to know about work; also you ought to know about bad work; and, besides, you ought to know about non-work. Profound is the course of work.

Sri Krishna says, not only I am going to teach about Karma, but also about its nature, also about wrong Karma (Vikarma) and also about Akarma (inaction).

I will discuss about action, inaction and wrong action. This knowledge you have to work to gain it.

This is an introduction to Gyanam as an insulating material.

Gathihi: in the shloka means, Swaroopam or nature of action.

Shloka # 18:

कार्यं कर्म कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं च कर्मण्येवमाद्यं
कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं कर्मण्येवमाद्यं 4.18

Whoso beholds non-work in work and work in non-work is wise among men; he is integrated; he does all works.

From # 18-24, Sri Krishna deals with knowledge or solution to

all problems. This shloka is the core of chapter #4. It is a very impotent shloka in the entire Gita. It condenses the teaching of all Upanishads. Hence Gita is also considered an Upanishad. Essence of Upanishad is Gyanam. It is discussed in chapter # 2 of Gita and now in Chapter # 4 as well. Shloka # 18 is very significant and a difficult one to understand. This shloka has language of contradictions.

The literal translation is as follows:

“Wise person sees action in in-action.

Wise person also sees in-action in action.”

The contradiction:

If you see a thing wrongly, can you be a wise person?

Shankaracharya has written a large commentary on this shloka. This shloka has also been called a knotty shloka of Gita. In chapter 2, shloka 2.69 is also a knotty shloka. These verses are called the knotty verses because when Vyasa wanted Mahaganapathy to become the scribe; Mahaganapathy put a condition that once I start writing, I cannot stop. Therefore, you have to continuously dictate and if you stop for some reason I will leave. Vyasa agreed to this condition of Ganapathy but he placed a condition on Ganapathy as well. He said when you take down my commentary you should know the meaning of it, as well.

Thus, Vyasa composed knotty verses intermittently, to gain some time and Ganapathy some time to grasp them. Such shlokas are called Grantha Grandhi.

As per Vedanta every individual's personality consists of two parts:

- 1) Anatma: Consisting of the body, mind thought complex.
- 2) Atma: consisting of the Conscious principle that makes the

body, mind and thought complex sentient. It can be compared to the electricity that makes the bulb illumine. This invisible principle is all pervading and independent and it continues even when the body is gone. There may be many bulbs but the electricity illumining them is one and the same. Similarly the Atma blesses the body, mind and thought complex and thus makes it sentient.

Wise person also sees in-action in action."

We discussed Atma and Anatma in chapter 2. While there is only Atma, Anatma's are many. Atma is all pervading while Anatma is limited in nature.

The Atma being all pervading cannot perform any action. Action involves physical or mental movement. So also it is with space, which cannot perform any action. While air, water, and fire can move, space cannot. Therefore, the all-pervading Consciousness is action-less. Hence, it need not renounce Karma. Consciousness is ever free from Karma.

The Anatma (Ahamkara) can never be free from action. It is a material entity. Matter is in eternal motion. Even a standing wall is full of atoms that are in motion.

In the book " Tao of Physics" the author describes Nataraja's eternal Dance. How do you know that he is eternally dancing? If you look at his jata, it is always parallel to the ground; when will the jata be parallel to the ground, it is possible only under one condition; when it is fiercely moving; that is why it is Natarāja's picture as vishwa roopa that is in eternal motion.

Thus, the smallest of atoms and the largest of galaxies are in motion.

Anatma's motion can never stop. Even if you see it at rest, it is still in motion in a potential form. Karma cannot be given up in Anatma.

Therefore, focusing on Atma own up to the permanent state of its rest. This inaction is called Gyana Karma Sanyasa.

A wise person sees the permanent peace of Atma even though there is action in Anatma. He discovers peace even in Anatma. So, discover peace amidst outer activity. Citing an example, even when the hand moves, the light illumining the hand is not moving. Similarly even when the body moves, the awareness does not move. Actors move but the screen does not move. Therefore, turn your attention to the screen.

“Wise person sees action in in-action.

Discussing the second part of the shloka, action in inaction, when Anatma is resting (sleep) it appears action-less although actions reside in it in potential form. Thus, in sleep, all actions are waiting in seed form. The wise person sees the potential action in the action less-ness of the body mind complex. It means it is explicitly active or potentially active. Atma is ever inactive.

When action overwhelms me we don't know how to get out of it. We feel overwhelmed. It is like catching the tail of a tiger, after sometime you will tire while the tiger will not. You then look for a place without action or shantam or shivam. This place is my own shanta swaroopam. So a wise person knows how to dip into his own tranquility. Sri Krishna wants to give us a taste of this shantam. This is provided to us during sleep. At that time you don't have a Karta personality. Deep sleep is absolute Ananda. This is Atma Swaroopam.

For Gyani, this atma ananda is available all the time. He is called a real Yogi or person of fulfillment.

Shlokas # 19-24 are commentaries on shloka # 18.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 15

Greetings All,

Shloka # 24:

The Supreme, having distributed light to the intellect, Himself shines hidden inside the intellect. Having turned the intellect inwards, here within the intellect, by uniting, the vision of the Lord takes place, not by any other method.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is pointing out that the Atma alone lends consciousness to the mind. Thus, the mind with this borrowed consciousness appears as if it is Self-effulgent. This mind is then capable of illuminating the external world. It has to work to know the external world. It, however, does not have to work to know the Atma, as the Atma is self-evident. Therefore, Self-knowledge involves turning attention to the ever-experienced Consciousness and understanding the fact that the ever-experienced consciousness is limitless. Intellect is not required for understanding Self Consciousness.

The word Dhiye in the shloka means giving Consciousness to the mind.

This ever-experienced Consciousness is ever present behind the mind. So, how does Atma remain hidden? If Atma is ever experienced, how can it remain hidden? This is a contradiction, says Swamiji. Citing an example, it is like

the movie screen. Without the movie screen the characters in the movie cannot be experienced. In life the screen is never noticed because of our preoccupation with the movie. Experiencing a thing is different from deliberately paying attention to something. This also true with space to which we do not pay attention to. If asked, what is on my hand, most of us will mention the hair, the fingernail etc. We will never mention the light on the hand that allows us see the hand. Due to our extroverted-ness we are preoccupied with the movie and don't pay attention to the screen. The same phenomenon occurs with our mind. We are so busy with our thoughts that we don't pay attention to the Consciousness, which is silence. So the two steps towards Self-knowledge are:

1. To pay attention to the ever experienced Consciousness.
2. With the help of scriptures negate all limitations of Atma and become aware of its limitless nature.

So, turn your attention away from all inert things (Samsara, body, mind and thought) and turn your attention to the ever-experienced Consciousness that illumines (makes known) the thought. Just as during watching the movie, you are asked to pay attention to the screen, the process followed here is also similar. It is one of changing the attention of the intellect. This is not a new experience rather it is just new information that the screen is not affected by the events in the movie. Tragedies and comedies do not affect it. Similarly, I, the ever-experienced Consciousness, is not affected by the events going on in my life. Don't be carried away by the events happening to you. Intellect alone can reveal this to you.

Guptaha in shloka means not paid attention to.

Na Anya means no other darshanam.

Therefore, turn your attention within your mind and connect the Budhi to the ever-experienced Consciousness.

This alone is Ishwara Drishti. Conscious attention to Consciousness is this Drishti. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi does not consider all other Darshanam's real. He says they don't liberate you. Therefore, change your understanding of yourself. Anatma Ishwara is only a Prathibhashika Ishwara or Vyavaharika Ishwara.

Shloka # 25:

The body does not say, "I am". Nobody says, "I was not", in deep sleep. Search with your intellect, the birthplace of that "I", upon whose rise, everything rises!

Here Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi talks about the mysterious nature of the ego. Ego is a misconception born out of ignorance. On enquiry it will disappear. Discussing Ahamkara, Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi asks, who is saying, "I am"?

Body can't say it and Atma can't say it either. Anatma body is inert as such it cannot say, "I am". Atma cannot say, "I am" as it does not have a mouth. Saying involves an action, the motion of the mouth. Therefore Atma can't say it. If so, who is saying it? It must be an entity different from Atma or Anatma. Unfortunately there is no other such entity. If so, then who is saying it? The answer is it must be an entity that is a mixture of Anatma and Atma. This is called Ahamkara. It is the one that says, "I am". Citing example of a bowl of salad, one can say there is mango, there is orange, there is cucumber etc., but there is no substance called salad. Salad is only a verbal expression. Ahamkara is also a mysterious entity with only a verbal existence.

If body had sentiency, death will never happen. So, someone else is saying, "I am this body". Nobody would say I was non-existent in sleep. We know "I" exist in three states of existence. If sleep becomes our death (a state of death), we will never sleep. So, the real "I" exists in all three states. Does Atma say, "I am"? Atma also does not and cannot

say that. If it said so, in Sushupthi, Atma does not say, "I am". Therefore there is someone other than Atma and Deha, called Ahamkara that is asleep in sleep, but awake in waking state. It is the cause of "I am". The Samsari "I" is neither body nor Atma.

All transactions and limitations arise with Ahamkara. So, attack Ahamkara. So, find the source of Ahamkara (by enquiry) with the help of intellect. Swamiji says it is a misconception that one has to transcend the intellect. As per Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi you require intellect for Self-Knowledge. Intellect is, however, not required to experience the Atma. The Atma is ever experienced. Intellect is required to pay attention to the ever-experienced Consciousness.

Knowledge comes to us during Vedanta Sravanam. In meditation this does not happen. No new knowledge comes from meditation. For knowledge, one needs Guru Shashtra Upadesa. This is the Vedantic parampara.

Shloka #26:

The body does not know. Of the Truth, there is no birth. In the middle of these two, another of the size of the body rises, which is of the names ego, knot, bondage, subtle mind, mind, the realm of becoming and the individual.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi continues on the mysterious Ahmakara. Ahamkara has some features of Atma as well as some features of Anatma. Upto Shloka # 27, he discusses Ahmakara.

The inert body can never say, I am. If it can say so, then it will become sentient and it wont die. Can Atma say "I am" the Conscious Being? Atma cannot undergo any modification. If it were to say, it would be " I am the eternal Consciousness" because it is birth-less. Atma is not mortal.

So this entity has taken properties of body and Atma and is called Ahamkara. It is the one that says I am a mortal

sentient being. So this third entity comes into being. It is of the size of the body. It is a localized Ahamkara. It is an imposter I or false I. It has several names. It is called the Knot, as it cannot be easily removed. It has been placed a long time ago. Ahamkara cannot be removed easily.

In spite of Vedantic knowledge Ahamkara will be difficult to remove, hence it is called Granthi. Ahamkara is formed by joining of the two (Mortal + Consciousness). It is called a Knot or Granthi. A third name is bondage. So, Ahamkara is bondage or Vibhandi. Ahamkara is not freedom.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note:

1. Pāramārthika (paramartha, absolute), the absolute level, “which is absolutely real and into which both other reality levels can be resolved”.^[web 5] This experience can’t be sublated by any other experience.^[20]
2. Vyāvahārika (vyavahara), or samvriti-saya^[17] (empirical or pragmatical), “our world of experience, the phenomenal world that we handle every day when we are awake”.^[web 5] It is the level in which both *jiva* (living creatures or individual souls) and *Iswara* are true; here, the material world is also true.
3. Prāthibhāsika (pratibhasika, apparent reality, unreality), “reality based on imagination alone”.^[web 5] It is the level in which appearances are actually false, like the illusion of a snake over a rope, or a dream.

It is at the level of the highest truth (*paramārtha*) that there is no origination.^[7] Gaudapada states that, from the absolute standpoint, not even “non-dual” exists.^[2]

Bagawat Geeta, Class 59, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 13:

चतुर्वर्ण्यस्यैव हि प्रकृत्यैव धर्मो ज्ञानमव्ययम्
व्ययं कर्मणोऽपि तस्यैव धर्मो ज्ञानमव्ययम् 4.13

The fourfold class-system according to the divisions of Prakrti's constituents and works, has been ordained by Me. Though I am its author, know Me to be the immutable non-agent.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna is talking about Varna Ashrama Dharma as described by him through the Vedas. According to Vedas, society is divided into four classes. Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. These four classes can also be seen from three other perspectives. They are: Jati (parentage), Karma (profession) and Guna (character) respectively.

When a Jati Brahmana becomes an elected MP, he has become a Kshatriya by Karma. He could even become a Vaishya if he spends a lot of time chasing after money. Thus, there are many permutations and combinations that are possible.

Are there any gradations among the three?

In Jati, all four are created equal.

In karma too all occupations are equally important for the

peace and progress of society. The mantra Purushasuktham says all four are parts of God. The four parts are Face (Knowledge, Brahmana), Arm (Soldier, Kshatriya), Thighs and Knees (Money, Vaishya) and legs (Movement or work, Shudra).

Every organ is important. You realize this only when an organ does not function. Thus, there is no difference between professions. Swamiji says India's caste problems exist because this equality in professions has been violated.

However, in Guna there is gradation. A Noble person is superior to others. He will not demand it but people will themselves respect him. All of us should strive to become Guna Brahmana. Guna Brahmana is superior to Guna Kshatriya, Guna Vaishya or Guna Shudra. This is because he is the one closest to knowledge. He is a Satva Guna Pradhana. Guna Kshatriya is a little away, as he still has to attain knowledge. Guna Vaishya is even further away as he is still selfish, although very active. Guna shudra is lowest. He has not even started selfish activity. He has a long way to go.

Puranic stories such as Nandanar are about a non-brahmin although he was a Guna Brahmana.

Jati: Do we have a choice regarding Jathi?

In Jati, there is no choice. We can't change our parentage. Moksha does not require Jati as a basis for it.

Guna: Do we have a choice regarding our Guna?

Can a Guna shudra become a Guna Brahmana? Here there is choice. Character change is possible. All sadhanas are to help us in this process. We are born Tamo Guna Pradhana. It is the intrinsic nature of our body to be lazy. In Tatva Bodha we learnt that body is made from Tamas Amsha.

So, we have to move from Tamas pradhana to Rajas Pradhana. Rituals (karmakanda) can help us in this process. And then,

move from Rajas to Satva Guna. One should learn to be contemplative. Upasana kanda helps with this change. Thus, after I become a Guna Brahmana, one has to go to the Nirguna state (Ishwara Aikyam) through Gyana Kanda.

Do we have a choice regarding Karma or occupation?

We do have a choice. We can choose our occupation based upon:

1. Jathi or hereditary profession
2. Guna: based upon inclination.

Both have advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages:

With jathi, there is no need to choose. One is already exposed to the atmosphere. Even a child listens to its mothers singing in its womb. Preparation takes place early, including food.

Disadvantages: If he does not like the profession he chooses, life can be miserable. Even today, Jathi based jobs are quite common.

Guna:

Advantages: There is no strain in person. He looks forward to Monday. Doing what I enjoy is important to a healthy life.

Disadvantages: I can never get an early training. Inclination becomes evident later in life. I may not choose correctly.

Drona and Vishwamithra are examples where Jathi was dominant.

Shastra warns us; let not money be a basis for profession. If this happens arts and crafts may die.

This is the Varna Vyavastha per Vedas and as per God.

Sri Krishna says even though I have created the four-fold class of humanity; still I am active all the time. However,

these actions do not bind me. So, Arjuna do not escape your Karma. You can, even performing your Karmas, enjoy peace. Even though I do all activity they don't disturb me. I am not affected.

Shloka # 14:

ॐ कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं कर्म कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं
कर्म कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं कर्म कर्मफलं 4.14

Works do not taint me; I desire not their fruits. Whoso knows Me to be such, is not bound by works.

Sri Krishna says Karma and its phalam cannot disturb me. I am not concerned about the results of action. Lord will not do any injustice to me.

As per Vedas planning for result is different from worrying about the result. Planning makes me efficient in the present, while worrying about result will make me deficient in present.

How to know if I am planning or worrying? Planning is a deliberate action. Worrying is not deliberate rather it is only a mechanical reaction. We cannot deliberately worry. It just happens.

Once planned and implemented, don't worry. I am not concerned about outcome of Mahabharata war. I have knowledge, which is the best remedy for all problems. My knowledge is my weapon. It is my Sudarshana chakra. You can also get this Chakra.

“ So, this is freedom in spite of responsibility. This is the greatest secret. Such a Gyani is not bound by Karma.

Shloka # 15:

कर्म कर्मफलं कर्म कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं कर्मफलं
कर्म कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं कर्म कर्मफलं कर्मफलं 4.15

Knowing thus was work done by ancient seekers after

liberation. Therefore you too do only work, as was done by the ancients in bygone days.

Sri Krishna says your forefathers knew this secret knowledge. They did not run away from responsibility. They had inner peace despite external activity. Therefore Arjuna staying in Grihastashrama perform your Jathi based Karma just like your forefathers did.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 14

Greetings All,

Shloka # 22:

That vision of the Lord which is without seeing the Seer can only be a mental vision. Indeed the Supreme is not other than Seer. His vision is absorption and abidance in one's own source.

Continuing his teaching and refreshing our memory of last class, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is pointing out that real god realization is not possible without Self -realization. The reason is that the real Ishwara is the Atma itself. This is the central teaching of the Upanishad's as well. Both Keno Upanishad and

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad say that whatever God one objectifies such as external (worship of god such in a temple) or internal (during meditation), all these forms are not the Absolute Reality. The God whom you worship outside is Vyavaharika Satyam while the God one worships inside is Pratibhashika Satyam. Both are not Paramarthika Satyam. Thus, both Vyavaharika (outside) and Partibhashika (inside) are both Mithya. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi calls it Manasika Ikshanam.

Brihadaranyaka, Chapter 3, Section 8, dealing with Akshara Brahmana says absolute Brahman is never experienced; rather it is the Experiencer or Knower. It is ever the Thinker in the thought. Real God is "I" the subject. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says real God being "you" how can you objectify it. So, know your "Self". Puranas do talk of objectified Gods. However, these Gods are not the real ones. Real one is "you". Ignoring the subject consciousness (the seer) and seeking any other darshanam is called Manasika Ikshanam.

How do we know if God who came in our dream is real or mithya? It is also a Vyavahrika God as such it is also a Mithya. There is no god other than Atma the experiencer. This is Consciousness (Sakshi Chaitanyam). Experiencer means that which illumines the mind by its mere presence or Chaitanyam. So, how can I experience the real God? Tasya Viksha? It is by abiding in real Consciousness after resolving the very seeker who wants to know. The very attempter (I want to experience God) has to be resolved and focus on "I" am the Consciousness. It is neither Pramata nor Prameya. Abiding in consciousness is abiding in knowledge that " I " am . This is the knowledge.

Shloka # 23:

The meaning of the sayings of the Vedas, "one should see the Self"; one should see the Lord" is not easy. If the Self is not seen, then what can be the talk of the Lord? The vision of Him is oneself becoming food unto Him.

Self-realization does not require knowing Self as a new thing. Experiencing anything other than Self requires effort. Thus, if one wants to see a wall, one has to turn and use our eyes to see. Every object in the world is experienced using effort and time. Only Self is experienced as Consciousness all the time. No instrument is required. No process or time is required to experience the Atma. Although Atma is ever experienced, we still need the mind to turn attention to this ever-experienced Atma.

Vedanta asks us to turn our attention to this ever experienced Atma by asking if " Are you conscious or not". "I am a conscious being", once you claim this, then shastra is required to talk about the nature of Consciousness.

Thus, again:

Mind is required to turn attention to Consciousness.

Shastra is required to talk about nature of Consciousness.

Mind and shastra both are not required to experience Consciousness as it is ever Experienced.

When I turn my attention, when I study Shastra, I realize this ever experienced Consciousness is independent, not limited by the body, survives even after body's death and is non-transacting as well. This ever-experienced Consciousness exists all the time.

This Atma, the Consciousness, lends its sentiency or life or Chiddabsha to the mind. Mind is like a mirror. This mirror becomes bright with this borrowed sentiency and thus becomes capable of performing many things. The inert mind becomes sentient.

Atma continues, as it is all pervading. Reflected Consciousness (RC) and Original Consciousness (OC) remain. OC remains hidden in RC.

So how to discover the OC?

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 13

Shloka # 21:

It is possible to talk of fate and self-effort for them who know not the source of the two. To them who know well the source of fate and effort, there is neither fate nor effort.

Continuing his teaching and refreshing our memory of last class, Swamy Paramarthananda said, in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is pointing out that any discussion of fate and free will is a useless one. A discussion with an Agyani will never have an end. One can never say if fate influences free will or vice versa. If you say fate is the original influence, we will never be able to trace the beginning as to which is first. It is a like a chicken and egg paradox. That is why it is called Maya or Mithya. In Chapter # 3 of Manduka Upanishad there is a discussion if Janma produces Karma or if it is the other way around.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says for a wise person there is no creation at all, no duality, and no cause and effect. Therefore never enter into a discussion.

Why do we say such a discussion will be inconclusive? This is because fate cannot be established without free will. Who gives fate to an individual? God does not do it. If god does

it, he will be charged with partiality. The world is not responsible for fate. Chance also is not responsible for fate. Since the world is harmonious and orderly, fate cannot be an accident or chance. None of them determine my fate. I determine my fate alone. My past actions are now coming as my fate.

My body, mind, parentage, etc determine my past actions. Therefore my actions are determined by my surroundings. So which determines fate versus freewill is not possible to establish. It is like asking: does body control the mind or vice versa? Is individual controlling society or vice versa? It is impossible to say. Hence such a discussion is futile.

Even though a discussion is futile, we must, as Sadhakas, give importance to one it. We must focus on one. The choice need not be based on logic but more as a working arrangement. Therefore we must decide if the life we wish to lead is a Freewill-based life or fate-based life.

Visishta advaitam and Dvaitam philosophies:

Followers of Visishta advaitam and Dvaitam philosophies feel the following:

I am eternally dependent on God for moksha. You are never free. Only God is free. We are all dependent. Moksha is recognizing that I am a Dasa.

Now, Moksha itself means freedom. So there is a contradiction. So, free will is never our focus here. I am a small person. I have no free will. Therefore, fate dominates my life. Therefore, I learn to use a new language. "Everything is his will etc." " I am a Dasa and enjoy serving the lord in moksha". Here **free will is suppressed and fate is expressed.**

Advaitam Philosophy: The Advaita Guru teaches us, " I am cause of my karmaphalam". "I am responsible for everything" Later this also leads to the claim that Aham Bramha Asmi. Everything

is born out of me and everything rests in me. I am the Swamy. I don't depend on time. Shankaracharya says, in this world (Jiva-Jagat-Ishwara), the Ishwara depends on me. Therefore if you want to know advaita, assimilate free will. Start practicing this now.

Therefore do not get into a debate.

Shloka # 21 (continued):

Discussion of fate and free will occurs only among ignorant. Vidhi is past action by a past "I". Prayatna denotes the present "I". So, this is a time connected "I". Time connected I is Ahamkara. This discussion occurs, as we do not know the moolam of Ahamkara. The timeless I, Atma, is the moolam of Ahamkara.

A debate of Ahamkara is only possible when they do not know the Ahamkara moolam. Once they know it, Ahamkara vanishes.

Note: Shloka # 15 or 17 (depends upon book) discusses time, which is imaginary. Past and future, both are myths. Present is also a myth as it is in relation to past and present. Thus, there is no Karta "I" or Bhoktha "I". Therefore in advaita, Aham must be emphasized.

Shloka # 22:

That vision of the Lord which is without seeing the Seer can only be a mental vision. Indeed the Supreme is not other than Seer. His vision is absorption and abidance in one's own source.

In this shloka all upanishadic teachings are condensed. For some it may even be disturbing. It captures the essence of Keno and Brihadaranyaka Upanishads.

What we experience is not absolute reality. It is only a relative reality. Relative reality means it is Mithya. " I" the observer alone am the absolute reality. Whatever is

observed is a mithya. This world is mithya, as is my body and as is my mind. We can train the mind to understand this. But what about God? Is God a Mithya or Sathyam?

Upanishad says, it will not answer this question rather it asks you to determine the answer based on the norms it has provided.

What does God mean? If God is someone who is experienced by me (devotee), then God is Anatma. This may disturb some devotees. Upanishad though says a seeker of truth does so without emotions.

Therefore an objective God is a Mithya.

The absolutely real God can only be discussed in one way. When you understand him as " I" the Experiencer.

Aham Asmi, this is God. The Aham is not the body or the mind. Therefore Ishwara Darshana as an object is a myth. However Darshanam of "I" is real.

For a Karmakandin this Shloka will be disturbing. Vedanta says duality is acceptable till you mature. During Karma and Upasana Yoga duality is acceptable, however, ultimately the objective god has to be negated.

The shloka: Ignoring I, the Atma, who is the real God and instead going after a God vision (darshanam) as an object does not make sense. God vision is only a mental projection or Mithya. There is no other God than " I" the observer. Saddarshana is heavily influenced by Manduka karika. Upanishad does not see God as He. Non-advaitic philosophies downplay Upanishads by focusing on shakthi.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

