

# Baghawad Gita, Class 176:

## Chapter 13, Verses 22 & 23

Shloka # 22:

13.22 Since the soul is seated in Nature,  
therefore it experiences the alities born of Nature. Contact  
with the alities  
is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.

Continuing his teachings

Swamiji said, Sri Krishna has come to last pair of topics,  
namely Purusha and

Prakriti. They are being discussed from shloka # 20-24. We saw  
both Purusha and

Prakriti are two basic principles that existed even before the  
world came into

being. This mixture of Prusha and Parkriti together is known  
as Ishwara. This mixture

or Ishwara has several common properties:

1. They are both  
Anadi, beginingless.
2. They are both the  
cause of the universe.

They have at least four

properties that are uncommon among them:

1. Pursuha is the conscious principle while Prakriti is  
the matter principle.
2. Purusha is changeless, while Prakriti changes all the  
time.
3. Pursuha is without attributes, while Prakriti has  
attributes.
4. Purusha is Satyam, while Parkriti is Mithya.

And then Sri Krishna pointed out that from this mixture alone creation evolved and in the evolution of the creation, the primary role is played by Prakrti alone, because Prakrti alone is capable of evolution; Prakrti being basic matter and as a result of this Prakrti's evolution, otherwise called the manifestation, the pancha bhuthas have come, all the fourteen lokas have come and all the physical and subtle bodies also are born, which means my own body-mind-complex is an evolute of Prakrti.

The question then arises where is Pusrusha in all this? Body, mind and everything I experience, all change. But where is Purusha? Sri Krishna says, that Pursuha is the Experienter in you; the Sakshi Chaitanyam; the "I". I, the Subject, the Experienter is Purusha and whatever I experience is Prakriti. We should remember body, mind complex belongs to Prakriti and it is the object of experience. Body and mind complex is so intimately connected with me that it appears as if it belong to the "I". Citing an example: It is like the spectacle that I wear, it is an instrument, but I include it as part of I, the perceiver. Very often we forget to include the specs as an object. So, cause of mistake is that object used as an instrument is used as an integral part of subject. Without a pen, can you be a writer? Thus, the body mind complex is also mistaken as a subject; now for

transactional purposes we can do so, but be aware that body and mind are all a part of Prakriti and "I" am different from Prakriti; I am the Sakshi Tatvam, illuminating all of them.

The word bhunkte means witnesses; even though the literal meaning of the word bhunkte is experiences; the word experiences should be understood as witnesses or illumines whatever happens to the body as well as to the mind, And witnessing or illumining the body-mind complex is an activity of Purusha, but in the presence of Purusha, the body and mind gets illumined. Just like we say, the fire burns the fuel. We use the verb that fire is burning the fuel; but if you analyze; Shankaracharya analyzes, burning is not a willful action done by the fire; if burning is an action done by the fire; the action will have a beginning, and action will have an end. But really speaking, fire does not perform the action of burning; fire just exists. When you put your finger in the fire, at that time too, fire does not do any special job. Before putting my finger, fire was fire. After putting my finger also, fire is fire. No transformation; no will; no action on the part of the fire; fire exists, my finger gets burned; but I make a statement, fire burns the finger. Here is a verb, which does not have verbal meaning. When we say the Sun illumines the earth; it is the same thing; Sun does not will or plan and perform the action of illumining. The sun just exists; in the presence of the Sun, whatever objects fall within the range, those objects get illumined; before the objects arrive, Sun is the same, after the objects arrive, Sun is the same; but still we use a verb, Sun is illumining the earth.

So also Sakshi, it is like fire, the sun, etc; it is just "is". In its presence, body is illumined.

Sakshi experiences; experiences means changelessly witnesses;

actionlessly witnesses; will-lessly without involving a will, Sakshi 'experiences', whatever happens in the body-mind-complex. And even when nothing happens in the body mind complex, and even when the mind is blank, the blank condition of the mind, is witnessed, experienced, known, aware by the Consciousness principle. That Consciousness am I.

Prakrti in shloka means shariram. In this context, Prakrti means products of Prakrti. Prakrti karyam is called Prakrti and what are the two products of Prakrti to be kept in mind; the body-mind-complex container is called Prakrti. Praktisthaha means enclosed within the body mind complex. I was telling you in the last class, the enclosed space is useful for living and that is why we build walls, because enclosed place is only vyavahara योग्यम्. Similarly, the all-pervading Consciousness, when it is enclosed within the body-mind-complex, it is called Praktisthaha Purushaha Sakshi chaitanyam.

And this I, bhunkte, experiences without action and without will. What does it experience? It experiences all the consequences, all the products of Prakrti in the form of varieties of thought, Prakrti jan gunaha means various thought modifications like pleasure thought; pain thought; raga thought; dvesha thought; kama thought; they are called Prakrti jan guna; certain types of thoughts are called Satvic thoughts, certain other types of thoughts are called Rajasic thoughts. Sukham is satvic vritti, dukham is rajasa vritti, moha or delusion is tamasic vritti, all those mental conditions, gunaha means condition, the Sakshi experiences; experiences means witnesses.

What are Sakshi's attributes?

I don't have any attributes. But when I illumine, I take on attribute of body, mind through a

process known as transference. Transference is like when we watch a movie, I start without any attachments, but as I watch the movie I get attached, unknowingly; thus problems of hero are transferred to observer.

**Anonya Adhyasaha:** We know we are involved for two three hours in a movie, then we are able to detach ourselves from it. In life, attachment to body mind complex is deep and continuous that it goes on into next Janma.

**Yoni, sat and Asat:** Sat yoni means good body; Asat yoni means inferior body or inferior janma. Thus punarapi jananam, punarapi maranam, taking higher birth of devas, taking lower birth of animals, plants and asura, in short the entire samsara chakram.

For this samsara chakram, what is the cause? Sri Krishna says it is the attributes of the body mind complex; that belong to the Prakrti, I get attached to.

Remember the movie, totally identifying with the hero, and when the heroine dies, this person also cries as though his wife has died. And his wife has to shake him and say and I am alive. So abhimana with Prakrti is samsara karanam, Purusha by itself does not have janma; just as nothing happens to space when the walls are pulled down.

Thus, when walls are raised, akasha is the same; when the walls are removed, akasha is the same. Similarly

I-the-Purusha, the Chaitanyam  
am the same, whether the body, mind walls continue or whether  
the body, mind  
walls, resolves. But instead of claiming this birthlessness of  
Purusha, I identify  
with Prakrti and suffer.

### **Shloka # 23:**

**He who is the Witness, the Permitter, the  
Sustainer, the Experiencer, the great Lord, and who is also  
spoken of as the  
transcendental Self is the supreme Person in this body.**

Here Sri Krishna is  
training to dis-identify from the Prakriti enclosure and  
identity with Purusha.  
He says, don't search for Purusha anywhere; he is in our body  
-mind container  
as Sakshi Chaitanyam; the I am. This Purusha's nature is  
opposite of Prakriti. Sri  
Krishna identifies its many features as follows:

#### **1. Paraha:**

Sri Krishna says this container, the content-consciousness, is  
not only within the body, it extends the beyond the container  
body. First I say the space is within the hall; because of  
which alone we are all accommodated; and later I say the space  
is not within the hall alone, the space is outside the hall  
also. And finally I have to say, really speaking the space is  
neither within the hall nor outside the hall, the hall is  
existing within space.

Similarly, I say consciousness is inside the body; and then  
finally I say consciousness is outside the body; then finally  
I say consciousness is inside or outside, all the bodies are  
inside the consciousness and therefore where is consciousness?  
The answer is; you should ask a counter-question, where is it

not? Therefore it is called paraha. Paraha means free from all limitations.

▪ **Upadrshtha:**

Means

the consciousness alone is the intimate witness of everything happening inside you.

So

here Sri Krishna says Atma is a witness, not remaining far away; but upadrashtha, intimately pervading the body, mind complex, it illumines the body mind complex; just as the light illumines the hand; by pervading the hand. Bulb is far away; but the light, the prakasha is the luminosity upon the hand; therefore it is a proximate illuminator. Proximate illuminator means one who is near, pervading the hand is illumining. Similarly, Purusha pervades every cell of my body. This inert body of chemicals, which does not have consciousness of its own; this inert bundle of chemicals is now sentient and alive, only because Purusha pervades and makes this body experience-able to me. And therefore upadrashtha. Close witness.

▪ **Anumantha Cha:**

means that which blesses activities of Prakriti. It blesses the inert Body and mind. Like electricity blesses the fan and in its presence it is able to function according to its design. Similarly it is with a

mike. So it is with every organ, they all perform their functions in presence of consciousness. It blesses all activities, good or bad, by its presence. Consciousness does not judge morality of actions.

▪ **Bhartha:**

does not mean husband; here it means that which lends existence. Purusha is satya; Prakriti is Mithya.

▪ **Bhokta :**

Then the very same Purusha, I the Sakshi, is called bhokta, the experiencer, from the standpoint of an ignorant person; I am really only the Sakshi, and I am the illuminator of the pleasure, pain, envy and all that anger etc. in the minds. Anger belongs Prakrti, the mind; therefore what should I say:

I am the illuminator of the anger of the mind. But instead what do I say; I am angry. When you say I am angry, which is the attribute of the mind, I have transferred to Me, the illuminator. And with the transferred attributes, atma appears, as though it is a bhokta. bhokta means seeming bhokta, as though suffering from that attribute.

- **Maheshvara:** means Free One, free entity; body is bound as matter. So body alone is a bound entity because body being Prakrti, it is affected by the other Prakrti; we have seen earlier body is matter, world is matter, therefore body will be definitely be affected by the body. Nobody can stop. In summer body will sweat; In winter, if there is one, the body will shiver. And in old age, the body will collapse. It will lose all its faculties. Similarly, mind is also



matter; the world is also matter; mind, too will be influenced by the matter.

If you read about the earthquake, children are starving; however great you may

be, the mind is going to empathize with that situation. Nobody can stop. And

therefore, Prakrti, the world, binds body; the mind is also bound; but Purusha the maheshvara, can never be affected by the matter principle and therefore Purusha is maheshvara; means Swami. Svatantra.

Master. That is why as body, you are never free. Not only the world will affect, even the planetary position affects you.

▪ **Paramatma:**

I, jivatma, learn to separate from those attributes and identify with Pusursha.

Attributes belong to Prakriti.

Thus:

Attributed I: is Jivatma

Attributeless

I: is Paramatma.

This

shloka is considered a mahavakya as it deals with Jivatma paramatma aikyam.

**Shloka # 24:He who**

**knows thus the Person and Nature along with the alities will not be born again, in whatever way he may live.**

And here Sri Krishna points out that the

clear knowledge about Prakrti and Purusha will give a person a great relief

from the burden of samsara.

A life which appeared a struggle till now; a life which is

very big drag, which is full  
of cares and worries, that life gets a very great relief, if I  
have made this  
discriminative knowledge and I have learned to claim I am  
Purusha and that all  
the attributes belong to Prakrti. This is called Purusha  
Prakrti  
viveka. So the phalam is, suppose a person gains this  
knowledge; the first knowledge  
itself is that I am a mixture of Prakrti and Purusha. I have  
told you the example, first  
when you see the hand, you will only say there is a hand; I  
have to tell you,  
it is not hand alone, there are two things here; and I have to  
tell you that the hand is  
pervaded by a light principle; the light falls on the hand; it  
gets reflected and  
according to the science, the reflected light travels and hits  
your retina; therefore it is  
not one; there are two things. Similarly when I use the word  
I, there is a  
Prakrti and there is Purusha. This is my  
first level of wisdom. Therefore Sri Krishna says suppose a  
person knows  
clearly that Purusha  
means Nirguna, Nirvikara, Satya, Chetana tatvam and  
Prakrti is Saguna, Savikara, Mithya, Achetana tatvam; both  
of them are distinctly known. The separation between the light  
and the hand, we  
do not physically do, because light cannot be scraped out of  
the hand; You need not separate from outside; the  
separation is an internal affair. It is a cognitive  
separation; it is not an  
external event. Similarly, body and atma, physically you need  
not separate and you cannot. It is  
a cognitive separation. He also knows that there are many  
attributes, like fat,

lean, old, bald, haired, all are physical attributes. There are subtle attributes like anger, envy, etc. They are all internal attributes, belonging to sukshma sharira, sthula sharira and karana sharira. So all the attributes I should know belong to the shariram, which is Prakrti. Whereas Purusha does not have sthula sharira attributes; body is fat, I am not fat. What a relief. Otherwise everybody will ask: Why did no you go for walking, being obese. That does not mean that tomorrow onwards, you should stop your walking. Even though you are not fat, you can keep the body in good condition and therefore you can walk; it does not require an abhimana; similarly, with all the emotions too. Thus, the one who has understood the difference between Prakrti and Purusha very clearly and also one who has learned to train his mind to identify with Purusha; that training is called nidhidhyasanam. For all transactions, you have to identify with Prakrti. In any application form, you should fill properly with correct dates. In all vyavahara-transactions, we have to identify with Prakrti. You also put the vesham and go the green room once in a while. In the green room, learn to say life is just a drama. And once a person knows the whole life is a drama, then what is the advantage, let him play any role in his life or in her life because life is a series of role-playing. You cannot avoid role-playing. The moment you are born, whether you like or not, you are related to your parents, as a child; you are

related to siblings,  
as a brother or sister; and when your brother gets married,  
whether like it  
not, you become a brother-in-law or sister-in-law. So life is  
a series of role-playing,  
and it would not be a tragedy, if you were aware of the fact  
that it is a role-playing.  
When the role becomes serious; as a beggar, and take yourself  
to be a beggar,  
and after the drama is over, if you continue with the begging  
bowl, then there is  
some problem. Therefore, Sri Krishna says: You need not change  
your role, if  
you are a Brahmachari,  
you can continue. If you are a Grihastha, you need not change  
your varna, you need not  
change the ashrama, you do  
not change your profession; no external change is required;  
only an inner transformation  
is required. Once the transformation has taken place, even by  
taking on any  
role, such a Gyani does not have a rebirth at all. I do not  
have a punarjanma.  
And if somebody asks the question to a Gyani, Gyani, how do  
you know you do not  
have punarjanma? Gyani gives a very big smile; where is the  
question of rebirth; I have  
understood I am the atma, which does not have the first janma  
itself; janma is  
what? What is the definition of janma? Sthula sukshma  
sharira samyoga, janma. And  
what is the definition of maranam? Sthula sukshma  
sharira viyogaha is maranam. The mind is  
there, the body is there; now the mind and body are together;  
At the time of death the mind  
and body snap their connection; body is here, mind will go  
away, saying tata.

This mind-body separation is called maranam, and what is punar  
janmam, this travelling sukshma shariram, getting  
associated with another sthula  
shariram; body-mind;  
new body association is called punarjanma. Is Mind Purusha or  
Prakrti?  
Prakrti. Is Body Purusha  
or Prakrti? Prakrti. Therefore Prakrti one and Prakrti two;  
Body is one type of  
Prakrti and mind is one type of Prakrti; two forms of Prakrti,  
coming into  
contact is punarjanma;  
two forms of Prakrti getting separated is maranam. And who am  
I; which form of Prakrti  
am I? Am I Prakrti No.1 or Prakrti No.2?  
I am neither Prakrti one nor Prakrti two. Why should I bother  
about how countless  
bodies and mind, getting together and separated; I do not  
care, I am the Purusha, who does not  
have the first janma itself; where is the question of  
punarjanma. This wisdom  
is called mokshaha. Through this  
wisdom, I do not get liberated. Through this wisdom I know or  
I claim that I  
was liberated; I am liberated and I will ever be liberated. I  
am incapable of  
getting bound; and after this knowledge, even if you want to  
become a samsari, you cannot  
be a samsari.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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# Baghawad Gita, Class 175: Chapter 13, Verses 20 to 22

**Note:** In this chapter the numbering of shlokas can be different depending upon Gita book you are reading. I am using Swamiji's numbering.

## **Shloka 13.20:**

**Know both Nature and also the individual soul [Prakrti is sometimes translated as matter, and purusa as spirit.-Tr.] to be verily without beginning; know the modifications as also the alities(reality) as born of Nature.**

With the 19<sup>th</sup> shloka of this chapter, Sri Krishna has completed four topics out of the 6 topics that Arjuna wanted to know. The four completed topics are Kshetram, Kshetragnya, Gyanam and Gneyam. And now from the shloka's 20-24, Sri Krishna is going to deal with the final two topics, namely, Purusha and Prakrti. And since these two topics are closely connected, Sri Krishna is dealing with them parallely or simultaneously. And for all practical purposes, we can understand the word Purusha as Brahman and we can understand Prakrti as Maya and therefore the discussion is regarding Brahman and Maya of the Upanishad. These two words, purusha and prakrti, are generally used in Sankhya philosophy but, sometimes, in Vedanta too, we use the word purusha and prakrti for Brahman and Maya.

And

Sri Krishna begins the discussion here saying:

Arjuna may you understand purusha and prakrti as the two basic principles, which are beginningless-principles. Anadi, means

without a beginning and it is in dual number which means purusha is also Anadi, prakrti is also Anadi. And this purusha prakrti mixture alone we call, Ishvara. **Prakrti plus purusha is equal to Ishvara.** Brahman plus Maya is equal to Ishvara. And Sri Krishna wants to point out that this Ishvara alone existed even before the origination of this universe. Since the universe has an origination; the world has a beginning, and since the Ishvara has no beginning, it is clear that even before the world originated, before the beginninged-world, there was the beginningless Ishvara, which means even before Srishti, Ishvara existed. And since Ishvara alone existed before Srishti, the Srishti must have come out of Ishvara only, because Ishvara alone was the beginningless principle. And this Ishvara consists purusha and prakrti and if you remember the 7th chapter, it was presented there as para prakrti and apara prakrti. The same idea you have to bring here.

Now,  
from this shloka, we come to know that purusha and prakrti have got one common feature; that both are beginningless.

Anaditvam is one common feature; and the second common feature is that both of them together are the cause of the universe. Therefore purusha is also cause, prakrti is also cause, together they enjoy causal status; say exactly like the father and mother. Father by himself cannot be the cause of a child, mother by herself can never be the cause of a child, father and mother alone, together, enjoy the causal status.

And  
these two principles have got some uncommon features as well. Common features are two, while uncommon features or differences are many and out of many differences, four differences are very important for our study, which I had

discussed in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter as well; but we will refresh our memory on them.

What is the first difference between purusha and prakrti? Purusha is chetana tatvam; it is consciousness-principle; whereas prakrti or Maya is achetana tatvam, it is the basic matter principle. Even if you like to call it energy, I do not mind. That is why they are inter-convertible, whereas Consciousness is neither matter nor energy. **Consciousness is neither matter nor energy.** Thus Purusha is consciousness principle Prakrti is basic matter; or energy principle; this is the first difference.

The second difference is the purusha is nirvikara tatvam; consciousness principle is not subject to modification or change. It is ever, the changeless principle, time cannot influence consciousness. Time cannot touch consciousness. Consciousness is not within the field of time. In fact, some scientists themselves are saying this.

Whereas, prakrti or matter principle is subject to time and therefore subject to modification; in Sanskrit savikara tatvam. So chetana tatvam-achetana tatvam is the first difference; nirvikara tatvam-savikara-tatvam is the second difference. And because of the influence of time alone, matter is violently undergoing change, even becoming energy is a form of change; thus, matter becomes energy. In fact in an atomic explosion matter is converted into tremendous energy. And therefore, matter is subject to change to energy form; energy is subject to change into matter form; and within matter itself, it violently undergoes change; the sun is changing violently, the planets are changing and even the minutest atom is undergoing change. Therefore savikara tatvam. And the other one, nirvikara tatvam.

Then

the third important difference or uncommon feature is that



Purusha, the consciousness

principle, is free from all attributes. It is absolutely property-free.

Whether you enumerate the properties as satva rajas tamo guna, then we say, Consciousness is free from all these three; if you enumerate the properties as shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha; shabda means sound, sparsha, means touch, rupa means form, rasa means taste, gandha means smell; then consciousness is free from all these five properties.

And if you are a chemistry student, then we say consciousness is free from all types of physical and chemical properties. In short, consciousness is property-less and attributeless or in Sanskrit, Nirguna tatvam; whereas, matter is endowed with all the properties. So from one angle, we say matter has got three gunas; three means satva, rajas, tamo gunas, we say; Or from another angle we say, matter has five gunas, shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa, gandha; or from chemistry angle, matter has got many physical and chemical properties. And therefore matter is simply attributed.

And then comes the fourth and final property for our discussion. You can have several but only four for our discussion. This is technical thing, which is not directly relevant, but for future questions, this will be required. And what is that difference; chetana or the consciousness-principle has got an independent existence and therefore it is said to be satya tatvam. The existence of consciousness is intrinsic, it is independent, it is unborrowed; That is why we say, it is satya tatvam; whereas the matter principle does not have an independent existence; the existence of matter depends upon the consciousness principle. Even to prove that you are all sitting in the class, I should be conscious of you, what I am not conscious, I cannot talk of its existence at all. And therefore the existence of a thing, a material thing, depends upon the consciousness principle and therefore matter enjoys or suffers an dependent existence. In Sanskrit we call it

mithya tatvam. Satyam and mithya. We will keep it aside, which we will deal later.

These are the four fundamental differences between Purusha and Prakrti. Such a purusha-prakrti mixture called God was there even before the origination of the world. And the most interesting thing is that when we say God alone existed before the creation, we cannot even answer the question, where was He located.

Where was He located; even location of God we cannot talk about because, before creation, even akasha was not there.

Even scientists point out that you cannot imagine space at the time of or before the big bang. How they have reached Vedanta. They will say Vedanta has borrowed from Science. But long before science came, this has been said. Therefore you cannot conceive of even akasha, before Srishti (akasha means space).

So when I talk about God before the origination of space, how can I talk about the location of God, because the concept of location requires space. Therefore do not ask where was He. And such an unlocatable God, who is a mixture of Purusha and Prakrti, was there before Srishti.

Similarly,  
here also, the student asks, then what happened?

Of the mixture of two, Purusha and Prakrti, nothing will happen to purusha tattvam, because purusha tatvam is not

conditioned by time and therefore Purusha, the chetana tatvam, will remain the same. Before Srishti, during Srishti, after pralaya, all the time, chaitanyam is Nirvikaram.

If this Nirvikara purusha tatvam does not undergo any change, then all the changes must happen to only Prakrti tatvam, basic matter or energy principle. And therefore Sri Krishna says at the time of creation, Out of the prakrti tatvam evolves this universe. The matter evolves into the universe just as a seed evolves to become a sprout. Then as time goes, again it evolves into a plant and finally it evolves into a full fledged tree. Similarly, the universe also, from karana avastha to sukshma avastha to sthula avastha, this gradual evolution takes place and in this matter-evolution all the products are born out of the basic prakrti, otherwise called Maya. That is why we call the creation Mayikam.

And what are the materials born out of prakrti? Initially, the five basic elements are born; called the five bhuthani, akasha, vayu, agni, apah and prithvi; and later the five elements through varieties of permutation and combination, they mix together, they produce all the other things which we call bhauthika evolution. Bhutha evolution, then bhauthika evolution. Elements evolved, then Elementals evolved. And what are

the elementals? All the 14 lokas; then the mountains, the stars, the planets, and not only that, according to scriptures, our physical body is also evolved prakrti. What is the proof? How do you prove that? The proof is: first of all the physical body is matter; it consists of only chemicals. it consists of only elements; elements, one can take two meanings; the shastric meaning, akasha, vayu, agni, apaha, prithivi; and if you are chemistry student, elements can mean: Aluminium, antimony, barium, carbon, etc. so those elements. So all those elements alone have produced the body; body is nothing but a chemical bundle. That is why we call it biochemistry. And therefore body being matter, it is born out of prakrti. And the second and important proof is body is subject to modification.

So this expansion and contraction of the body proves that it cannot be purusha tatvam, because purusha tatvam is Nirvikaram, body is savikaram; therefore body has to be a product of prakrti only.

Then what about mind? The mind is also material in nature. And that is why the changes in the chemistry of the body change your mind also. Enzyme changes, hormonal changes, etc. can cause tremendous mood disorders. All these are possible, because the mind is also matter and it is influenced and changed by material. And not only that, that the mind is also subject to change, need anyone tell us to understand that? Mind is subject to violent changes, that mind is an evolved version of prakrti. So world is prakrti's evolute, body is prakrti's evolute or product, mind is also the product of prakrti.

Now if body is a product of prakrti, mind is also a product of prakrti, both of them must be achetana tatvam; because we have said prakrti is achetana tatvam.

If  
prakrti is achetana tatvam,  
body and mind, which are its products, they also must be  
achetanam, achetanam means  
insentient. But, mind seems to be sentient; not seems to be,  
if doubt, pinch  
and see yourselves; you know it is sentient. So for that, the  
scriptures give  
the answer that the body and mind are prakrti only but they  
are such a fine  
version of prakrti, like refined clay. Body is refined clay,  
And sometime the brain  
also is acting like a refined clay. So being a refined version  
of matter, they  
are able to manifest consciousness; but it is not their own  
intrinsic  
consciousness; it is only reflected or manifested  
consciousness.

Like, if my cloth is bright now, visible to you now, light  
from the cloth is hitting your Eyes; you are able to see and  
when light comes from the cloth, it is not the cloth's own  
light, rather it is the light reflected on the cloth. It is  
not intrinsic but borrowed light.

**Similarly,**  
**body is prakrti with borrowed sentiency; mind is prakrti with**  
**borrowed sentiency.**  
**Therefore all these are the creation of prakrti.**

And therefore Sri Krishna says; Arjuna note it that products  
are  
born out of prakrti. And not only all the objects are born out  
of prakrti; the

various properties of these objects; every object has its own property. It has got a color, form, weight, and all these properties are born out of prakrti alone.

Because **the rule is that the properties of the cause will inhere in the effect also.** Thus, if Gold has certain combination of other elements; alloys, then the all the ornaments also will have the same proportion of the other elements. And that is why the children also will have the combination of properties or character borrowed from the parents.

And that is the world also has got satva rajas tamo guna, and the world also has got shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa, gandha. And Shankaracharya points out that the even the properties, like raga dvesha etc. do not belong to the Purusha, they all belong to prakrti alone.

### **Shloka # 21:**

**13.21 With regard to the source of body and organs, Nature is said to be the cause. The soul is the cause so far as enjoyership of happiness and sorrow is concerned.**

The first line is almost the repetition of the previous shloka. Everything in the creation is born out of prakrti, which includes the body, mind complex also. So karyam means the body. It is a technical meaning here; normally karyam means a product in general; but in this context, karyam means sthula shariram, the physical body. And similarly, the word karanam in this context means the mind or the subtle body in general.

In the creation of the physical and subtle bodies, not only the human beings, but all the living beings, in the origination of them Prakriti is the contributor that does a lot of work and is highly active; while Purusha is the laziest person; that is why, in home also, it so happens, reading only the newspapers. It has begun at the time of creation itself.

Because the original purusha does not do anything. In the creation of the body and mind, prakrti is the hetu.

And

there is another meaning as well.

In

the creation of the world, which can be divided into karanam and karyam, Prakriti

alone does all work. In the creation of the body mind complex too, prakrti alone does all work.

Now comes the basic question. If everything is a product of prakrti, where is this blessed Purusha!! Because, Ishvara is a mixture of two; of these two, one principle we find pervading everywhere, the pancha bhutas are prakrti and all the other combinations mountains, rivers, sun, and moon. In short the entire visible universe; experienced universe is prakrti; because everything I experience undergo a change; whether it is the minutest atom or the biggest galaxy. So, therefore, the experienced world is changing; and is therefore prakrti. Then what about the body; body is also experienced by me clearly, I am experiencing my body via pleasures pains hunger thirst etc; so, I am able to talk about. What I do not experience, I cannot talk about. And the physical body is also an experienced principle and Sri Krishna says that also is prakrti because it is subject to change. Therefore, experienced world is changing, hence prakrti. Experienced body is changing; therefore prakrti.

Then what about mind, mind is also experienced by me; In fact the mind is experienced by me alone; at least in the case of

the body, I am experiencing, and you are also experiencing, whereas, mind is experienced by me because I am aware of emotions, my calmness, my anger, my knowledge, my ignorance, and even blankness of the mind too. The mind is also experienced and it is subject to change and therefore that is also prakrti. So experienced world is prakrti, experienced body is prakrti, experienced mind is prakrti; if everything experienced is prakrti, where is this blessed purusha? He is not to be seen. Where is the Purusha hiding? Therefore we go on searching. Some people search outside. Whatever they search and find is an experienced, changing object; that is not going to be Purusha. Suppose I look within the physical body, I will see blood, marrow, etc; all within your experience of changing prakrti. If I look within the mind too I see varieties of emotions, all changing thoughts; outside also I experience prakrti, inside also I experience prakrti, everything experienced is prakrti; so, where is the blessed purusha?

Sri

Krishna says: Do not search for the purusha. because the purusha is The

Experiencer I; The basic subject of I, the basic conscious principle. Now there

is a big question. Is, I, the experiencer, am I, conscious or inert? An

experiencer has to be necessarily a conscious, sentient principle alone. Sri Krishna

says it is that experiencer, I, the subject witness of the world; the witness

of the body, the witness of the mind. How to look at that; do not ask; the moment

you see, it will become an object, and again it will be within body, mind, etc. **That, which is ever the subject of**

**experience, and never the object of experience; that I am; the Purusha. Aham Brahma asmi.**

Who



says this? Sri Krishna says this.

**Purusha is not located anywhere as an object, the purusha, the chetana, nirvikara, nirguna, satya tatvam purusha, is I, the very subject, who is enclosed in the material body; who is enclosed in the material mind; the enclosure is prakrti and the enclosed consciousness is, I am Purusha.**

And

therefore Sri Krishna says Purusha is bhokta; here bhokta means the witness the

sakshi chaitanyam, the subject experiencer principle; The experiencer of what?

If purusha is the experiencer, he will be

experiencer of what? What is there other than purusha?

Prakrti. Therefore he is the experiencer of prakrti. Prakrti means the body mind complex, and not only the body mind complex prakrti, sukhadukhanam, as well as all the conditions of the body mind complex. Like favourable healthy condition; as well as the unfavourable unhealthy condition; all of them belong to the object prakrti, raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, lobha, moha, all are properties of observed prakrti; None of them is the property of the observer purusha.

**So this is a very important law in Vedanta. All the observed properties can belong to only observed objects; no observed property can belong to the observer subject. I will repeat. All the observed properties can belong to the observed object alone. The observed properties can never belong to the observer-subject. Therefore the observer is always property-free. Therefore I am the experiencer of properties but I am without those properties.** And therefore Sri Krishna says in the created world, prakrti is available as an object and purusha is available as the subject and the subject purusha is never objectifiable.

And

remember, I have given you the examples before. The eyes can see everything in the world, but the eyes can never see themselves. Maximum, the eyes can see is its own reflection in the mirror; even the reflected eye is objectifiable but the original eye is never objectifiable, perceivable. What a tragedy.

You cannot see your eyes, with your own eyes. Suppose a person asks: If the eyes can never be seen, what is the proof that there are eyes. Even though, eyes are never seen, you do not require proof for the eyes because every sight of every object is the proof for the existence of the eye. Every perception pre-supposes the existence of the perceiver, even though the perceiver is never perceived. Every perception presupposed the perceiver. Even though camera is never photographed, every photograph is the proof for the existence of camera.

Therefore the subject does not require proof. Subject does not require proof; because the very search for proof presupposes the existence of the subject. The prover need not be proved. Prover does not require a prover. And therefore where is purusha? It is like the tenth man story. **Where is the purusha? I am the purusha.** What a terrible discovery. What a wonderful discovery.

**Shloka # 22:**

**13.22 Since the soul is seated in Nature, therefore it experiences the alities born of Nature. Contact with the alities**

**is the cause of its births in good and evil wombs.**

Originally,

before the creation evolves or the world evolves, the purusha was neither the subject, nor the prakrti was object; there was no subject-object transaction at all, before the creation evolved. Then when did the purusha get the subject status?

When

the universe evolved, naturally the body was also created, the mind also was created; and after the creation of the body and mind, the all-pervading purusha got enclosed within the body-mind-enclosure. Previously the enclosures were not there;

Therefore, this consciousness was an all-pervading unenclosed consciousness; but after the creation of body-mind, we have got an enclosed consciousness. Just as we have got a enclosed space after the creation of wall. Before the creation of the wall, space was there, but it was unenclosed space. Once the walls are created, it become enclosed. By building the wall, what are you the accomplishing? The open space is converted into enclosed space. And once it becomes enclosed space, it is called a house. What is the definition of house, not the walls; walls do not make a house; then what is a house; enclosed space is a house, and once it is enclosed, it becomes a useful and transactable thing. In the same way, previously it was unenclosed consciousness. **Now it is body mind enclosed consciousness; and that becomes the subject principle. And then the whole world become object.**

Therefore

consciousness becomes a subject, when it is enclosed. An open space becomes a

house when it is enclosed. Therefore, you never build a house; you only build the walls. What is a house, the enclosed space is a house, because that alone is lending you the place for transaction. Wall is not useful. All your movement, study, etc. is housed in the enclosed space. Thus, purusha becomes the subject and prakrti becomes object.

### **Take away:**

Consciousness  
is neither matter nor energy.

Prakrti  
plus purusha is equal to Ishvara.

Body is prakrti with borrowed sentiency; mind is prakrti with borrowed sentiency. Therefore all these are the creation of prakrti.

That,  
which is ever the subject of experience, and never the object of experience;  
that I am; the Purusha.  
Aham Brahma asmi.

Purusha is not located  
anywhere as an object, the

purusha, the chetana, nirvikara, nirguna, satya tatvam  
purusha, is I, the  
very subject, who is enclosed in the material body; who is enclosed in the  
material mind; the enclosure is prakrti and the enclosed consciousness is, I am  
Purusha.

Purusha:

previously it was unenclosed consciousness. Now it is body  
mind enclosed

consciousness; and that becomes the subject principle; and  
then the whole world  
becomes object.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Baghawad Gita, Class 174: Chapter 13, Verses 17 to 20**

**Note:** In this chapter  
the numbering of shlokas can be different depending upon Gita  
book you are  
reading. I am using Swamiji's numbering.

**Shloka # 17:**

**And the Knowable, though undivided, appears to  
be existing as divided in all beings, and It is the sustainer  
of all beings as  
also the devourer and originator.**

In this 13th chapter, from shloka No.13 onwards, Sri Krishna  
has come to the topic of Gneyam, which is the fourth topic of  
the six topics that Arjuna wanted to know and Sri Krishna made  
it clear that this word Gneyam is nothing but Param Brahma of  
the Upanishad. He then started description of the Param Brahma  
as given in the Upanishads and as I said, this is the subtlest  
topic of the Upanishads, and the subtlest topic of the

Bhagavat Gita as well. In fact, this is the main topic and the description of one who is inconceivable is: Param Brahma is nirgunam, it is free from all attributes and therefore available for any kind of sensory perception and **while it is Nirgunam, it is all pervading; it exists everywhere; in fact, in the form of the very existence itself. Nirgunam Brahma is the very existence principle, which is everywhere, and not only that, it is only one;** it is not plural; the objects in the creation are many; but the all-pervading, attribute-less existence is Ekam.

Even though this Existence seems like it is divided, it is really not so. As I gave the example, the light pervading the hall or pervading the fingers, cannot be divided; it is all over; but you see the light only on the fingers; in between the fingers, you do not see the light and therefore it creates a misconception that one light is on this finger, second light is on this finger, the third is on this; thus there are five fingers and it appears, as though there are five lights; and in between it appears as though there is no light. But the fact is that it is only a seemingly divided light, reality is that the light is continuously there, even in between the fingers. In a similar manner, existence is seemingly divided but it is really one indivisible Brahma. Thus Nirgunam, Sarvagatham, Ekam, Akhandam, Sadrupam, all these descriptions Sri Krishna gives.

It is almost impossible to conceive of such an Existence, which is why later Sri Krishna will point out that you have to train your mind to understand Brahman and one of the training suggested in the Shashtra's is meditating upon space. Here you are trying to understand or conceive the akasha tatvam. We use the word akasha loosely. When I say aksasha here, it is something I do not see, I do not touch, I do not smell, I do not taste, and even though it is not a perceptible yet I am able to talk about akasha.

When

I use the word empty space; what does it mean?

We

probably have never thought of the meaning of the word space. And if you think of space, you will know, it is something, which is not perceptible or tangible and which is all pervading, which is only one:

How

many spaces are there? There is only one indivisible space and it looks as though space means emptiness. But remember, science has proved space is not emptiness or void, but it is a positive substance. So by meditating upon akasha, as described in Taittiriya Upanishad, one sees Brahman. This meditation is known as akasha dhyanam.

**Akasha dhyanam is**

**prescribed to make the intellect extremely subtle to understand Brahman, which is subtler than even akasha.** Similarly, the Brahman description creates an impression, that it is a void or nothing. Sri Krishna says it is a positive entity.

**(Can you see; No. Can you hear; No. Can you touch; No. Can you taste; No. Where is it? It is everywhere).** So, then it appears that it is void. It is positive bhava padarthaha and therefore we have to make the mind subtler and subtler; ultimately grasping this is our aim. Let it take months, let it take years; let it take janmas; ultimately, knowing this Brahman, Gneyam or unconceivable Brahman is our ultimate goal. And, therefore, Sri Krishna struggles to describe and you should also struggle to understand. I will also struggle to explain.

## Shloka # 13.18:

**That is the Light even of the lights; It is spoken of as beyond darkness. It is Knowledge, the Knowable, and the Known. It exists specially [A variant reading is dhisthitam.-Tr.] in the hearts of all.**

So here Sri Krishna says that Satrupam Brahma; that Brahman which is in the form of pure Existence; formless Existence; is the same as the Atma, which is the formless Consciousness principle. Sadrupam Brahma is the same as chidrupah Atma. And when I use the word consciousness you have to remember all those points: **Consciousness is not a product, part or property of the body; Consciousness is an independent entity which pervades and enlivens the body; Consciousness is not limited by the boundaries of the body; Consciousness survives even after the fall of the body; the surviving Consciousness is not accessible to us, not because it is absent, but because there is no medium for its manifestation. And that consciousness is Existence- Brahma and Sri Krishna describe the Consciousness by a special word used in the Upanishad, jyotisham mapi jyoti.** Sri Krishna borrows Upanishadic expressions throughout, because whenever the topic of Brahman comes, one has to turn to the Upanishads. Everybody has to come to that.

What is the meaning of this word? Jyotisham jyoti means the light of all lights, just like in Kenopanishad, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, similarly, light of all lights.

In Vedanta, the word light is used in a technical sense, I have told you before, I would like to remind you in Vedanta light means that in whose presence things are known or recognized. Light is defined as that in whose presence things are known and from that standpoint, all the luminaries in the



sky such as Surya, Chandra, Nakshatrani and vidhyut are called light. It means the sun, moon, the stars, as well as the lightning; all of them are called lights because in their presence we are able to know things. During the daytime, because of the sunlight alone, I am able to know what is in front of me. In the night, I recognize things with moonlight. And if it is amavasya night, then I have to use a fire to know things. All of them are called lights because in their presence things are known. If the electric current goes off now, you are all there, but I cannot know you.

Now

extending this principle, the Upanishad says that every sense organ can also

be called light. **Every sense organ also**

**can be called light; because in the presence of sense organs, things are known;**

**in their absence, things are not known. A blind man cannot see anything even if**

**the sun, moon, and electricity are present.**

Similarly,

the ears are called light, because in the presence of the ears, the sound is known,

in its absence, sound is not known. Similarly, nose is a light; in the presence

of the nose, smells are known; in their absence they are not known. Thus every pramanam,

every instrument of knowledge is a light. **Even**

**logic is a form of light, because through reasoning, I come to know things.**

And

then the Upanishad says there

is a special chapter, section in Brihadaranyam dealing with this subject matter. It

is called svayam jyoti

brahmanam. The Upanishad says even

words can be called light.

And suppose, there is a visitor in your house, and when he enters the power goes off; And he does not know where is what, in your house, and you are worried and then you give a verbal light; turn to the right, turn to the left, etc. and now he comes to know of the things in front of him; he is not using the flash light, nor electric light, not any other light, he cannot even use his eyes because of the pitch darkness, and he can be guided by vacha agnina. **Brihadaranya says: words are lights.**

And

coming from this direction, the Upanishad says the **ultimate light is nothing but the consciousness principle, because in the presence of consciousness alone, you can know everything and if**

**consciousness is not there, an inert thing cannot know anything. And therefore**

**the ultimate light in whose presence you can know everything, in whose absence**

**you do not know anything, that light is consciousness.**

And if that light of consciousness is not there, then even the sun, the moon, etc. become useless, even if the sense organs are there, they are useless, even a wonderful brain cannot answer. So therefore the greatest brain,

the sense organs, the sun, moon, all the lights become meaningful, only when the

consciousness principle is there, and therefore consciousness is called the

light of all lights, the light in whose presence alone, the other lights become

meaningful. And therefore Sri Krishna says jyotishamapi tajjyoti. It is the

light of all lights.

Furthermore Sri Krishna says, param tamasah uchyate.

And this light is a unique light, the light of consciousness, with which you can illumine or know even darkness. This is a very interesting thing you have to know. If you take local light, that light can illumine everything. So the light can illumine the wall, all your bodies, your head, this mike, the book, the letter; the light can illumine everything, but that light cannot illumine one thing; it cannot illumine darkness. If you take a flashlight to see darkness, what happens?

Citing a story, Swami Chinmayananda says: some people went and told Surya Bhagavan it seems that there is a very beautiful girl, if you want to marry; and that girl's name is Miss Darkness or Miss Night, because in Sanskrit night is feminine gender and known as nisha; ratri, etc. We even have a prayer in Veda, called ratri suktham. A suktham is a prayer dedicated to ratri.

So, if you want, you can marry her. Surya Bhagavan wanted to go and see Miss Night. And somebody said, she is on the other part of the earth. And therefore Sun started travelling to reach the other side; Surya Bhagavan, started going round; and he is still continuing this journey. He wants to meet Miss Night. That is how Sunrise and sunset started. So sunlight however powerful it might be, it cannot illumine darkness; whereas the consciousness is the only unique light, which is capable of illumining, making

you know, what is darkness.

In the night, in darkness, how do you see? You are not seeing the darkness through your eyes. Eyes can never see darkness because eyes stop functioning when there is no light; if so, how can that I ever illumine darkness, but still we are able to know and experience darkness. So how do we gain the knowledge of darkness? We gain this knowledge by a unique method. The consciousness alone illumines darkness when all other lights are opposed to darkness, because when light is there, darkness will go away,

Consciousness is the unique light, which can co-exist with darkness.

And therefore it is said to be tamasa paramuchyate. The meaning of word Param is unopposed to. Unopposed to and therefore only absolute, is the light of consciousness.

This sad chit Brahman alone is in the form of everything. Sarvam Brahma mayam jagat. This formless existence, consciousness alone appears as this formed universe. **A formless existence consciousness alone appears as the formed universe.** You may ask, how is it possible? Again you have to go back to science alone. Just as formless energy gets converted into formed and tangible matter. Energy is intangible and when energy is converted into matter, it becomes tangible. And when matter is converted to energy, again it becomes intangible. **So if intangible energy can appear as tangible matter, Vedanta says, the non-tangible Brahman is the ultimate cause of this universe and that alone appears as the tangible universe.** It is jagat

karanam. It is in the form of everything. And therefore Gyanam, Gneyam, that Brahman alone is Gyanam, Gyanam means the means of knowledge. So that through which we come to know that means of knowledge is also Brahman and Gneyam, the object that you know is also Brahman. **Thus, the subject is Brahman, the object is Brahman; the instrument is Brahman, sarvam Brahma mayam jagat.**

So Gyannam, Gneyam, and Gyana gamyam. And through this knowledge, BrahmaGyanam, the destination that you want to reach that destination is also Brahman. **The knower is Brahman, the knowing instrument is Brahman, the known object is Brahman, and the destination you want to reach ultimately is also Brahman.** In short, sarvam Brahma mayam jagat.

And where should you discover that Brahman. Even though Brahman is everywhere, you have to discover that Brahman only in a particular place. Like the electricity is there all over the cable. It runs, it passes through, but if you want to find out whether there is power or not, you only need to look at the fan, electricity is not in the fan alone; is all over the cable, but to recognize it, you look at the fan; or you look at the light; and suppose there is neither the fan nor the light, where there is a plug point, with a tester it can be tested. And once I test electricity in the plug point, I know that electricity is not only there, but it is also throughout.

In

the same way, sat chit atma  
Brahman is everywhere but if you want to recognize it, you  
require a plug  
point; that plug point (power outlet) is  
each one of us. **Even though**  
**consciousness is everywhere, you recognize it only in your**  
**mind.** I recognize consciousness in my mind, you  
recognize consciousness in your mind; but, I cannot recognize  
consciousness in  
you, That you are conscious people, I  
cannot see, because when I see a body and a dead body, I do  
not see the consciousness  
in you. I see only the material body I do not see  
Consciousness. When you nod  
your head, I assume that you are conscious and that you  
are aware of the words, and somehow you are managing to  
understand and  
you are nodding the head out of understanding and not of  
dozing, because in  
dozing also, the head shakes. Anyhow, I have to be optimistic;  
that you are not  
sleeping.

Remember

I have no way of recognizing the consciousness in your body;  
That is why,  
scientists are struggling to recognize the consciousness in  
the brains of  
people; how consciousness is happening, any amount of brain  
research, they are  
not able to understand, because it is not visible. Therefore,  
**how do I understand consciousness? Only in**  
**one way; I am a conscious being; for that I hope you won't ask**  
**for proof.**

That I am conscious being is self-evident fact. And I am  
consciousness in my own mind, in what way? Being conscious of

all the thoughts that arise in my mind, I am Consciousness; of the words that are coming from outside, which form thoughts in my mind, I am conscious; whether the words I understand or not, I am conscious.

Because

you say that you understand; you also say that I do not understand. And when

all these thoughts are resolved, and the mind goes blank, that blankness of

mind also I am conscious of. What is the proof; I am using the word blank.

What I have not experienced, I cannot talk about. The very fact that I am talking about mental blankness or mental blackout, I am able to talk, because I am Conscious of it.

**And that consciousness is the vritti bhava abhava sakshi; the witness of the presence or the absence of thought in the mind** is the consciousness and it is this Consciousness, which is in everyone's mind and it, is this consciousness, which is in between the living beings also. Thus we have to go a long way to appreciate it.

Therefore

Sri Krishna says sarvasya hrdis

visthitam. visthitam means

available, literally it means present, present being accessible, available, and

recognizable. And Arjuna this is Gneyam Brahma. So with this, the fourth topic

is also over.

And incidentally one point you should remember is: the topic of kshetraGneyaha which we discussed in the beginning and the topic of Gneyam which we have just completed, both of them, are ultimately one and the same principle alone. KshetraGneyaha is Gneyam Brahma, jivatma the kshetraGneyaha,

is the paramatma the Gneyam Brahma. Then the question is if both of them are one and the same; why do you use two words and confuse us. Normally itself it is difficult to understand; when why you confuse by using different expressions also. We say that this is not new to Vedanta and even in our daily transactions we have got different words to indicate one and the same substance. In fact, in Vishnu sahasranama, thousand names are used to reveal one Vishnu. And if you look at a home, in it, the same member of family is addressed by different names by different people, one calls her mother, another calls sister, another calls wife, another calls granny; so one and same substance can have different names, when the point of reference is different.

From the reference point, from the standpoint of the child, the man is father. From the standpoint of the wife, the very same man is the husband. Not that the stomach is father, the head is the husband. The whole person is the father and the whole person is the husband, the whole person is the brother; so when the angle differs, the nama differs; suppose one person says this is Adyar. Another person says that this is Tamil Nadu. Another person says that this is India. Another person says this is Asia. Who is correct? All are correct. When you are talking from the standpoint of local area of Tamilnadu, you call it Adayar. In the context of various States of India, you call it Tamil Nadu. When you are talking from the standpoint of different countries, you call it India. When the topic is in the context of continents, you call it Asia. When the topic is planet, you call it Earth. When the topic is solar system, this is the solar system. When it is galaxy, our galaxy is what, milky way. Same way, even though consciousness is all pervading, when you look at consciousness from the standpoint of **the individual, consciousness obtaining in the body, the individual, we call it kshetragnya**, the jivatma, from microcosmic standpoint, **whereas the very same consciousness as the all pervading principle, macrocosm, we call it paramatma or Gneyam Brahma**. Thus, kshetragnyam is



Gneyam Brahma alone.

### **Shloka # 13.19:**

**Thus has been spoken of in brief the field as  
also Knowledge and the Knowable. By understanding this My  
devotee becomes  
qualified for My state.**

In

this shloka Sri Krishna is consolidating all his teachings of the six topics.

He says, I have discussed four topics and two more are remaining. This kind of

summary is a method of teaching known as Simhavalokanam Nyaya.

The Lion does like that, it seems. Just goes forward and makes sure that there is no challenger at all; I am the king of the forest; and everybody has to accept me; and having gone forward it looks around as having made sure that the portion covered, I have proved myself; then it goes forward. Similarly, the teacher has to give an opportunity to the student to think what has been covered and then go forward. And therefore Sri Krishna here says; O Arjuna, I have discussed four topics; They are:

(1)

Kshetram and (2) you

have to supply Kshetragnya, which

is not stated in shloka, but which goes together; and (3)

Gyanam, is the third

topic and (4) Gneyam, the fourth topic. Choktam means, I have taught you briefly.

If

you want to know more details go to the Upanishads that deal with this subject matter

alone. And therefore, this is just a preview of the topic.

Thus,

Sri Krishna says, every seeker who is my devotee will certainly know this and

one of the conditions is he should be my bhaktha from which Sri Krishna

indicates Bhakthi is an important qualification for gaining self -knowledge. So

a Vedantic student

should be necessarily a devotee. Vedanta

teacher should also be a religious person and that is why in all our

scriptures, philosophy, religion and theology are mixed together. Whereas in

other systems; especially western, philosophy and theology are separated. But

in Vedanta, we insist, if you want the philosophical knowledge, you should

start with devotion. The discussion may be of pure formless truth; even though

the discussion is the ultimate truth, we keep the photo of the Lord and start with

the Sahanabhavathu prayer and also end with prayer, because without devotion,

Gyanam does not take place. There is no secular Vedanta. Even if somehow knowledge takes place for a

non-devotee, it remains an academic knowledge; he will just be an expert in the

Upanishads, but there

will be no transformation in his personality.

And,

therefore, Sri Krishna insists that you should be necessarily a devotee. In

fact, at the end of the 18th chapter, Sri Krishna

**even gives a warning to every Gita teacher not to teach Gita to a person who is a non-religious person.**

Therefore Sri Krishna here says: mat bhaktha, means he must be My devotee, which further means Ishwara bhaktha. Such a devotee will necessarily gain the knowledge even if he feels that it is too subtle for understanding, as his devotion will refine his intellect. The second time he listens; he will understand better.

That is why Vedanta has to be listened to, again and again. First time listening certain aspects you will understand; next time some other will be cleared, and so on.

A special Brahma sutra is dedicated for this subject. So, keep on listening.

What is the benefit he will get? Sri Krishna says, he will also attain the same nature as mine. Just as I am ever free, he will also discover the eternal freedom, which is his very nature. So mat bhava means Brahma bhava, Ishvara bhava, which means poornatvam. Previously he considered himself to be a finite individual, now he does not have that problem. He knows I am the all-pervading Brahman. There is no sense of isolation. There is no sense of rejection. These emotions increase as we grow older and older because when we are younger, we can forget this samsara by diversion. Go to beach, or go to a movie, or move with friends you can be busy and forget samsara, but as we grow old, we have no escapist route, lying on the bed without able to get up; therefore no fear of that. How wonderful it is. I never feel lonely. I never feel rejected, because all are existing in Me. This purnatvam is the benefit of this knowledge. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, he will become qualified.

**Shloka 13.20:**

**Know both Nature and also the individual soul**

**[Prakrti is sometimes translated as matter, and purusa as spirit.-Tr.] to be**

**verily without beginning; know the modifications as also the alities(reality) as born of Nature.**

In 19th verse, Sri Krishna has consolidated and concluded four topics. He now wants to discuss the last two topics of purusha and prakrti. And these two, he wants to discuss them together, because they are closely interconnected principles, just as Kshetram and Kshetragnya are closely interconnected. Shlokas 20-24 deal with purusha and prakrti. And this purusha and prakrti are very much similar to Kshetram and Kshetragnya. We saw Kshetram represents the matter principle and kshetragnya represents the consciousness principle. Vedanta takes consciousness as an independent principle, because as we have seen, Vedanta does not look upon consciousness as part or product of matter; therefore it is enumerated as a separate entity. Remember the example, even though I see one fan functioning, in my understanding there are two principles, one is the visible fan and the invisible electricity, which is a separate principle, which continues even when the fan stops. Similarly, when I look at you, it is not one principle but a mixture of two; the visible-matter-principle and the invisible consciousness principle; And in the seventh chapter, Sri Krishna used the word para prakrti and apara prakrti, para prakrti being consciousness and apara prakrti being matter. Now the same ideas are discussed again in the name of purusha and prakrti; purusha means chaitanya tatvam, the independent-consciousness-principle and prakrti means the matter-principle.

The  
fundamental basic invisible matter can even be compared to energy. Energy is the  
invisible version of matter. And about these two topics Sri Krishna is going to  
talk details of which we will see in the next class.

**Take away:**

Brahman:

(Can you see; No. Can you hear; No. Can you touch; No. Can you taste; No. Where is it? It is everywhere).

So,

then it appears that it is void. It is positive bhava padarthaha and therefore

we have to make the mind subtler and subtler; ultimately grasping this is our

aim. Let it take months, let it take years; let it take janmas; ultimately, knowing

this Brahman, Gneyam or

unconceivable Brahman is our ultimate goal.

Nirgunam Brahma is the

very existence principle, which is everywhere, and not only that, it is the only

one.

Akasha

dhyanam is prescribed to make the intellect extremely subtle to understand

Brahman, which is subtler than even akasha.

Ultimate

light is nothing but the consciousness principle, because in the presence of

consciousness alone, you can know everything and if consciousness is not there,

an inert thing cannot know anything. And therefore the ultimate light in whose

presence you can know everything, in whose absence you do not know anything,

that light is consciousness.

And,

that consciousness is the vritti bhava abhava sakshi; the witness of the presence or the absence

of thought in the mind.

So

if intangible energy can appear as tangible matter, Vedanta says, the non-tangible Brahman is the ultimate cause of this universe and that alone appears as the tangible universe.

Even

though consciousness is everywhere, you recognize it only in your mind.

Sri

Krishna even gives a warning to every Gita teacher not to teach Gita to a person who is a non-religious person or one without bhakti.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Baghawad Gita, Class 173: Chapter 13, Verses 15 to 17**

**Note:** In this chapter the numbering of shlokas can be different depending upon Gita book you are reading. I am using Swamiji's numbering.

**Shloka # 15:**

**Shining through the functions of all the organs,  
(yet) devoid of all the organs; unattached, and verily the**

**supporter of all;  
without ality, and the perceiver of alities;**

Arjuna

in this 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter had asked Sri Krishna for clarification on the six technical terms used; they were: Kshetram, Kshetragna, Gyanam, Gneyam, Prakrti and Purushah. Sri Krishna is explaining them one by one. He has explained three of them beginning with Kshetram; now he is explaining the meaning of the fourth topic that is known as Gneyam. Gneyam means Param Brahman. Gneyam is used to convey the meaning that it is the ultimate truth knowing which one gets liberated. Such a Brahman is being explained in shlokas 15-19. Sri Krishna is revealing Brahman as pure existence. Existence and Consciousness are two words that have very different meanings. According to Vedanta, Existence is a unique thing and everything that describes Consciousness extends to Existence as well. Consciousness is not a part, product, or property of matter.

Consciousness is an independent entity, which pervades and enlivens matter. Consciousness goes beyond the dimensions of matter or the body. Then, I said, consciousness survives even when the body is destroyed. And fifthly and finally I said that the surviving consciousness is not recognizable, not because it is not there, but because there is no body-medium for manifesting it. Just as if you do not see light in this point, not because light is absent here; but it is because there is no manifesting medium. The moment I keep the hand here, the light which was not manifest before, becomes

manifest through the hand. Therefore hand is not producer of light, but hand is the medium, which manifests the light. Similarly, the surviving consciousness cannot be recognized because the manifesting medium is not there.

All

these five principles regarding the consciousness must be extended to the existence

principle also. Existence is with capital E, because according to Vedanta, existence

is the same as consciousness. And therefore all the five principles applicable

to consciousness will have to extend to existence as well.

What are the five

principles? If we enumerate the principles, assimilation will take lot of time.

The

five principles are:

1. Existence is not part, product or property of body or an object.
2. Existence is an independent entity. It is the ultimate substance that pervades the body, and makes the body existent. Existence pervades the body and makes the body existent.
3. This existence extends beyond my body and is not limited by boundary of body. This existence, which pervades the body, extends beyond the periphery or the dimensions of the body; just as the light that falls on my body is not on my body alone, the light extends beyond my body; similarly, existence is not limited by the boundaries of the body.
4. This existence survives even after death of body. Just as the light that falls on the body will survive even if remove my hand. That is why in space travel, when they go beyond our atmosphere, you will have eternal darkness. There is no day night division at all. We are



able to have day upon the earth because the earth has an atmosphere, which is capable of reflecting the sunlight; that is why we see the blue canopy. Blue canopy is nothing but sunlight's blue-color scattered by dust particle. It is dust particle, scattering the blue color of the sunlight. You go beyond the atmosphere where the dust particle is not there to reflect, what you will experience is eternal darkness. Even when you see the Sun, between the Sun and you, in space travel, there is no nothing, no atmosphere, only darkness. So Vedanta says the existence survives even after the fall of the body.

5. Surviving existence is not recognizable, as a manifesting media is not there.

That

existence consciousness is the Brahman and that Brahman, O Arjuna are you. Tat Tvam Asi.

So

you have to travel a lot. First you have to conceive a pure existence. Then appreciate it as pure consciousness. Then you should claim that the pure existence consciousness is I, myself. This is tat tvam asi. It is not an easy topic. And therefore Sri Krishna adopts a method, which is used in Vedanta. What is the method? Say, I want to show you or teach you what is the light. But I am not able to show you the pure light, because light without medium cannot be demonstrated. So, what should I do? I put my hand here. What do I want to teach? Not about hand but about light.

Therefore

I introduce my hand and ask what do you see? You will say only hand. Then I have to tell you that that it is not the hand alone, there is something other than the hand, and because of that alone you are able to see the hand, etc; if I say so for half an hour, you will say that there are two things; hand and the pervading light. There, afterwards, I have to tell you, please focus your attention on the light and forget the hand; So I introduce the hand, through the hand introduce the light, and thereafter quietly withdraw the hand and then I tell you that, in that place, where the hand was, there continues the formless light principle and what is that formless light principle; it is that because of which the hand is recognized. **So introduce the hand, introduce the light; remove the hand and reveal the pure light.**

**This method of teaching is adhyaropa-apavada nyaya.** Introducing the hand is called adhyaropa and after revealing the light, removal of the hand is called apavada. In fact, this we do all the time. Suppose I ask you, please get me some water, and then you went and brought me a cup of water; and I get angry with you as guru; I have a privilege to get angry. Therefore I tell: What did I ask? Water; I never asked you to bring the cup. Why did you bring the cup? Then what will the Shishya think? I thought Guru is sane; but he seems to have some problem. How can I

bring water alone;  
water requires a container to communicate/transfer. And  
therefore, for the sake  
of communication/transaction/transference, we keep the  
container; so that  
shishya brings water with the container, I also take the water  
with the  
container, then when I drink, what do I do? The shishya knows,  
the guru knows, the cup is  
only used for transferring the water; I take the water part  
and leave the  
container. Similarly, pure existence can never be understood.  
So you introduce  
an object and appreciate the object plus existence and having  
gathered the  
knowledge of existence; what do you do, you remove the  
container and container  
is the object, nama rupa. Mike IS;  
Minus mike is, IS. Table IS. Minus table is what: IS.  
Therefore, understand  
existence with the world, adhyaropa; and then  
retaining the existence, remove/dismiss the world, it is  
called apavadha. And this  
method Sri Krishna is using here. This existence is all the  
time appreciated by  
you through all the sense organs. The existence is manifest  
and is recognized  
through every sensory operation. Just as light is recognized,  
when I see the  
clip.

At the same time, the existence or Brahman is free from all  
the sense organs or objects. It means that sense organs are  
not the intrinsic nature of Brahman. Light is Illuminating the  
hand; and because of the hand, light is visible to us. But you  
know that the hand is not an intrinsic part of the light.  
Light is not the intrinsic part of the hand as well. If hand

were intrinsic part of light, what will happen? Wherever light is there, there will be hand.

Thus

you appreciate existence through the mike, but mike is not intrinsic part of Brahman.

**Thus you appreciate existence through the world but the world itself is not an intrinsic part of Brahman. Therefore Brahman is world-free and free from all the sense organs.**

This existence Brahman accommodates and supports everything. It is sarvadharmam. How do you know that; because of that alone, everything is existent. Every object enjoys existence only because of Brahman, just as gold alone lends existence to all ornaments. Brahman alone is sarvadharmam.

Brahman is free from all the objects of the World; that means those objects are not innate part of Brahman. Asaktam means like akasha. Akasha supports everything but nothing is an intrinsic part of it. So everytime you take water with the glass, it is adhyaropa, and when you leave the glass after drinking the water, it is apavada.

Then Gunabhoktr means it is associated with all the properties; how do you know; because you say, every property IS. That IS represents association. Green color IS. ISness is associated with the property.

Now, the properties are not the intrinsic nature of Brahman. So the nearest example you can have is the screen and the movie. All the movie objects are associated with the screen, at the same time, screen is free from all those movie objects. If it is the movie Towering Inferno; the fire in the movie is associated with the screen, but the screen is not affected by the fire; that is why at the end of the movie, screen is still present; as far as screen is concerned, there is no fire; and suppose you see the movie Titanic; the ship sinking scene is

throughout the movie, water you have seen on the screen; and at the end of every show, but you still have a dry screen. No, the wettest movie will not make the screen wet; the dry screen continues to be driest, even when you have water. Similarly, Brahman accommodates all, but from Brahman's standpoint, they are not there, intrinsically. So nirgunam. That Brahman is said to be nirgunam

### **Shloka # 16:**

**Existing outside and inside all beings; moving as well as non-moving, It is incomprehensible due to subtleness. So also, It is far away, and yet near.**

So the existence consciousness Brahman is not only in the Body, but it is outside it as well. It is both within and without. Remember the example, light is upon the hand also, light is beyond the hand as well. Then the question will come; how come I see the light only on the hand; what answer will you say. That is because of reflecting medium; upon the hand, light is manifest light; in Sanskrit, it is vyaktha prakasha, beyond the hand, the light exists, but in what form; in unmanifest form; In Sanskrit, Avyaktha prakasha. Wherever people are sitting, it is vyaktha prakasha. In this fan in vyatha prakasham, in that fan, vyaktha prakasham, in between the two fans, it is avyaktha prakasha. I am talking about the light, the prakasha is, but in what form; unmanifest, but if you put any object in between it will become vyaktham.

Similarly, the Upanishad says Consciousness is in this body; consciousness is in the other body. Between the two bodies too, consciousness IS. Similarly existence is here, there and in between as well. In fact, even when you say, nothing is; Nothing .... IS; there also you are talking about Is. You can never think of the absence of existence anywhere. Even when you talk about total blankness, what will you say, there is blankness; there also IS.

And because this concept is very subtle, instead of using the word sat, chit, etc. we use the word Rama, Krishna, Narayana etc. These we can conceive and appreciate because there is form. We do not question ourselves, if Narayana is with shanka, chakra, etc.

If Narayana has to be both inside and outside, he has to be formless existence alone. You can never think of an all-Pervading Narayana, unless you can think of pure existence. And, therefore, bahirantasca bhutanam. Bhutani means all living beings.

And  
acaram carameva ca. It is  
moving and it is non-moving. So it is moving and it is non-moving. How to  
understand this? If it is moving, it cannot be nonmoving.

Both  
are diagonally opposite. How do you say it is both? The answer is: It is really  
non-moving; but it is seemingly moving when the medium moves and it is the  
medium, which manifests. Let us take the example itself. The all-pervading  
light does not move at all. Light is all over the hall. It does not move. It  
cannot move as well. But what happens? When I keep the hand here, you are able  
to see the light here and imagine I am moving the hand; the visible light has come  
to this point now. Again I move to another place, the visible light has moved  
to that point. As the medium, the reflecting medium moves, it appears as though  
the light is also moving. This is an aberration; there is a seeming feeling of  
movement, exactly like when we are coming to Madras, after a

vacation by train;  
what do you say: Madras has come. You are travelling by train;  
You have crossed  
Bassein Bridge and when the Madras station comes, you jump to  
the platform and  
say at last Madras has come. Does Madras come and go. It does  
not come. The  
arrival of the train, the movement of the train is falsely  
transferred to the  
place Madras. The movement of the earth is transferred to the  
Sun. Even in the  
newspaper you see, Sunrise 6.15, sunset 6.45, etc. You know  
the Sun never rises  
or sets. It is stationary.

What  
is happening? The attribute of one thing is transferred to the  
other. Similarly  
what do we do; the movement of the hand is falsely transferred  
to the light and  
therefore the light appears to be moving. You would have seen  
the Lighthouse  
from the beach. I always thought that there are three lights;  
powerful lights  
are kept; spot light or something; thus we see three beams  
moving or rotating.  
I thought that there are 3 lights that are moving. But, I read  
in a book, and  
it says: three lights are not there; there is only light. And  
not only that,  
that one light too, does not move. So there is one non-moving  
light; but what  
is my experience. Ekam  
is becoming anekam; achalam is  
becoming chalam. So I read later that there is only one  
motionless powerful  
light in the middle and there is a device around the light;

and that device has  
three holes; and that device is moving.

And therefore what do we do; the motion and the number belonging to the device we falsely transfer to the light. All these topics are very elaborately discussed in Vedanta. This is called dharma adhyasa. Property of one transferred to other. When we feel gloomy, we say today was a gloomy day. Day is the same. Something is bad with me, so I say the day is gloomy. Black day, etc. Day is neither black, nor white nor gloomy. Whatever I feel, I transfer and ascribe it to the day. Similarly the Upanishads say that the body travels; the mind travels, the jivarsis travel; but the consciousness, the Existence does not travel. But it seems to travel along with the medium. Therefore acharam means motionless and charam means seemingly moving, because of the transference of the property.

And  
durastham chantike ca tat; second  
line, last portion. That Brahman is far away. Durastham means far away. Then we will decide; we  
have to start because it is far away and that too Vaikuntha, so much distance  
is there; And not only they say it is far away, they say, if you take two steps  
forward, Bhagavan will take  
four steps towards you. All these they tell when they talk about Bhakthi and we  
also enjoy it. Five feet we take and Karunamurthy takes ten feet and tears roll down  
our eyes on the compassion of the Lord, etc. It is all OK, as long as, you do  
not use your Buddhi. If Bhagavan  
has to come near me by travelling, that Bhagavan cannot be all pervading. Daily we  
would be saying also Ananthaya



Nama, Ananthaya Nama, etc. In one place, one direction, we say that Bhagavan is all pervading; and at the same time, we thoughtlessly say that Bhagavan will take 10 steps when you take two steps towards him.

Therefore durastham, we have a wrong concept that Bhagavan is far away and therefore Sri Krishna says that antike ca tat. When you say Bhagavan is far away. how should you understand it? Whenever anyone says that Bhagavan is in Vaikuntha, what should you say is, Bhagavan is in vaikuntha also. Bhagavan is in Kailasa also. That also means what: he is in vaikuntha also, kailasam also, bhulokha also, Adayar also, Vidya Mandir also, the lecture hall also; and he is also in the mat in which I am sitting; which means that He is in your heart also. So durastham cantike ca tat. Brahman is far and near; in short Brahman is everywhere.

Shankaracharya gives another interpretation. For a wise person, Brahman is nearest, because he knows that Brahman is not away from me. For an ignorant person, Brahman is far away; because he continues his search; going on and on and on. So for an ignorant person, it is far away. For a wise person, Brahman is nearest, nearest is not the word; He is one with me.

Then comes the final question. If Brahman is everywhere, how come I do not recognize that Brahman?

Sri Krishna answers: Sukshmatvat; Even though Brahman is everywhere it is of the subtlest nature, which means that it is free from attributes; attributes alone help me recognize things. When an object produces a sound, I can recognize through the ears; if the object has got a touch, I can recognize through the skin. If it has got form or color, I can

recognize through the eyes. Attribute alone helps me recognize.

And Brahman is sukshmam; meaning one without attributes; and therefore, avijneyam, extremely difficult to comprehend. Lesser the attributes, more incomprehensible a thing becomes; More the attributes; the easier to understand. And that is why when you take the pancha bhutani; akasha, vayu, agni, jalam, prithvi, you will find that prithivi, the earth is the grossest thing you can recognize, because it can be recognized through shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha. All the five are there; When you come to water, it has got only four attributes; shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa. Water does not have smell.

So, water is Smell-less. Only four attributes; therefore it can be recognized only through four sense organs. Agni has three attributes: shabda, sparsha, rupa. Agni does not have taste. If you have doubt, taste it. You do not have to taste Agni; taste over heated coffee. You cannot taste anything for an hour later. Agni has got three elements and three attributes can be recognized through the sense organs.

Vayu has become still subtler. It has got only shabda and sparsha. That is sound and touch; no form. If you want to teach what is air to a child, you will have a tough time.

And when you come to akasha, it does not have rupa, rasa, gandha, all these things; akasha is supposed to have only shabda, means the echoing capacity. And that is why akasha has only one property and therefore it is very difficult understand.

Even

now science does not know what is space. They are coming up with various theories, sometimes they had the theory of ether; sometimes that it is emptiness,

Now

they say it is a positive thing; particle just comes out of space that means it is not an empty space. Space is a positive matter. Einstein says: space is a curved elastic matter. We are not able to conceive of it at all. Because the lesser the properties, the subtler the thing, and we say Brahman is subtler than even akasha.

Therefore

comprehending Brahman is going to be the toughest job. And, therefore, Sri Krishna says, if you do not understand, it is not your mistake; it is the mistake of Brahman. Why should Brahman come like that? Can't He have come and jump in front of us. The problem is with Brahman.! Sukshmatvat tat avijneyam.

It

is difficult to comprehend. This is Gneyam.

**Shloka # 17:**

**And the Knowable, though undivided, appears to be existing as divided in all beings, and It is the sustainer of all beings as also the devourer and originator.**

So that Brahman is indivisible, like space which cannot be divided; that Brahman, the pure existence-consciousness, is

vibhaktam; na  
vibhaktam; vibhaktam means division, it is indivisible.  
Therefore he says. avibhaktam,  
it is undivided and at the same time, bhutesu vibhaktham iva  
sthitham. It is  
seemingly divided. It is really undivided but it is seemingly  
divided, Why is  
it seemingly divided; Consciousness is all pervading, but we  
experience  
consciousness only where the body-medium is available. So  
therefore, 'here' consciousness  
can be recognized, in another living being consciousness can  
be recognized, but  
in between them the consciousness is not recognizable.  
Therefore what will be  
our conclusion; it will be, there is one consciousness here  
and there is  
another consciousness there; And therefore how many  
consciousness's are there;  
So many;

Therefore there is a seeming division, but the fact is  
consciousness is in between as well, in an unrecognizable  
form, but wherever body is, it is recognized. You can see the  
light; here one, there one, but in between there is no light.  
We therefore might commit a mistake that the light is also  
two. But what is the real understanding?

Divisions belong to the fingers but the division does not  
belong  
to the light. Here there is visible light; between the  
fingers, there is  
invisible light. Therefore, light is continuously there; in  
pockets visible; in  
pockets not visible.

And therefore, he says, it is seemingly divided. Again  
remember

the lighthouse example. There is only one light; but it seems to be three lights.

And such a Brahman is Jagat Srishti laya karanam. Out of that pure Brahman alone, all names and forms of the universe have originated and they exist and they dissolve into that Brahman. Out of that Brahman alone all the nama rupa has come.

And  
that Brahman is Jagat Srishti Sthiti Laya Karanam. Everything dissolves into  
that Brahman. Brahman is sthiti karanam.

### **Take away:**

So introduce the hand, introduce the light; remove the hand and reveal the pure light. This method of teaching is adhyaropa-apavada **nyaya**.

Thus  
you appreciate existence through the world but the world itself is not an  
intrinsic part of Brahman. Therefore Brahman is world-free and free from all  
the sense organs.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Baghawad Gita, Class 172:**

# Chapter 13, Verses 13 to 15

**Note:** In this chapter the numbering of shlokas can be different depending upon Gita book you are reading. I am using Swamiji's numbering.

## **Shloka # 13:**

**I shall speak of that which is to be known, by realizing which one attains Immortality. The supreme Brahman is without any beginning. That is called neither being nor non-being.**

From shloka # 13 onwards Sri Krishna is discussing the fourth topic of Gneyam.

Gneyam

means that which is to be known by everyone; the ultimate truth, without this knowledge one can't obtain immortality. So, every human being must have this knowledge that is also known as Param Brahman. And every human being wants to conquer mortality, and therefore every human being should necessarily gain this knowledge. This Param Brahman is discussed in all Upanishads and that knowledge is called Brahma Vidya. Now Sri Krishna wants to give us the essence of Upanishads in shlokas # 13-19; it is the Upanishad Sara or Brahma vidya.

## **Shloka # 14:**

**That (Knowable), which has hands and feet everywhere, which has eyes, heads and mouths everywhere, which**

has ears

everywhere, exists in creatures by pervading them all.

In

Upanishads, Brahman is revealed as ultimate substance out of which Universe is made of.

It

is the ultimate content of universe. Science is also trying to find this substance. Once they said 100 elements made up the universe; then they tried to find out content of elements and found molecules; digging further they found molecules were made of invisible atoms in motion. While atoms are invisible, together, they create this tangible universe. Digging down further they found even atoms were made of sub-atomic particles.

Then the particles also, they tried to divide further, and they said energy, the intangible energy is the ultimate stuff of the universe. Thus they are going deeper and deeper, and their aim is what, to find out, what is the basic, ultimate substance. And the interesting thing that we see is **as you go deeper and deeper, the visible becomes the invisible. The tangible becomes the intangible. The concrete becomes the abstract. Therefore we come to know that the ultimate substance must be intangible, formless and abstract substance.** And what is that final abstract substance, the scientists have not yet arrived at; they are still in the process of enquiry.

Vedanta has analyzed the same subject matter and Vedanta has arrived at the ultimate substance and Vedanta calls it Brahman. Brahman is the basic substance of this creation, and the being the ultimate substance, it is going to be abstract, it is going to be intangible; it is going to be invisible; it

is ashabdam, asparsham, arupam, arasam and avyayam. And, therefore, understanding that Brahman is going to be a relatively tougher prospect. So we are going to analyze a substance, which is not available for seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and therefore this portion are going to be abstract. Therefore, it looks like a jumble of words because we try to concretely conceive of something, but we are not discussing a concrete and tangible thing. But still if you go on dwelling upon this teaching, slowly, the words will begin to make sense but it requires lot of intellectual acclimatization.

So to understand Brahman, it requires certain Acclimatization, therefore, for new students, this topic will look like a bunch of words, but do not be disappointed, but slowly if you dwell on, it will make sense.

How

should we approach this topic? Normally, we have seen a lot of substances in the world. So when we see a person, you qualify him/her as tall, lean, fat, fair etc.

We use a noun and an adjective. An adjective generally refers to a property like tall, short, fat, fair, round and in English, adjective, refers to properties of an object. And generally, the noun, like the tall tree, the fat man etc.; refer to substance. Adjectives reveal properties and attributes, while nouns reveal substances. This is where we have to begin. Adjectives reveal properties and nouns reveal substances; this is one thing we generally experience.

Now

there is another experience we have, which also we have to notice. When I say a fat man, a tall tree, a round object, etc.; this is what I experience. Now I



will give you another set of words; I say there is a golden bangle; there is a wooden chair. When I say Golden bangle, golden is adjective; and bangle is the noun. And when I say wooden chair, wooden is adjective; chair is noun.

Now in this particular case, when I say golden bangle, the word golden does not refer to a property, even though the word is an adjective; here in this unique and peculiar case, the word golden refers to the very substance of the bangle. So, Golden refers to the substance gold and not a property. And when I say a wooden chair, the word wooden is an adjective, but it still is not referring to a property; the word wooden here means the substance is nothing but wood.

And therefore in this particular case, adjective reveals a substance and not a property. Whereas, **when I say a tall person, adjective reveals a property, tallness. but when I say golden bangle, adjective reveals a substance.** Therefore rule No.1, I want to convey is that: an Adjective can reveal either a property or a substance. Both possibilities are there.

Similarly, when I say golden bangle, the word bangle is a noun. But even though the word bangle is a noun, really speaking, it does not reveal a substance at all; because there is no substance called bangle, there is only the substance called gold; bangle is a noun, but still it does not reveal a substance. If bangle is not a substance, then what does it reveal? If you analyze, Gold when it is in a particular form or shape, that shape alone is called bangle. Similarly when you say golden ring, there is no substance called ring; ring is the name of a particular shape. Similarly when you say wooden chair, there is no substance called chair; chair is the name of a particular shape alone.

Here

the name of the substance is wood alone. Similarly, bangle is

a form; chain is  
a form, ring is a form.

So we have two examples, in example No.1, tall tree; adjective reveals property; Noun reveals substance. When I say golden bangle, adjective reveals the substance; the word bangle reveals not a substance but a particular form. That is why when form is changed, bangle is gone. Therefore the word bangle refers to the property. And therefore **Vedanta says adjectives can reveal either a property of a substance. Similarly, nouns can also reveal either a property or a substance.** Should I remind you of the four examples:

Adjective  
reveals property such as Tall, fat etc.

Adjective  
reveals the substance such as golden, wooden etc.

What  
is the example for noun revealing the substance? Tree.

What  
is the example for noun revealing the property? Bangle.

Now Vedanta comes to this world. All this is only example. Now only we are coming to the original. When I experience a world, I say here is a book, and here is a fan; and there is a wall; there is a man; there is a woman. So when I experience the world, I refer to everyone as there is a man; there is a woman, there is a table, there is a chair. What is common to all of them: It is, It is, It is, and the verb "IS" refers to the existence of the world. When I say there is a clock, it means clock is existent. When I say there is a planet, the planet is existent. Therefore, every object that I experience is existent such as: existent tree, existent man, existent woman. Whatever I experience is, existent, existent, existent. If anything is nonexistent, then I will not experience it. Therefore everything that you experience in the world is an

existent object. Everything is existent.

In

Sanskrit they say: San ghataḥ;  
san phata; sat patram; san purushaha; san or sat means,  
existent-object.

Now

when I say an existent tree, an existent man, an existent  
woman, etc. what is the  
noun and what is the adjective in this?

When

I say existent-man, existent-woman, table, chair, sun, moon,  
stars, etc. the  
word existent is adjective; and man, woman, table, chair, sun,  
moon, etc. are  
nouns. So the word existent is adjective and every object is a  
noun.

Now

Vedanta asks the  
question, if the word existent is an adjective, and if the  
word man, woman,  
sun, moon, etc. are nouns, tell me what type of adjective it  
is and what type  
of noun is it? And why this question, because previously we  
saw, an adjective can  
either reveal a property or it can reveal a substance.

**Generally,**

**until we come to Vedanta, our general conclusion is world is  
the substance and  
the word existent is an attribute or property; this will be  
our general  
assumption.**

Vedanta,  
however, says that is the handiwork of maya. Maya

makes you commit a very big blunder. It makes me think that the word "existent", an adjective, is revealing an attribute and the world is the substance. Vedanta says that is not correct.

According to Vedanta, the word 'existent' reveals the basic substance just as the word golden reveals the substance. It reveals a substance and the substance is called existence.

According to Vedanta, it is also called Sat Brahma. Chandoyga Upanishad begins its teaching with this topic. According to this Upanishad, the basic substance is existence and existence is not an attribute of an object, but it is the fundamental absolute substance. And being the fundamental absolute substance, it is invisible, it is intangible and it is the abstract principle.

And therefore according to Vedanta, the whole world is not a substance at all. Just as chair is not a substance, the desk is also not a substance; thus when I am touching the desk, I am not touching the desk at all, rather I am touching the wood alone.

There is no substance called desk; no substance called table; no substance called chair. Therefore Vedanta says world is nama rupa makam.

Brihadarnyaka Upanishad says, the whole world is different

names, different forms and different functions; there is no substance called world. Bangle is a name, given to a particular form, to serve a particular function. If it is a bangle name and form, what is its function? To decorate the hand; If its name is chain and what is its function; decorating the neck; if it is a ring name and form, the function is decorating the finger; there is no substance called bangle, chain, ring, etc. and the substance is gold and how many gold's are there; gold is ekam, one gold alone.

Applying

this principle, **Vedanta says**

**existence is the only basic substance, and everything else is name, form and functions.**

So when you are experiencing a bangle, you are really experiencing gold alone, which is the only substance. When you are experiencing the ring, you are experiencing the gold alone, the fundamental substance. Similarly, when you are experiencing the world, you are experiencing only one fundamental substance which is inherent in all of them. That substance is IS, IS, IS, IS.

Shakaracharya

says all this, in a, one line shloka, when you are experiencing different ornaments you are experiencing gold. Similarly, when you are experiencing world, it is existence. That existence is Brahman. Therefore, we experience Brahman everywhere.

In

this experience I have a small difficulty. I am experiencing existence with

different names and forms (tree, chair etc). Is-ness is not experienced in a pure form. Through sense organs I experience nama rupa sat. Sense organs can reveal only nama rupa.

So,  
how can I experience pure existence? By filtering out nama rupa? Once you filter out nama rupa, only pure existence should be there. But if I remove nama rupa, sense organs can't experience existence.

How  
to do so? Close all sense organs to remove nama rupa and let only basic substance or pure existence remain. How to experience pure existence?

Chandogya Upanishad's 6th chapter is the most well known section of the entire Upanishadic literature, because it begins with pure existence and the student is now eager to know how to experience the pure existence. The teacher says: Oh Student, you can never experience the pure existence, because it is never an object of experience. Then the student raises his eyebrows; if I can never objectify the pure existence, how do I know it is there? Then the teacher gives the well-known statement of the Upanishad. Teacher answers, pure existence can't be objectified. It is nothing but you the Witnessing Consciousness. It is you, the Seer. Hence the saying, Tat Tvam Asi or Aham Brahma Asmi. My nature is Existence Consciousness. This is essence of Vedanta. You have to go on dwelling on this teaching that I am the ultimate substance; I am sat and I am chid; and the whole world is nama and rupa resting upon me.

When  
this is said, it will be very difficult to swallow. And that

is why scientists are not able to find because they are looking for the substance; but they are not going to come across the substance, why? **They are not able to come across the substance, because the searcher is the searched for object.** It is extremely difficult to swallow that I am the substance.

And to help us accept this truth; the Upanishad gives a well-known example, and that example is our dream experience. When I am dreaming, and seeing varieties of objects giving me happiness, giving me sorrow, giving me fear, what does it mean?

Dream is capable of frightening you. And imagine you are in a dream and you are seeing terrible things and in the dream a dream guru comes and tells: you do not be frightened of all these things; you are the essence of this dream world, the dream has come out of you, the dream is resting on you, on waking up the dream will resolve; if he says this in the dream, it is unbelievable. It is so realistic. But on waking up, he knows there is no dream river, dream man, dream object; none of them exist separate from me-the-waker. Vedanta tells us that world is just another dream channel.

Now it is unbelievable; it is very difficult to accept that I am the substance, but the ultimate truth is I (not this body, because body is also part of this world only), I, the witness, sakshi chaitanyam; I am the substance of the dream world; Similarly, **during the time of our ignorance, it is unbelievable, it is difficult to accept that I am the substance;** but according to Vedanta, I am the salt of the earth. And that I is Brahman, that Brahman is existent and that existent Brahman alone appears as the world with different nama rupa. And when Brahman, the existence, the only substance, appears with different nama Rupa's, it is called Vishva rupa Ishvara. It is the name of Brahman, the

existence, which is along with all the names and forms. Therefore, the one Brahman alone has become you, me, that and this, etc. This is the teaching here.

The

Shloka says: That existence pervades everything. As we used Is to describe an object. It has eye, head, face; it is everywhere with ears, it pervades surroundings, everything.

**Shloka # 15:**

**Shining through the functions of all the organs, (yet) devoid of all the organs; unattached, and verily the supporter of all; without ality, and the perceiver of alities;**

All the sense organs are revealing that Brahman all the time; for example, the eyes can reveal only colors; they cannot reveal sound; ears reveal only sound; and when I experience sound, I do not experience colors; When I experience colors, I do not experience smell; Therefore Shabda, sparsha, etc. are mutually exclusive; shabda comes sparsha is not there, rupam comes, sparsha is not there; but all the sense organs experience one thing commonly. It is that sound IS: when you hear, sound IS: Similarly, when you use the eye, the form IS: therefore all sensory operations, uniformly reveal that Brahman alone, all sensory operations uniformly reveal that Brahman alone in the form of shabda san, sparsha san, rupam sat, etc. But the problem is you are attracted by nama rupa, and you lose sight of the inherent existence in all of them. Therefore, what should you do to experience Brahman? Sri Krishna says, you are experiencing Brahman alone every moment. When you say, shabda IS, sparsha IS, rupam IS. But because of mixture, because of mixing up of nama and rupa, we are absorbed in nama rupa and lose sight of this fundamental truth and therefore we require a sensitive and subtle intellect to



appreciate that.

**Take away:**

As you go deeper and deeper, the visible becomes the invisible. The tangible becomes the intangible. The concrete becomes the abstract. Therefore we come to know that the ultimate substance must be intangible, formless and abstract substance.

Vedanta says

existence is the only basic substance, and everything else is name, form and functions.

Scientists

are not able to come across the substance, because the searcher is the searched for object.

During

the time of our ignorance, it is unbelievably difficult to accept that I am the substance; but according to Vedanta, I am the salt of the earth.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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**Baghawad Gita, Class 171:**

# Chapter 13, Verses 11 – 13

Greetings,

Gita, Class # 171, Ch. 13, 6/29/19

**Note:** In this chapter the numbering of shlokas can be different depending upon Gita book you are reading. I am using Swamiji's numbering.

**Shloka # 11:**

**And unwavering devotion to Me with  
single-minded concentration; inclination to repair into a  
clean place; lack of  
delight in a crowd of people;**

Continuing his teaching

Swamiji said,

from

Shloka # 8-# 12, Sri Krishna is dealing with topic of Gyanam.

Gyanam in the

shloka means all virtues of mind that are conducive to attainment of knowledge.

Any virtue that makes mind eligible to receive spiritual knowledge is Gyanam.

Now in Shloka # 11, Bhakti or devotion to Lord is being emphasized. Only with

Bhakti is Gyana yoga possible. Even Karma yoga requires bhakti, as does Upasana

yoga. Thus in Ch.12 each of these yogas were named Bahkti Yoga. Thus we have:

Karma

Yoga: is Bhakti Yoga stage 1

Upasana

Yoga: is Bhakti Yoga stage 2

Gyana

yoga: is Bhakti Yoga stage 3; because Gyana yoga

also requires the background of bhakti, therefore Sri Krishna says: mayi bhakti, devotion towards me. Here the word Mayi does not refer to Sri Krishna as a person, but it refers to the Lord who can be invoked in any form that you like.

When

Sri Krishna prescribes Bhakti as a necessary condition for Gyanam, what kind of

Bhakti is he prescribing? It can't be Gyani bhakti, as only an Agyani has to

perform such a bhakti. Artha, artharthati bhaktas are also not seeking self-knowledge;

Artha Bhakta is one who is in crisis and and is seeking freedom from crisis. He

can't even study Vedanta properly. Artharthi Bhakta is only into it for artha

alone. So, only Jignyasu bhakta is left. In Ch.7 we saw God can be used as a

means for worldly ends or he can be looked upon as an end, himself. So, in this

bhakti, God is an end in himself.

And

if I have to choose God as the end or destination, I should have the maturity

enough to understand that everything other than God is perishable and therefore

they cannot give what I want. Thus, this bhakthi requires vairagya towards the

world; and without vairagya, this bhakthi is impossible. Therefore, viveka

janya, vairagya janya

bhakthi is devotion, in which I know God alone can give me

poornatvam,  
security, fulfillment, etc.

And

that Bhakthi, Sri Krishna calls avyabhicharini bhakti, a devotion which is unswerving, unflinching and one pointed. And with undivided attention, even when the worldly transactions are going, and even when the worldly responsibilities are fulfilled, this devotee remembers that my goal is something else. So now and then, he should be reminded, what is the purpose of this life.

Often

people ask what is the purpose of this life. Poornatvam prapthi is the purpose of this life. I have to keep on expanding enough to reach a stage beyond which I should not be able to expand, i.e., possible only in infinitude and that poornatvam is the goal. And reminding it off and on, is ananya yoga bhakthi and that is very important.

### **Viviktadeshasevitvam:**

This

is also considered to be an important virtue that means resorting to a secluded place, now and then.

Developing

the habit of going to a secluded place and, resorting to solitude, in which I do not have anyone around. And I do not even carry a walkman.

And

here, I should find out whether I could confront myself. So

more than facing  
other people in the society, I should ask a question whether I  
could face  
myself, whether I can accept myself, as these problems will  
surface, only when  
I am alone. In fact, seclusion introduces me to myself. And in  
fact the  
fundamental problem of samsara also we come to know only when  
we are alone,  
otherwise we try to escape ourselves through various  
diversions. A  
materialistic society is one, which provides maximum  
diversions as well. And  
the more you take to diversion, the less you diagnose your  
problem, and if you  
do not diagnose the problem, how will you work for a solution.  
Therefore,  
solitude is to know more about myself, and my problems. And  
this solitude has  
got another purpose as well; it is also an expression of  
Samsara. Samsara expresses in  
different forms; in the form of anxiety, in the form of fear;  
in the form of  
security; there are several versions of samsara, and one  
expression of samsara is the sense of loneliness. And this  
problem of loneliness can attack any person at any time in  
life. And this can  
happen in the middle age, when the children leaves the nest or  
when children go  
out for either studies or they are married or as we grow old  
the people who around  
us start leaving. Thus loneliness is a potential problem,  
which can attack any  
human being at any time. And you have to learn to face it well  
ahead and not  
when it comes.

And therefore

better learn to be alone; better learn to enjoy solitude. And what is the best

method; once in a while, just go for a walk, without walkman.

Go for a walk,

sit on the beach; do not take any friend or anyone. And find out

how you feel. Old age will be wonderful if you have learned to tackle

loneliness. It is wonderful because, the loneliness can be made use of, for vedantic nidhidhyasanam.

So why can't we go through the training rehearsal to gracefully grow old. The best rehearsal is learn to enjoy Solitude, not eternally, but once in a while, be alone and see what happens.

Does

it mean that one should not enjoy company? Sri Krishna says, don't get addicted to people's company. We are mentally weak when we can't spend time in solitude.

And

Shankaracharya in his

commentary notes that it is OK, if the association is with satpurushah because they

will guide you properly. Any other place, you should be careful.

**Shloka # 12:**

**Steadfastness in the knowledge of the Self,**

**contemplation on the Goal of the knowledge of Reality-this is spoken of as**

**Knowledge. Ignorance is that which is other than this.**

**Tattvajnanarthadarshanam**

Then the next virtue; in the first line in the second word,

tattvagyanarthadarshanam. All these virtues or values are prescribed for the sake of Gyana योग्यता prapthi. And by gaining the eligibility for knowledge one gets Gyanam itself. And if I have to have a value for Gyana योग्यता, then I should have a value for Gyanam as well.

The more value I have with regard to the end, and then I will have the value for the means as well. So the love of the means is directly proportional to the love of the end. And therefore, these virtues I will value, if I have a value for Gyanam. Then, when will I have value for Gyanam? That I will have, only if I know the benefit of Gyanam.

Tattva Gyana artha means Gyana phalam, I should know what will I get out of this knowledge. Otherwise I will wonder why should I study and know. And that is why, of and on, Sri Krishna mentions to us the benefit of this knowledge.

### **The main**

**benefit, given in the second chapter, is that I am comfortable with myself, irrespective of external conditions.**

### **Things**

may be favorable or may not be favorable but since I have psychological immunity and I am not vulnerable to mood disorders. So, therefore, I am not vulnerable to external conditions, I am ever balanced. And Gyanam is the one that gives me emotional immunity.

The more I appreciate this fact, the more I will have value for Gyanam. And the more I have value for Gyanam, the more I will have value for Gyana योग्यता. So, from Gyana योग्यता one goes to Gyanam; and then on to Jivan mukthi. This route I should understand.

Therefore Sri Krishna tells us to remind you that Gyanam gives

inner freedom; thus  
the world cannot blackmail me anymore.

### **Adhyatma Gyana nithyatvam**

is  
the final and most important value of all.

It  
is the systematic and consistent study of vedantic  
scriptures for a length of time, under the guidance of a  
competent Acharya. Without  
that, I will only get a stray idea here and there.

It  
is like dumping bricks in a pile that do not result in  
anything; rather than  
cementing them in an organized manner, to result in a house.

Thus,  
when you study Vedanta in a classroom like situation, we are  
studying in an  
organized manner and so this knowledge will be like building a  
house. Random  
study and knowledge will just remain a heap of rubble.  
Therefore if the  
knowledge is to be useful, Sri Krishna tells it should be  
systematically studied.  
It is Sri Krishna's advice, not mine.

Sravanam  
automatically implies there is a Guru. In Shloka # 8, Sri  
Krishna talked about  
Guru Upasana. Only an Acharya can teach Shastra effectively.  
So, this is Shastra  
Vichara. All others prepare mind, while this produces  
knowledge. Shankaracharya  
says it is like Pathyam (discipline) and Aushadham (medicine).

Pathyam



provides the condition and aushadham the cure. Virtue alone, without shastra, will not result in Gyanam. If you follow all of them (virtues), knowledge will occur. Hence the 20 Virtues including shastra study is called Gyanam.

Sri Krishna says anything opposite to that is agyanam. And how do you find the opposite? It is simple, you take every word, say amanitvam and it is the opposite of manitvam, adambitvam is the opposite dambitvam; ahimsa himsa, then kshanti, ashanti, you add 'a'; the opposite of all these together is called agyanam, that means these negative virtues will solidify your ignorance. Ignorance will get more and more knotty and more and more difficult to remove. And that alone in the 16th chapter Sri Krishna calls Daivi sampath and Asuri sampath.

### **Shloka # 13:**

**I shall speak of that which is to be known, by realizing which one attains Immortality. The supreme Brahman is without any beginning. That is called neither being nor non-being.**

With previous shloka, topic of Gyanam is over. So Kshetram, Kshetragnya and Gyanam topics are all over. Arjuna wanted to know about six topics and three are over. The other three he requested were: Gneyam; Prakrti and Purushaha.

### **Gneyam:**

Gneyam is described from shloka 13 to # 19.

Gneyam

is same as Kshetrangya. Sri Krishna says, O Arjuna, I will now talk about a subject, which every human being has to know while all other topics are optional. Why is this topic unique? It is unique because knowing which, it solves a fundamental problem of every human being, that is insecurity or fear of mortality that exists from birth. It comes from childhood and every action of ours comes from this feeling of insecurity. Our house, our job, children etc all of them address our insecurity. It is a universal problem. It grows as we grow older. When death comes, it is frightening. So every human being has to learn about this to attain immortality or the freedom from insecurity.

And therefore, Arjuna, listen to this carefully, as to what is that gneyam that is to be known by all. Sri Krishna says: It is Param Brahma, that ultimate thing to be known, called Brahman. The word Brahman means, the infinite one, Sathyam, Gyanam, and Anantham.

Brahman or Infinite means that which is free from threefold limitations; one limitation is called space-wise limitation; another limitation is called Time-wise limitation; third limitation is called attribute-wise limitation. Space-wise limitation is when I am here; unfortunately I cannot be elsewhere; you wish it would have been fine; to be in the house and also be attending

the class also;  
but it is not possible.

Time-wise

limitation means I am limited by time, I

have

got a date of birth, and date of death as well. We just do not know when we will die.

Attribute-wise

limitation; having certain attributes,

if you have a particular attribute, the very presence of that attribute excludes all the other attributes. So if there is particular color, all other colors are not there; if I am a human being, my very humanness excludes cowness and horseness and all the other nesses. That is called attribute-wise limitation. And Brahma means that which is free from all the three limitations. And that is therefore called Param Brahma, which is the absolute. And that Param Brahma is to be known by all, to cross over mortality.

I do not know if I have told you this story before or not; when this Brahmin was crossing the river in a boat, the Brahmin asked do you know vyakaranam, the boatman asked vyakaran se kya karna, and then the Pandit said one fourth of life is gone.

Then

the Brahmin asked; do you know tarka shastram. No. So two fourth of life or half is gone. Then do you know mimamsa Shastra? I know meen and mamsa. Then the

Pandit said that three fourth of the life is gone. As they were talking the boat developed a leak and the water was gushing in and boatman tried to stop

that leak and he was not able to; then he asked, Oh Panditji do you know how to swim. I do not know. Then your whole life is gone.

Now

Sri Krishna begins the description of Brahman. It is Anadi mat; that which does not have aadhi. aadhi means beginning; means both spacial and timewise and therefore it is anantham; the limitless one. In shloka, the word asat means karanam. Any cause is called asat, and the sat in this context means any effect or product or karyam. A cause is called asat because any cause is in potential form; and any thing potential is not available for our utility. Oil in the seed is potentially there; but I cannot use it. Butter in the milk is there; but I cannot use it; therefore any cause is in potential form; therefore, I cannot use it; therefore it is as though non-existent. Therefore the word used is asat; seemingly nonexistent, which means potentially existent karanam. And an sat, sat means karyam,

Karyam is as good as existent, because it is available for our use. And what is Brahman? Sri Krishna says Brahman is neither karanam nor Karyam. Brahman is beyond the realm of cause and effect.

Now

it is becoming mind-boggling, because **the entire universe you experience is nothing but a flow of cause and effect.**

**Yesterday is the cause for today's condition.**

Today is the cause for tomorrow's condition. The entire creation I experience is nothing but cause effect flow. **And Sri Krishna says Brahman is beyond cause and effect.** That means it is beyond time. Because, cause and effect, wherever they exist, there Time is also there. How do you know? Because the difference between cause and effect is determined by time. Yesterday's cause is today's effect. Yesterday's Idli is today's body, your blood. Therefore the difference between karanam and karyam is determined by kala alone. Therefore whatever is beyond karya karana, is kalathitham.

Therefore

Brahman has no form, no attribute and it has no time. And Swamiji, how will I conceive it? It is not a concept to be conceived. And therefore Sri Krishna is beginning to describe the essence of the Upanishads. From Shloka #13 onwards, we get Upanishad sara (essence). Upanishad says:

Brahman does not have shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha. So no form, color, taste or touch and therefore you cannot see it; hear it, smell it, taste it or touch it and you are supposed to know that Brahman. How to know? That Sri Krishna will tell you in the following shlokas in the next class.

**Take away:**

Loneliness:

And therefore better learn to be alone; better learn to enjoy solitude. And what is the best method; once in a while, just go for a walk, without walkman. Go for a walk, sit on the beach; do not take any friend or anyone.

Don't

get addicted to people's company. We are mentally weak when we can't spend time in solitude.

The main benefit of Gyanam is that I am comfortable with myself, irrespective of external conditions.

The entire universe you experience is nothing but a flow of cause and effect. Yesterday is the cause for today's condition. Brahman, however, is beyond cause and effect.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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## **Baghawad Gita, Class 170: Chapter 13, Verses 8 to 10**

**Shloka # 8:**

**(Shloka # 7 in  
some books)**

**Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury,  
for-bearance, sincerity, service of the teacher, cleanliness,  
steadiness,  
control of body and organs;**

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, From the 8th verse of the 13th chapter, Sri Krishna has taken up the third topic for analysis. He has already dealt with two topics; Kshetram and kshetragna and now he is dealing with the third topic called

Gyanam and we saw that in this context, the word Gyanam refers to a set of virtues, which will keep the mind a healthy one. Just as there are certain physical parameters, which indicate the physical health, such as the pressure, the level of cholesterol, the level of hemoglobin, etc. similarly there are certain parameters or virtues, which indicate mental health. And this mental health is useful for every human being to enjoy a peace of mind and this mental health is particularly required for a Vedantic seeker because only if the mind is healthy, the intellect will be freely available for higher pursuit. If the mind is not healthy, the intellect will be a hostage of a sick mind. You will not allowed to think properly because a disturbed mind will suppress your intellect and that is why when you are mentally disturbed, you can never read anything where intellectual application is required. You cannot hear a discourse where intellectual application is required; intellectual application is possible only when the mind is relaxed. Mind is relaxed only when the mind is healthy; mind is healthy only when these parameters are handled and maintained. And therefore Sri Krishna gives the list. We covered the 8th shloka in which some of them have been mentioned; amanitvam, adambhitvam, ahimsa, Kshanti, arjavam, acharyopasanam, shaucham, sthairyam, atmavinigraha; 9 virtues have been enumerated; now in the next shloka, we are going to get some more virtues.

### **Shloka # 9:**

**13.9 Non-attachment with regard to objects of the senses, and also absence of egotism; seeing the evil in birth, death, old age, diseases and miseries;**

**Indriyartheshu vairagyam:** these two words together, refers to the next virtue, viz., mastering of the sense organs. Sense organs are a set of instruments gifted to us by the Lord and they are very important instruments, as we interact with the world through them alone. We have two sets of sense organs,

one set is called Gyanendriyani, through which we receive the input from the world, and we have another set of sense organs called karmendriyani, through which we express ourselves, we respond to the external world.

Therefore,

sense organs are extremely important for interaction with the world and not

only for ordinary interactions but for all the spiritual sadhanas too, you

require these organs. And since they are a set of instruments given to us, we

have to make sure that they are under our control and we are not the slaves of

our sense organs.

Sri

Krishna calls this avoidance of slavery to the sense organs, indriya nigraha or

indriya jayaha or damaha or even prathyahara. And this requires a constant

alertness on our part, because the sense organs are generally in contact with

the sensory world; and the five sense organs namely shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa, and gandha;

each of them functions in its own respective field. **And when the sense organs comes in contact with any object on a regular basis, unknowingly, the sense organs develop an attachment to the sense**

**objects. So every sense organ is prone to develop attachment to any particular**

**sense object; thus forming an addiction is the very nature of every sense**

**organ.** So when you see an object or a person or a particular program in the

TV for a few days; initially, you say it is nice, it is wonderful, but gradually



the sense organs demand association with the sense object. And when they demand it, it is for us to decide, whether we should fulfill the demand of the sense organ. It is like bringing up a child.

A child when you give some thing to him begins to demand more of it and the mother gives in. Slowly the child's demand becomes an addiction and when demand is not met, it goes into tantrums and the mother continues to cave in. Then, a time comes, when the child knows how to make the mother do what it wants. Every sense object is like such a child. Initially you allow the sense organ to function in a field; later the sense organs begin to demand; and once you pamper the sense organs, you have become an addict or slave. And afterwards, when you try to master, the sense organ has become powerful enough that it will know how to throw tantrums. They will not allow you to master them.

Thus, if you are addicted to coffee, if you don't get it on time; you are upset; some even get headaches. Pampered by me, the sense organs can become so powerful that they can even drag the mind to its field; and then the intellect tells, that it is not good; I should not pamper, I should not become a slave; because I want to attain Moksha from the whole creation. And being the slave of coffee, cigarette, liquor or something else, if I am not a master of even few small things, how can I become a master of, how can I get the freedom from, the whole creation? And therefore the intellect begins to feel the guilt and that is how the tug-of-war begins; intellect decides I want to get out of the habit and even after I give

up the habit for a few days; thereafter he gets addicted. Mark Twain said: Who said giving up smoking is difficult. I have given up many times. Then begins the big tug of war as the intellect says that I am a Gita student, and I should be a master, I should not be a weakling, and it takes a wonderful decision; and for a few days it is implemented, and again it falls back in the same old rut, called relapse. And then once the intellect fails a few times, intellect does not know how to handle the guilt. Then intellect uses another method; because the guilt is really painful, at the same time, the intellect is not able to find a method of getting out of the addiction. So it decides that, if you cannot defeat your enemy, join it. And the joining is called, justification. So the intellect knows how to justify every addiction.

Like that person who wanted to show the harm of taking liquor and he did an experiment, he just put an insect inside the liquor and the insect died. In front were sitting a lot of liquor addicts. He showed the experiment and asked them what is the conclusion you arrive at? Because the insect died in the alcohol; one fellow got up and said: Whoever takes liquor will have a clean stomach without any germs, because, they will all be killed and I will have a clean stomach. So, any argument you give, the intellect knows how to manipulate. And **therefore the best solution with regard to any addiction is: prevention is always better than trying to cure.** And therefore alertness becomes important and that is why they say, once in a while, say No to anything that you regularly do. **So all forms of tapas, vrthams that we practice are all meant for avoidance of sense-slavery.** In yoga Shastra, it is called pratyahara; in Vedanta Shastra it is called damah; sadhana chashtutaya sampathi calls it sama, dama and uparathi. So indriyartheshu means vairagya which, means dispassion, not hatred; you are allowed to enjoy legitimate pleasures without becoming a slave of that pleasure. While you can enjoy any pleasure, let not the sense organs decide what you should do. So it is an important virtue.

**Anahankara:** Ahankara

is self-conceit; Anahanakara is freedom from self-conceit. Amanitvam also means

freedom from self-conceit. Why does Sri Krishna repeat the same quality, again?

In normal context both would mean the same thing. However, in this context

there is a difference:

Amanitvam: Is lack of

self-conceit at the thinking level.

Anahankara: is freedom from

self- conceit at the verbal level. I don't use the word I at all times in all

my conversations, always using first person singular, I, mine etc. Any subject

you talk about, this person with self-conceit will convert into a subject

matter relating to him. You talk about an event in America; when I went to that

place, he will convert it into 'I'. Any topic under the Sun, this fellow will

convert into 'I' topic, that is called self-propagation, self-proclamation, blowing

his own trumpet; that is ahankara.

**Janma mrtyu jara vyadhi dukha doshanudarshanam.**

It conveys the meaning, don't

be body oriented. Life is not only in physical existence; you are something

else than this body. Body orientation will cause obstructions in spiritual

growth. What are problems caused by body orientation?

Vedanta does not recommend

neglecting your body. Body is required for both spiritual and

material

pursuits. It is only a means; it is annamaya kosha, the very first sheath.

How to be detached from

body? By, constantly reminding ourselves of the various defects of Deha

abhimana will help us. Thus, body is subject to five problems:

1. Birth or Janma.
2. Jara; or old age,  
with its related problems. As I age, I will have no power to decide on functioning of the body. I will be helpless.
3. Vyadhi: disease.
4. Mrthyu: Death; or  
separation from everything I own or love.
5. Dukham: These are  
the problems or sorrows of life.

**Constant remembrance of these five doshas will assist one in not having Deha abhimana; a pre-requisite for atma gyanam.**

**Shloka # 10:**

**13.10 Non-attachment and absence of fondness**

**with regard to sons, wives, homes, etc., and constant eqanimity of the mind**

**with regard to the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable;**

**Ashakti:** means mental detachment with respect to any object, situation or person. It is avoidance of mental slavery with regard to any external object, situation or person. Previously we talked about indriyartheshu vairagyam. Now we are talking about ashakti. Both mean detachment, but the difference is, previously it was detachment from the standpoint of sense organs; it was indriya nigraha; here ashakti deals with mano

nigraha, detachment at mental level. So previous one is damaha; the present one is Samaha. And why does Sri Krishna talk about both of them?

Mental detachment cannot be easily attained, because mind is a subtler instrument. Therefore taking the mind away from the object of attachment is extremely difficult; whereas sense organs are external instruments; they are grosser instruments and therefore, they can be controlled in a relatively easier manner. And how can you control the sense organs, by physically being away from the place. If a person has a tendency to use an addiction causing object; he can be physically separated from it. In all de-addiction centers, the object of addiction will not be available.

The problem is: even when the sense organs are physically separated from the sense objects, the mind can continue to dwell on it. And as long as the mind dwells on that, again re-addiction or relapse is possible. Therefore as long as the person is physically away, he will have control.

So initially you start from sense control; and even after sense control; mind continues to have a vasana and therefore we have to handle the mind also. To handle the mind it has to be educated on the evils involved in the addiction, and once the mind is mastered; thereafter, even if the object of addiction is in front, I remain aloof. I have got out of habit of smoking or drinking. If the other person is using that

right in front, I can remain there without having a temptation. So this is a higher stage of detachment born out of viveka shakti. And only when I say NO out of discrimination; it becomes transcending. If I stop them, because of the others' pressure, it becomes suppression. Therefore, suppression should be converted to transcendence. And that transcendence is inner detachment. After inner detachment, I am not worried about temptation.

Once the mind is mastered; let this person be in any field; he can never get addicted to anything or temptations. Until that possibility is there, I have to physically get away from the tempting situations and therefore ashakti; that is detachment or dispassion at the mental level.

**Putradaragrhadishuanabhishvangaha: To be read as putradararagrhadishu anabhishvangaha.** Bhishvangaha means over attachment or intense attachment. Anabhishvangaha means absence of over attachment or absence of excessive attachment. Sri Krishna gives a list of important things one can get attached to. They are one's child, spouse, own house and other such things. These are people with whom your life is closely intertwined.

And with regard to them you can never avoid attachment. Sri Krishna admits that attachment cannot be avoided with regards to a few things and beings with which you regularly move.

And

therefore Sri Krishna says, I do not ask you to avoid attachment. I am only saying, avoid over attachment.

This

applies mainly to Grihasthas and not Sanyasis.

Now

the next question is: How to differentiate between attachment and excessive attachment?

Saint Anandagiri, who writes a sub commentary on Shankaracharya's commentary, gives a beautiful explanation on differentiating attachment and over attachment. He defines attachment as mamakara; claiming a thing or a person as mine; he belongs to me. I belong to you; you belong to me.

But when the attachment is excessive; then it is no more mamakara; my identification becomes so complete; that I become one with that object; and therefore I do not see any difference between that object or person and myself. That means whatever happens to that person I take as happening to myself. And naturally, when that person is dead, instead of saying that person is gone and I continue to survive; I feel that I myself am dead and gone; that means my life appears to be empty. If I think my life has no meaning, without another person; this is excessive attachment. If I think my life has no meaning without another person, it is excessive attachment, because the fact is, every life has got its own meaning, irrespective of other people being there or not; because we have all come to the earth for the particular purpose of spiritual evolution and every one of us has come independently; we are never born together.

We

are also never going to die together. As Swami Chinmayananda says: All alone is Life. And therefore we have come here for our spiritual

growth; and God has  
connected a few people, so that our growth is helped. And the  
people will be  
around as long as there is needed for my growth and once that  
purpose is  
served; thereafter each Jeeva has to continue his own journey.  
It is like a train  
journey. I have entered the compartment at a particular  
station and I have started  
the journey. People come and go during journey but we all have  
our own  
destination. The whole earth is like a  
compartment alone; we have all come together and we progress  
and thereafter, we  
have to continue our journey in our own direction. If this is  
forgotten; I will  
think my life is purposeless without another person; and once  
that thought  
comes, it has become excessive attachment.

That  
means I cannot imagine living without that person.

Sri  
Krishna says you can cry, nothing wrong in it. Attachment will  
give grief; but  
you should never forget; that everyone is an individual and we  
have to make our  
own journey. And therefore not forgetting the fact that life  
is like a train  
journey is the virtue.

**Nityam samacittatvam**  
**ca ishtanishtopapattishu:** This gives  
the essence of karma yoga.

Whether  
situations that arrive are favorable or unfavorable, I have



freedom from  
elation or depression. All situations change. Learn to  
maintain equanimity in  
all situations. Let it be a manageable disturbance. How to  
practice this? Sri  
Krishna says, every human being must practice equanimity.;  
this indicates that  
Sri Krishna accepts that every human being will face favorable  
and unfavorable  
situations. Reading puranas one sees that every avatara faced  
ups and downs.  
How can I, a small being, avoid it? Nalla, Rama, Yudhishtira  
all suffered; so  
life is a mixture of both.

According  
to God and shastra, spiritual growth requires suffering. Only  
in suffering  
there is greater growth. Opposites will always arrive in our  
lives. Vedanta  
teaches one to have equanimity in all situations.

How  
to maintain equanimity? Vedanta gives us two methods.

Karma  
yoga is considered a short-term response, like a first aid.  
Karma Yoga was  
detailed in Shloka 2.48

Gyana  
Yoga is more of a long-term response, the ultimate cure.

Karma  
Yoga gives relative peace of mind while Gyana yoga gives  
permanent peace of mind.

In  
karma yoga one has to accept every experience as Ishwara

Prasadam. Equanimity

must be maintained throughout the waking state.

And why is it called prasada? The word prasada means tranquility of mind; and when you look upon anything as a gift from the Lord; it gives you tranquility of mind; and therefore the object is called prasada; So by implication vadai, kadalai, chundal; why are they prasadam; They are not prasadam; When you receive them, as a gift coming from the Lord, because of your devotion, you have got a sense of fulfilment; and that gives you tranquility and therefore I should have prasada bhavana; that it is coming from the Lord.

Prasada

Bhavana is possible only if I have devotion towards God; else there is no karma

yoga. Dayanada swamiji used to say that Karma yoga exists only due to Bhakti

yoga. It is one of the levels of Bhakti yoga. There is no secular karma yoga;

an atheist can't be a karma yogi.

Karma

yoga presupposes

faith in God. And of course karma yogi does not know the ultimate nature of God.

If he knows, he will be a Gyani; so he has got his own concept of God, in any

form he likes an ishta devatha, as eka rupa Ishvara or aneka rupa Ishvara.

And

therefore Sri Krishna wants to say **without**

**bhakti, karma yoga is not possible.** And therefore Arjuna, Mayi bhakti is

the next important virtue. So Mayi means in Me. In Me means, in Ishvara; and what

type of devotion should it be?

**Take away:**

And

when the sense organs comes in contact with any object on a regular basis, unknowingly, the sense organs develop an attachment to the sense objects. So every sense organ is prone to develop attachment to any particular sense object; **thus forming an addiction is the very nature of every sense organ.**

The

best solution with regard to any addiction is: prevention is always better than trying to cure.

So

all forms of tapas, vrthams that we practice are all meant for avoidance of sense-slavery.

Constant remembrance of

these five doshas (birth, old age, disease, death and related sorrows)will assist one in not having Deha abhimana; a pre-requisite for atma gyanam.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**

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# Baghawad Gita, Class 169:

## Chapter 13, Verse 8

Shloka # 8:

**Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury, for-bearance, sincerity, service of the teacher, cleanliness, steadiness, control of body and organs;**

Continuing his teaching

Swamiji said, having

talked about the topics of Kshetram and kshetragna up to shloka No.7, now from shloka no.8 onwards, up to shloka no.12, Sri Krishna

deals with the topic of Gyanam which in this context means, those virtues which

will make the mind fit for receiving the self-knowledge. And he gives a list of

20 virtues here; which has to be carefully cultivated by every person. **In fact, gaining self-knowledge really does**

**not take time; it is relatively easier; but cultivating these virtues alone**

**involves time and effort.**

And therefore, this is as important or more important than even Vedantic study. And therefore Sri Krishna will deal with this topic again and again. The 16th and 17th chapters are exclusively dedicated to deal with this topic. So we will deal with this again later. And now we have seen some of the virtues mentioned in the 8th shloka; that is amanitvam, adambhitvam and ahimsa.

Amanitvam is freedom from self-glorification, or humility or vinayaha; adambhitvam is simplicity and ahimsa is non-violence at the physical, verbal and even mental levels. Up to this we saw in the last class.

The fourth value is **Kshanti**.

**Kshanti** has  
two aspects.

1. **Titiksha** is

acceptance of all choice-less situations, without any resistance. While we have freewill, unfortunately, reality is that, we have no control on many aspects of our life.

And all such uncontrollable, helpless situations, I call choice-less situations and in the second chapter, Sri Krishna uses the word, *apariharya artha*; *artha* means a situation, *apariharya* means over which I do not have a control at all. **And since I do not have any control over the situation, I have to only change my attitude in such a way that I welcome, I accept the situation and this acceptance of the situation is called titiksha.**

When we look at life, the past I cannot change; as such it is choiceless. Thus, I should accept my past; such as my parents, my age etc; as it is. I have to accept my gray hair, my age etc. They are all choice-less.

Present is also choice-less as it has already arrived. So, prepare mind to accept it. This acceptance is known as *Titiksha*. The more you put resistance to accepting it, the more you get heated up. Now there are two types of acceptance: 1) Healthy acceptance and

2) unhealthy acceptance.

**Unhealthy acceptance:** the feeling, **what cannot be cured has to be endured.** It is acceptance with bitterness; self pity, anger towards the world and god. This unhealthy acceptance is not Titiksha. A mind with this thinking is not available for positive action. He constantly complains. He distributes his grief to others as well. Mind is not constructive. **I become a complaining person.**

**2. Healthy acceptance:** I don't allow choice-less situation to overcome and immobilize me. I ignore the situation and work constructively. It is difficult but possible to ignore an unfavorable situation and continue with life. When you read life stories of handicapped people it provides inspiration. Stephen Hawkins is an example.

This is the first aspect of Titiksha.

Even though past and present can't be changed, I can change the future. Astrology can tell us our past but it too can't predict future as Prayaschitha can affect future. Future is choice-full. I can use freewill and resources to improve future.

I can work for improving and transforming the future. But here also we should remember any transformation requires time. Any transformation, any growth, any Change, requires its own time.

So, I need patience. If I have disease, I don't have to suffer, as medical science

advances every day.

When you want to change people, one can change them but it takes time. So, I need to wait.

And

this capacity to wait with regard to the future is the second part of the titiksha called Kshama. This capacity to wait for future is called **Kshama**. Even in front of a traffic signal, one needs Kshama. You can see lack of kshama in front of the traffic

signal, especially during rush hour, as people don't have patience. Everything

takes its own time. Even a child takes ten months to grow.

Bhartrhari says, Oh Mind, why are you always in a hurry, you want tomorrow to come today itself. You want next year to come this year itself. Ask your mind to wait and be patient. The future has to unfold in its own time; and you cannot hasten the process. Let the future unfold; you face it when it comes; we will cross the bridge when it comes; not brooding over the past too much; not getting concerned over the future too much.

There is no brooding over

the past, nor be concerned about the future; develop patience in the present.

If I don't have Titiksha (acceptance) and Kshama (capacity to wait) there will

be stresses and strains in personality.

**Anayasa:** means

freedom from stress. Sandhyavandanam, performed several times a day is to help

ease the day-to-day stress in life. Thus physical and mental stress makes you

irritable. You are at a flashpoint, in tamil: Mukulai Shundi (anger at nose

tip).

Dayananda saraswati says, this irritable condition is the accumulated stress and often the children are the victims; and previously when father is stressed out, mother was there as a cushion; now both of them are working; therefore generally the temperature at home is above 100. And children becomes victims and they also get the internal stress; when they grow up, they take it out on their wives and spouses, and thus we have a nuclear family, ready to explode. Therefore Kshanti is an extremely important value to avoid stress; Stress is inflicting injury on myself. And when the stressful person explodes it is inflicting injury on the other people too. Therefore a stressed person is always practicing himsa, upon himself and others. Therefore, if ahimsa has to be followed, Kshanti is required. Kshanti is the only method to develop ahimsa. And therefore it is very important value in the shastra and it is called anayasaha; meaning a stress free relaxed mind.

**So to practice Ahimsa, Kshanti (patience) is essential.**

**Aarjavam:** means alignment of threefold personality; Kayika, Vachika and Manasika. If thought, word and deed are integrated one has a healthy personality. If there is no alignment; where, I think one thing, say something different and act even more differently; this causes a split personality. This causes stresses and strains in a person. It



causes disintegration  
and destruction.

Like

any machine with several different parts; all of them should be in alignment.

Adjustment is required, when you install huge machinery; the mechanics have to

come and align. Even in a tape recorder, the head has to be aligned; there also

it is said 'head' has to be aligned and cleaned at regular intervals; otherwise

recording does not take place. Similarly your head, not only tape recorder. And

your ears, they all must be aligned; otherwise after one hour, if someone asks,

how was the class, you will say it was wonderful; what did swamiji say; that is

what I do not know. What was wonderful, I do not know?

When my organs are not integrated, then I am destroyed. Destroyed not in the physical sense, but destroyed in the spiritual sense; I cannot accomplish anything higher. And therefore integrity, or uprightness or alignment or harmonization of the personality is important. If you go to a music concert, there are many instrument players like Mridangist; gadam, violinist, ganjira, and musician. You will find that they are spending a lot of time adjusting the sruthi. Aligning of the throat and the tamera is required. If it is a north Indian music concert, they are very particular about shruti. According to them, carnatic musicians do not have shruti at all.

The

North Indians take more time to adjust the shruti than even the concert time.

So if a music concert requires alignment,

life is the greatest music, which should give happiness

to me, and which should give happiness to others. There should be no apasruti, that means my thought, word, and deed should be

harmonized. That is why we have one of the most wonderful upanishadic prayers that say; let me not have a split personality.

Let me not have a split personality. Let me not have a multiple personality syndrome. And Dayanada Swamji beautifully says that Ravana shown with his 10 heads, indicate his multiple personality and the best method to develop arjavam is starting with punctuality. I feel the first exercise in arjavam is punctuality. And it is one thing; we do not have at all in India, because nobody values punctuality. So, **first exercise in arjavam is punctuality.**

If for some reason I am not able to make it on time, I need to inform other person. This is Aarjavam.

So being punctual and or meeting commitments is Aarjavam. Satyam is a subdivision of Aarjavam.

**Acharya Upasanam:** is a very important virtue for Vedantic students. It means worship of teacher. Here worship of teacher does not go to a person. Guru represents Shastra Gyanam within him. He is a temple of scriptures. A question comes up as to why I should worship Shastras or Vedas?

Why should I worship the Veda? This is a very important thing for us to know. The knowledge that we want to acquire through the Shastra is a knowledge, which can be acquired through Shastra alone.

It is not a knowledge,  
which can be acquired through any other source of knowledge.  
The Shastra is like a  
sixth sense organ. Every sense organ like eye, ears, etc. is  
capable of giving  
a unique knowledge, which the other sense organs cannot give.  
Eyes can give the  
knowledge of color; the other four sense organs cannot give  
that. Similarly,  
ears can give the knowledge of sound; other sense organs  
cannot give that. And  
Veda is like the  
sixth sense organ and it gives me a knowledge, which cannot be  
gained through  
any other means of knowledge. And since it is a unique  
knowledge, which cannot  
be gained through other sense organs, the other sense organs  
cannot confirm or contradict  
that knowledge. Other sense organs can never verify the Vedic  
knowledge. So we have  
to accept what vedas reveal, as  
a new knowledge and this accepting capacity is called  
Shraddha. **Shraddha means learning**  
**to accept the knowledge given by the veda as a unique**  
**knowledge which is not available for any**  
**other sense organs to verify.** And this Shraddha is an  
extremely difficult thing to  
develop and one of the methods to develop shraddha is through  
worship or Upasana. Imagine  
there is a person with only four sense organs. From birth he  
has got only four sense  
organs. He does not have eyes; he is blind from birth. And he  
has got total  
faith in these four sense organs. And, at the age of 50, I  
give him the gift of  
a fifth sense organ called eye, and I tell him eyes are  
another means of

knowledge; and the eyes give a unique knowledge which you have to accept as a fact. And suppose this person argues that he will not accept whatever the eyes reveal; He says I want to verify through the other four sense organs. because I have faith only in the 4 sense organs; the 5<sup>th</sup> sense organ, I do not want to accept; therefore I want to verify the color, which the eyes reveal with the ears. The ears can never confirm the color; ears cannot contradict the color either. Therefore, I should never attempt to verify the knowledge given by one sense organ with the help of another sense organ. Then what is my attitude? Every sense organ reveals a fact, which cannot be proved or disproved by the other sense organs and in our tradition we say that veda is like the sixth sense organ And that is why in our tradition right from birth, they tried to cultivate Shraddha in the veda; learn to look at the veda as the sixth sense organ, so that the knowledge received from the veda, I accept as a fact. And suppose a person says; like this blind man; I too will not accept the eyes, if it cannot be verified by the other four sense organs; and he refuses to accept the eyes. In this case who is going to be the loser? If I refuse to accept the eyes, only I will not get the new knowledge of color. Similarly, if I refuse to accept the veda as another instrument of knowledge, I will never get unique knowledge given by

the Veda and I will  
continue to strive to prove the vedic wisdom by other means,  
which I will never  
be able to prove; that is why science can neither prove God  
nor disprove it. **Because God can be understood only through  
the sixth sense organ, called the Veda. And therefore the  
shraddha towards the veda should be exactly like my shraddha  
towards my sense  
organs.**

And  
how to develop that shraddha;  
it has to come from birth itself and that is why they kept  
acharya upasana, as part  
of our culture. Veda  
is another form of eye called Veda  
Chakshu; and  
therefore acharyopasanam is the  
capacity; the attitude towards Veda, as a pramanam. This is  
extremely important.

### **Shaucham:** Cleanliness

and or purity of surroundings. Keep surroundings clean. Keep  
dress clean and  
simple; keep body clean; keep speech clean, Vaktapas. Then  
there is  
cleanliness at the thought level. And that means ultimately  
all those virtues, which  
will keep my mind healthy. And what are those virtues, which  
keep the mind healthy.  
Amanitvam, Adambhitvam,  
Ahimsa, Kshanti, Acharyopasanam, etc.  
they are called mental hygiene, which will lead to mental  
health.

These virtues lead to  
mental hygiene, which leads to clean thoughts.

And,

the opposite of each one of them are: Amanitvam's opposite is manitvam. Adambhitvam's opposite is dambhitvam. Ahimsa's opposite is

himsa. Anarjavam's

opposite is arjavam. The

opposite of each one of these virtues is mental un-hygiene if that quality is

there; which will cause mental sickness and therefore enjoyment of a healthy

mind by cultivating all the virtues prescribed here is called Shaucham.

**Sthairyam:** And the next virtue

means sthiratha. It includes, Will

power; Perseverance, Commitment, all is called Sthiram. When we start any

pursuit, certainly there will be obstacles and setbacks. Some of them are

actual obstacles and some are imaginary obstacles. And because of the actual or

imaginary obstacle, if I withdraw from my pursuit, it is asthirathvam.

Sthirathvam means any type of obstacle may come, but I will continue.

Brthrahri,

in his niti shastra, says there are three types of people.

Lowest

level person is one, who does not start anything, as he is afraid of failure.

The second level person is one who starts but at first sign of obstacle stops.

The third level person, Uttama person, is one who continues despite obstacles;

or as saying goes, when going gets tough, tough get going.

Stories

such as Bhagirtaha prayatnam; Samundra manthanam; are all examples of tenacity.

It is an important virtue for spiritual seekers.

**AtmaVinigraha:** The next one is atmavinigraha.

Atma vinigraha

means

self-mastery. Being the master of my own equipment or instruments. We have seen

in Tatva bodha, we have got seventeen organs. pancha jnanedrianis, karmendriyanis five are

there; pranas, five are

there; mind, the emotional faculty and buddhi, the intellectual faculty;

seventeen instruments, we have got inbuilt in us and through these instruments

alone, I have to accomplish any goal in life. And before using any instrument,

I have to make sure that instrument is healthy and the instrument is under my

control. In Kathopanishad,

we saw the example of the chariot, the horses, the reins, the driver, etc. The

horses are like the sense organs; and so are the reins and they are controlled by

the mind and intellect is comparable to the driver. We required an informed

driver and we require the controlled steering or reins and the horses must be

tamed and obedient, then alone I can reach the destination. In the same way, we

have the body, senses, the mind and the intellect. Unless I can manage myself,

there is no question of managing a company.

Ashtanga

Yoga is to help us with Atmavinigraha.

Asanas

help us control the body; Pranayama helps control pranamaya kosha; Pratyahara

controls the mind; Then they got dharana, dhyana and samadhi, that

provide mastery over the mind, developing attention span, developing focusing

capacity. For developing these faculties the three exercises are: dharana, dhyana and samadhi, or absorption.

Swami Chinmayanda used to tell that the student must be so absorbed in the

class that even if the ceiling comes down, student should not know what is

happening. Otherwise, if someone comes late, we will be watching his movements,

what dress, color, etc. That the I should die to the world, that is samadhi, the absorption

capacity.

**Take away:**

Titiksha:

And since I do not have any control over the situation, I have to only change

my attitude in such a way that I welcome, I accept the situation and this

acceptance of the situation is called titiksha.

Kshama: So to practice Ahimsa, Kshanti (patience) is essential.

Shradha means learning

to accept the knowledge given by the veda as a unique knowledge which is not available for any other sense organs to verify.



With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Baghawad Gita, Class 168: Chapter 13, Verse 8

Shloka # 8:

Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury,  
for-bearance, sincerity, service of the teacher, cleanliness,  
steadiness,  
control of body and organs;

Upto shloka # 7 Sri Krishna  
dealt with Kshetram and Kshetranya. Kshetram and Kshetranya  
are also known as  
Atma and Anatma; and also called Deha and Dehi in chapter 2.  
One is matter  
principle while other is Consciousness principle. Sri Krishna  
was clarifying  
the six questions raised by Arjuna.

Now from the 8th shloka, which I introduced in the last class,  
up to 12th shloka, in five verses, Sri Krishna is now dealing  
with Gyanam, which is the third topic. In this shloka, Gyanam  
means the group of mental virtues required to enjoy a fit mind  
for gaining spiritual Knowledge; or spiritual-knowledge-  
friendly virtues.

If knowledge is given to an  
unfit mind, such a mind will resist it and it will not be  
assimilated.

Unassimilated knowledge, like unassimilated, undigested food can become a poison. Now these virtues are also known as Dharma. Dharma is the steppingstone for moksha. Many virtues are enumerated in the Gita and shastras. Brthhari wrote the Niti Shatakam a book of 100 virtues. Sri Krishna is introducing this topic now and each of 20 virtues will be discussed.

**Amanitvam:** Manlitvam

means self-glorification; thinking I am a great person, while Amanitvam is freedom from self-conceit or the humility. Why is self-conceit a big obstacle?

When we accomplish something, society admires, recognizes and rewards.

It

often starts with the family itself; the parents admire when we do even a small thing. When we listen to this glorification, admiration of others, generally our tendency will be, to easily join that group, and along with the society, we also start enjoying admiration of ourselves. When the society admires or rewards, it is the duty of the society and it is perfectly OK, but unknowingly we also start, like others, admiring ourselves. This self-admiration is the beginning, the seed for self-conceit.

What is the problem due to

it? Vedanta says problem of self-admiration is a very big trap for spiritual

seeker. **Once we start self-admiration,**

**it causes addiction to it and we look for more and more of it.**

**Once addicted,  
we want it all the time; and when deprived of it, it causes  
great disturbance  
in us.** Like  
a smoker, suffers deprivation symptoms when he quits smoking,  
like a liquor  
addict suffers when he tries to stop it; once we get addicted  
to the glorification  
of others, the deprivation causes lot of problems and  
therefore, just as any  
other sense addition has to be carefully avoided,

Similarly,  
admiration addiction also one has to carefully avoided.  
Therefore the first  
problem is that it causes addiction.

Second problem with self-admiration  
is that I get so excited about it that I get carried away and  
my discriminatory  
powers get robbed by name and fame. Once this is lost, we get  
delusional. I  
forget important facts of life. What are these important facts  
of life:

1) Whatever be my accomplishments, I can never take full  
credit for it, as there are many other factors as well. This  
forgetfulness is caused by excitement. So, most of the credit  
goes to many others. Whatever be the accomplishment, my  
contribution is only one of the factors; for every  
accomplishment, there are innumerable people involved,  
innumerable factors involved, I can never take full credit,  
but in excitement, I do lose sight of this fact and I claim  
and feel that "I", with my full power, I have accomplished  
that. This is the forgetfulness caused by excitement. I should  
remember that whatever be the name and fame I get, 99% of the  
credit goes to many other factors; I can perhaps take a little  
credit. This is first fact that is lost sight of by a

conceited person.

And the second fact that is forgotten in self-conceit is, even if I have contributed something for an accomplishment; whatever it be; may be music; may be education, may be sport; according to the Gita which we have seen, even that little contribution from me, is really speaking, not my contribution. I find I am born with that talent; that talent is a gift from the Lord, which is a fact, revealed in the 10th chapter of the Gita, called Vibuthi yoga: I do not enjoy any credit, any glory, it is a grace of the Lord's glory, which is expressing, manifesting through me, and therefore, the so-called limited contribution too, I cannot claim. That is the fact; but in self-conceit, I forget this fact also. I forget others' contribution; I forget Lord's contribution. Thus, self-conceit is an obstacle to devotion. Self-conceit and bhakthi cannot co-exist, because a self-conceited person forgets Lord's contribution, which is the only contribution.

Third, however great I am,  
I can never claim I am greatest one; in world there are people, there will be people, who will be greater than me.

It is a world of sadishayatvam. It is a beautiful word used in shastra. Sadishayatvam means anything can be bettered. Anything can be improved.

Anything can be improved,  
say the shastras. Self-conceit robs me of this fact. I can never appreciate another person who is greater than me. When I come across such a person my self-conceit does not allow me to admire. I alone want to be center of admiration. I develop jealousy, anger etc. In its extreme, I can even tend to eliminate the other person from the field.

A way to test my  
self-conceit is to ask if I can comfortably admire glory of  
other people? This  
will tell me how self-conceited a person, I am.

In our village, there was a temple nagaswaram person. He used  
to play in the temple rituals, daily. It is told that he was  
so self-conceited, he thought that he is the nagaswaram  
vidhwan. And just to tease him, somebody asked him: Hello  
Sivarama, how is Karikurichi Arunchalam? He was one of the  
nagaswara vidhwans. How is he?

And you know what was his answer: Ah.., he will also blow  
air'. He cannot accept others' greatness. That is the  
indication of self-conceit. And once this self-conceit comes,  
the door of devotion is blocked; and without bhakthi, Gyanam  
is never possible.

So one has to develop  
humility. Puranas have many stories related to manitvam. Every  
self-conceited  
person will be humiliated at some point or other.

Humiliation is called humbling experience. Every conceited  
person will be humiliated at one time or other; what do you  
mean by humiliation; **a lesson in humility is humiliation.**  
**Humiliation means humility creation.** And all our acharyas you  
find in any field, they all were embodiments of humility. They  
were all great in their field and they were all embodiments of  
humility. If you read the works of Kalidasa, he has written,  
(he is supposed to be, or the greatest Sanskrit scholar)  
several poems and several dramas.

In  
all of them, he writes an introductory verse. In all of them,  
you can see how humble  
he is. And not only he expresses his humility, he teaches  
humility to others.

All Acharyas were  
embodiments of humility. From this we come to know how much  
importance is given to  
humility. And in one of the works,  
known as shatpadi  
sthothram, Shankaracharya's first  
prayer is: O Lord remove my self-conceit; make me humble.  
Humility is required  
in all fields; humility is particularly required for Vedantic  
seeker,  
because without humility bhakti cannot come, and without  
bhakthi Gyanam cannot come.

### **Adambhitavam:**

Dambhitvam means physical  
expression of self-conceit. Here I want admiration at physical  
level as well. I  
want an attractive body, attractive dress, a head turner,  
through my walking,  
attention seeking expression and all forms of pretensions.  
Thus, Adhambhitvam  
means unpretentious, simple, inconspicuous, even though he is  
great. Hence the  
saying empty vessels make noise.

### **Ahimsa: It**

means non-injury to other beings. Like different weapons to  
hurt others,  
we already have three weapons to hurt others. They are:  
Kayika, Vachika, and Manasa; the very body  
is a weapon, which can cause injury to others; hands and legs,  
which bhagavan has given  
with good intention, but we use it terribly. And similarly vak  
is another  
instrument; animals do not have this instrument; therefore,  
animals cannot  
verbally injure; human beings are the unique ones who have

this most wonderful  
instrument. It can be used or it can be terribly abused;  
verbal abuse you know  
is worse than physical ones. So there is a saying that the  
wound caused by the tongue will not heal  
easily. And the third instrument is mind, anthakaranam; and  
mentally also himsa is possible,  
through thoughts. Mentally cursing others and remember  
thoughts are powerful  
forces and therefore kayika,  
vachika, and manasa are three  
forms of himsa.

In the Ten Commandments,  
Ahimsa is the first commandment. It is a major vow for a  
spiritual seeker.

**I should not do what I do not expect others to do, to me; is a very simple law. I do not want any living being to injure me, even mosquitoes.** And if I do not want others to hurt me, it becomes a universal law and it is an instinctive expectation; nobody teaches this; it is instinctive and natural expectation; what is my expectation; nobody should hurt me, which means everyone, else has got the same instinctive expectation that I should not hurt him or her and therefore this becomes a universal law and therefore only when I follow a Universal law, as Dayananda swami says, only when I do not rub against universal law, I can have peace of mind. Any time I am violating a universal law, also called dharma, I am hurting myself.

Dayananda Swamiji used to  
say, the Tamarind tree has a rugged bark and if you rub  
yourself against the  
tree, the bare body can be hurt. Dharma is like a Tamarind  
tree; nothing  
happens to Dharma; I hurt myself.

Second: Whatever I perform  
in world remains as a deposit and that alone I can take back.  
If I contribute  
Himsa, I will get back Himsa from world. If I give love, I get  
back love. If I  
don't want injury from world, I should not injure.

Third: The tendency to hurt others is natural and impulsive.  
We have a lot of expectations from family, friends, neighbors  
etc. Raga Dvesha, which, when fulfilled, I am happy; but when  
others behave according to their own free will, most of my  
expectations are then not met and if that expectation is not  
fulfilled I get into a rage. When expectations are not  
fulfilled, the natural consequence is that I am hurt. Non-  
fulfillment of expectation is bound to hurt me. And once I am  
hurt, the immediate reaction is attacking that object which is  
the cause of my hurt. The object means, the person who did not  
behave, and the set up which was not up to the mark; a hurt  
person, reacts causing hurt to others. So the psychology is  
hurt person hurts others. An injured person injures others.  
And there is no gap between my injury and my causing injury to  
others; it is so impulsive.

If this should not happen,  
it can occur only in one condition, my mind should be  
sensitive to feel the  
pain of the other person. Once I feel the pain of the other  
when I hurt the other  
person in impulse; I also go through the pain. I also go  
through the pain like  
the mother who beats the child; and afterwards the mother is  
never comfortable  
because the mother goes through the pain, which the child goes  
through.

**So for a  
sensitive person hurting another person is like a self-injury.  
I don't want to**



**hurt myself, so I don't hurt others.**

I go through sleepless nights when I hurt another. My mind registers others pain. So, my mind has to be sensitive (empathic) to follow Ahimsa. Vedanta requires a sensitive mind. Even reading newspaper and reading about pain should hurt me. Crime itself becomes punishment for a sensitive mind.

**Kshanti:** This word has several meanings. One meaning is mental immunity, where mind is not disturbed when my expectations are not met. I need to develop the immunity to weather, economy, people etc. Just as a person has physical immunity, I can have mental immunity as well.

**Take away:**

Ahimsa:

I should not do what I do not expect others to do, to me; is a very simple law.

I do not want any living being to injure me, even mosquitoes.

For a sensitive person hurting another person is like a self-injury. I don't want to hurt myself, so I don't hurt others.

A lesson in humility is humiliation. Humiliation means humility creation.

Once we start self-admiration, it causes addiction to it and we look for more and more of it. Once addicted, we want it all the time; and when deprived of it, it causes great disturbance in us.

**With Best Wishes,**

# Bagawad Gita, Class 167: Chapter 13, Verses 3 to 8

Note: My Gita book has only 34 shlokas in Ch.13, while swamiji's book has 35 shlokas. Thus, the numbering of shlokas is different.

Shloka # 3:

Hear from Me in brief about (all) that as to  
what that field is and how it is; what its changes are, and  
from what cause  
arises what effect; and who He is, and what His powers are.

Continuing  
his teachings Swamiji said, in the beginning of thirteenth  
chapter Arjuna asked for  
clarification of six words or technical terms. They are:  
Kshetram, Kshetragnya, Prakrti,  
Purushah, Gyanam and  
Gneyam. Sri Krishna  
is now talking about Kshetram and Kshetragnya starting from  
Shloka # 2 till  
Shloka # 7.

Kshetram  
is the physical body and any objects experienced in creation.  
Kshetragnya is  
the Experiencer, the subject, thus, I am Kshetragnya and I am  
experiencing  
Kshetram.

And

having defined Kshetram and Kshetragnya, now

Sri Krishna wants to give a simple elaboration of these two words; for which he

gave the introduction in the third verse.

Arjuna

may you know what is objective universe, may you know what is the nature of the

objective universe. May you know what are the products belonging to the

Objective universe, and May you also know the various causes, which produce these effects. And therefore what is Kshetram, what is the nature of the Kshetram, what is that part of the Kshetram which is called effect, and what is that part of the Kshetram which is called the cause, and from this we get a corollary that all the causes come under Kshetram and all the effects also come under Kshetram. 0

Arjuna, I am going to briefly elaborate on Kshetragnya, May you learn

carefully.

In

shloka's # 2 and # 3, the knowledge of these two words alone is considered

liberating knowledge. Now Sri Krishna wants to enter the elaboration. However,

before that he wants to glorify this topic again.

**Shloka # 4:**

**It has been sung of in various ways by the**

**Rsis, separately by the different kinds [The different branches of Vedic**

**texts.] of Vedic texts, and also by the rational and convincing sentences**

**themselves which are indicative of and lead to Brahman.**

This

topic is so important that all scriptures have talked about it. Kshetram is the material universe and Kshetragnya is Consciousness; or we can say, it is about matter and spirit. If both these words are understood, you have an understanding of whole creation. Science claims it is working on a Theory Of Everything (TOE) that is still eluding scientists. Vedanta says this TOE is matter and consciousness.

All

Rishi's have sung about this topic. All Vedic mantras (chandras) also deal with this topic. All sciences such as astronomy, physiology, biology etc come under Kshetram. Science has not yet been able to understand the relationship between matter and consciousness.

Vedanta,

however, has distinctly talked about it. Consciousness is satyam; matter is mithya and I am the consciousness principle. Brahmasutra, written by Vyasa, is where all Upanishads have been analyzed. Purva mimasa provides a logical analysis of ritual aspects of sutras. Upanishad portion of Veda is called Vedanta; it is also known as Vyasa Sutra. A sutra means it is an aphorism, a brief, packed, idea statement.

Nyaya

shastra says consciousness is a property of matter. Sankhya philosophy says,

consciousness is separate from matter. Thus, Brahmasutra has 555 sutras, 16 sections and 192 topics. Shankaracharya has written an extensive commentary on Brahmasutra with many lower level commentaries from many others, as well. The topic is large and takes a long time to study and they talk about Kshetram and Ksheternya.

### **Shloka # 5:**

**The great elements, egoism, intellect and the Unmanifest itself; the ten organs and the one, and the five objects of the senses;**

Here

Sri Krishna talks about Kshetram. All philosophers in our tradition have analyzed and categorized the topic into divisions called Tatvani. It is like science has been categorized into electricity, magnetism, organic chemistry, inorganic chemistry etc.

And

therefore in all the philosophies, we have got mainly 12 branches of philosophy in our tradition; all of them try to categorize the universe into various tatvams;

Vaiseshika philosophy, has divided the whole creation into seven tatvas. Nyaya philosophy has divided into 16 tatvas. Sankhya philosophy has divided the whole objective universe, into twenty-four tatvas.

And here Vyasacharya temporarily borrows from Sankhya philosophy

and he categorizes the universe into 24 tatvams. And what are those 24 tatvams? In Tatva bodha also, when we talked about the creation, this categorization is present. There is no rule that the category should be in a particular manner; it can be categorized according to our convenience. Suppose I want to categorize the whole class into groups. I can divide into two groups, male and females; or I can divide based on qualification, graduates, postgraduates, non-graduates; according to mother tongue etc. Here we are borrowing the categorization of Sankya philosophy and they talk about the evolution of the universe in four stages; gradually increasing the number of tatvams.

First

stage: was Prakriti, a beginning-less principle or basic matter or condition, just before the big bang.

Prakriti does not have origination. Prakriti is basic matter. If you want to understand in scientific language, it is the condition just before the big bang. Then they say, the Prakriti evolves partially and the first stage of evolution is called mahat tatvam. Prakriti, then mahat; so Mahat is total matter in the first stage of evolution.

Then

from Mahat, the next stage of evolution occurs, they call it ahamkara. Ahamkara, is the name of total matter; we are not talking here about the individual ego. Individuals are not yet born, this is even before the birth of the individual, the total matter has evolved into Mahat and the next one is the

Ahamkara, let us call it cosmic ego. Prakrti to Mahat, is stage No.1, mahat to ahamkara is stage 2.

In stage 3, from ahamkara, 15 tatvams originate or emerge; and what are the 15 tatvams?

No.1  
is the cosmic mind; Manah;  
not the individual mind of yours or mine; we are talking about the cosmic mind,  
Manah.

No.2  
then dasa indriyani; the ten sense organ principles or powers of perception, dasa indriyani; one plus 10; eleven,

And  
then, pancha sukshma bhutani, 5 subtle elements, come up. So in the third stage 16 principles come; Prakrti, mahat and ahamkara total to 16.

And  
then in the fourth stage from the subtle elements, the five gross elements come.

Thus:  
Prakrti, mahat, ahamkara, the 16 principles, and then at the 4th and final level, five gross elements all add up to 24 Tatvams. And all these twenty-four tatvams put together is Kshetram, the inert material objective universe. And consciousness is not the

nature of any one of them.

All of them are matter and therefore Sri Krishna enumerates them.

The  
shloka says:

In the first line, you see the avyaktham, which represents Prakrti, the topmost one; then buddhi means the mahat tatvam, the second stage; buddhi here is not the individual intellect, but buddhi is the cosmic intellect, the mahat tatvam, and the second stage, then ahamkara, is the cosmic ego the third stage; avyaktham, buddhi, ahamkara, (three) and then from ahamkara 16 items; they are the mahabhutani, the 5 subtle elements: akasha, vayu, agni, apaha, prithvi; space, air, fire, water and earth; in their subtle form; subtle form means invisible form. In Tatva bodha we have dealt with this. And then indriyani means the ten sense organs. Sri Krishna himself says: ekam means the mind, mana tatvam, the cosmic mind; so mahabhutani, dasa indriyani, ekam, these are the 16 tatvas at the third stage;

And then comes the fourth stage; means the five gross elements; thus 1+1+1+16+5; this is the addition; If you add it will be 24 tatvams; all of them come under Kshetra. And not only that, these 24 tatvams do not remain changeless; they constantly undergo change and as a result of their change and interaction, various properties are generated. And they are called the various gunas or vikaras of the Kshetram; and what are the generated properties? Sri Krishna enumerates them in the next shloka.

**Shloka # 6:**

**Desire, repulsion, happiness, sorrow, the aggregate (of body and organs), sentience, fortitude- this field, together with its modifications, has been spoken of briefly.**



Now

we have a material universe with 24 Tatvani and our physical body is also a part of it. Mind too is in it. Now, Mind is peculiar form of matter. While it is an inert matter, it appears as though it is sentient. Citing example of electricity, when it passes through water, nothing happens; but the same electricity passing through tungsten filaments, makes them glow; the glow is due to nature of Tungsten. Similarly, Wood does not allow electricity to pass through it, another property of wood.

Mind

is like the Tungsten filament; it is able to absorb Consciousness principle and then reflect it; then the reflected consciousness (RC) looks sentient. This borrowed sentiency is called Chetana.

Now look at the sloka. Sanghataha means the body mind complex; and chetana means borrowed sentiency. And if you want another example, imagine you have a mirror in hand and up above the Sun is there during the day time, the mirror is able to reflect the sunlight; and the non-luminous mirror; mirror does not have a light of its own, but with borrowed sun-light, mirror itself becomes itself a luminous and a bright object and what is the uniqueness of its luminosity; it is not intrinsic luminosity; but it is borrowed; whereas the light of the sun is intrinsic but the light of the mirror is borrowed. So, the kshetragnya is like the Sun; mind is like the mirror and borrowed consciousness is like the reflected Sun. And in Vedanta it is called chidabhasa; or cit prathibhimba or prathibhimba chaitanyam.

Chiddabasha,

this reflection, exists wherever there is a reflecting medium, the Kshetram.

Thus, Reflected Consciousness (RC) becomes a part of Kshetram, while OC (original consciousness) is not part of Kshetram.

Thus

the mind is able to experience the world, and such, a live mind immediately categorizes the world as:

1. Through Ragaha or Ichha.
2. Through Dveshaha

Thus the

objective world is replaced by my subjective world that is qualified by Raga and Dvesha. Once this division occurs, next comes sukha and dukha. Now, strangely, **both desirable and undesirable things cause sukha and dukha. How does this happen?**

**A desirable object produces happiness in me via its arrival; but it also produces sorrow in me, through its departure.**

**Even undesirable object produces sorrow and happiness. This capacity is not intrinsic in the world. It is "I" who classify this world in this manner.**

Thus iccha is Kshetram; dvesha is Kshetram, sukham is Kshetram; sanghataha, the body mind complex is Kshetram; the chetana, the reflected consciousness is also Kshetram.

Then, dhrti means will power. Because once we have classified the world as the cause of sorrow and happiness, then you use your will power to acquire the so-called object of joy, which is called pravrthi; I want this, that, etc. you have got an

increasing list. And you use your will power to run after those objects. And similarly, you have got of list of objects to be removed, which is called nivrithi, one is running towards, another is running away. So pravrithi-nivrithi-dhrti or will power. So, Dhriti and all fall under Kshetram.

**Padartha means object. Padartha with ragaha and dveshaha gets capacity to hurt or please me hence it is called Vishayaha. So the world is padartha, but it is converted to Vishayaha, an object that can bind me.**

Sangathaha  
means body mind complex.

Dhriti  
means will power.

Nivrithi  
and Pravrithi: Tendency to Desire and tendency to dislike.

The  
above list constantly changes and we struggle with this list, life long. So,  
there are the 24 properties of Kshetram.

**Shloka # 8:**

**Humility, unpretentiousness, non-injury,  
for-bearance, sincerity, service of the teacher, cleanliness,  
steadiness,  
control of body and organs;**

Sri  
Krishna now concludes analysis of Kshetram and Kshetrnya that started in  
shloka # 2. However, there appears to be an incompleteness in Sri Krishna's  
teaching. In shloka # 4 he promised, he will talk about

Kshetram and

Kshetranya. In shlokas # 6 and # 7 he elaborated on Kshetram but not on Kshetranya.

Shankaracharya gives an explanation for this. He says, Kshetranya is identical with Gneya and Purusha; thus, all three represent the spirit.

Arjuna

does not know this fact; it is like wanting to learn Vedanta and Upanishad; both are synonymous.

So

Gneya and Purusha description is description of Kshetranya. But Sri Krishna feels even though he leaves out kshetranya now, he is going to elaborate on that through the discussion of Gneyam and Purusha later. Therefore, Shankaracharya says, Sri Krishna has not forgotten.

Now

Sri Krishna comments on the third topic, that is Gyanam, (shloka's # 8- 11 in my book.)

Gyanam,

here, has a special meaning. Its normal meaning is knowledge while philosophical meaning is spiritual knowledge; but here it means, all virtues of a person or the Satgunas. These 20 Virtues are called Gyanam.

Shankaracharya

says if these virtues exist in a person, he can obtain Gyanam easily; hence it is called Gyanam.

**Take away:**

Both desirable

and undesirable things cause sukha and dukha. How does this happen?

A desirable

object produces happiness in me via its arrival; but it also produces sorrow in me, through its departure.

Even

undesirable object produces sorrow and happiness. This capacity is not intrinsic in the world. It is "I" who classify this world in this manner.

Padartha means

object in its original nature. Padartha with ragaha and dveshaha gets capacity to hurt or please me hence it is called Vishayaha. So the world is padartha, but it is converted to Vishayaha, an object that can bind me.

**With Best Wishes,**

**Ram Ramaswamy**