

Baghawad Gita, Class 202: Verses 9 to 14

Shloka 16.9:

16.9

Holding on to this view, (these people) who are of depraved character, of poor intellect, given to fearful actions and harmful, wax strong for the ruin of the world.

Greetings,

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said, In our scriptures, they talk about four goals of human life, known as purusharta's.

Purusha

meaning human being, artha means

goals. Therefore, purushartha means human goals. They are called human

goals; because human beings alone can fix a goal and work consistently to

accomplish that, because fixing the goal and working for that requires a

freewill and human beings alone are endowed with this freewill and therefore

they alone can have short-term and long-term goals and consistently work for

their accomplishment and since freewill and these goals are unique to human

beings, they are called purushartha; Of these four purusharta's, the

first one is well-known and every human being naturally goes after that; and it

is called artha; artha means material possession that make

sure that
the life is secure.

So material possessions for the sake of my security is very natural for even animals and certainly it is instinctive and natural for human beings and all material possessions are called artha; it may be in the form of money, in the form of shares, land etc.

And the second is kama, kama means all forms of sense pleasures or entertainment. This is a season of entertainment and therefore people know what entertainment is; it is sense pleasure. This artha and kama are called material pursuits and this is very natural to human beings. One need not have any special training; we do not require gurus; we do not require scriptures to train people in these two pursuits.

But Vedas say that these two are human goals; but do not stop with these two; there are two more human goals; uniquely human, not available to other animals and the third in that list is **called dharma, by which we mean inner refinement; or refinement of the mind.** In Sanskrit we call it samskara; chitta samskara. In fact, we have several ceremonies from conception to death; 41 such ceremonies are mentioned. Each ceremony is called a samskara. Garbhaadharana, pumsavana samskara, seemanthonanyana, jathakarma, nama karana, choula, annaprasana, upanayana, vedavrathini, vivaha; 41 such samskaras are mentioned; the culmination being the rituals done at the time and immediately after death. All of these are samskaras, because they are

supposed contribute to
the inner refinement;

And not only the rituals contribute to the inner samskara, even a life of values contribute to this inner refinement. All the ethical values are part of the inner samskara and not only rituals and values, even healthy attitudes contribute to the inner refinement; our attitude towards the parents; matru devo bhava; pitru devo bhava; Our attitude towards elders; which is unique to our culture, we are asked to do namaskara. Namaskara indicates our reverence for age; our reverence for experience; because certain type of refinement can come only through experience. Therefore, attitude towards wealth; attitude towards people, attitude towards the environment; attitude towards the world in general, they all form part of the lifestyle; contributing to inner refinement. **This chitta samskara is called dharma; Thus, the third unique human goal is mental refinement;** In Vedanta it is called sukshma buddhi.

But unfortunately, this inner refinement is not a tangible goal. Money is a tangible goal; people can understand it. And entertainment is tangible; I can switch on a show; but dharma is an intangible goal. Therefore, it takes time for the human beings even to know the value of this goal; Why is dharma an important human goal? Even to appreciate that it requires sensitivity. Plus, dharma is inner refinement, attained through combining religious life as well as ethics and morality. And this will lead to inner refinement. This is called dharma purushartha or in the language of sixteenth chapter; daivi Sampath or inner wealth or invisible wealth.

And then the fourth purushartha, which is the culmination of these three is moksha, otherwise called

spiritual enlightenment
or spiritual knowledge. Spiritual wisdom is the fourth
purushartha, which
is called moksha. Moksha means freedom from ignorance.
Knowledge
will give me freedom from ignorance. And freedom from
ignorance means freedom
from problems created by ignorance and according to our
scriptures; all human
problems are caused by ignorance. And this spiritual knowledge
or wisdom is
also an intangible goal; I also cannot show what is moksha.

Dharma is an intangible inner goal; moksha is also an
intangible inner goal; but the scriptures say they must be
included. And Vedas say, even if you do not know the worth of
these two higher goals, even if you do not understand what is
dharma; even if you do not understand what is moksha; it does
not matter; you follow the lifestyle that I prescribe; then if
you follow that; in due course you will know the value of
dharma and moksha. Like a mother, cannot teach everything to
the child; because child is too young to understand what is
hygiene. Child cannot understand; therefore, mother blindly
commands: wash your hands before eating. The child does not
understand the significance of washing, infection; hygiene;
bacteria and disease; mother cannot teach a small baby;
therefore, the mother says, do what I tell you now.

Even though the child may be unhappy because the mother is
forcing too many things; but mother does not feel bad, the
motive of the mother is the wellbeing of the child. Therefore
what the Veda's say is: You may not understand the
significance of inner growth; you may not understand the
significance of a value based life; you may not understand the
significance of religious life itself; even if you do not
understand, follow with faith in the Veda's; with the attitude
that veda is my mother; whatever it tells will be for my good.

And even if I do not understand the significance now; as I grow, I will understand. Thus, dharma and moksha purushartha's also should be included even as a person is pursuing artha and kama. Such a person is a religious person; a person given to daivi sampath.

And Sri Krishna says the problem with the materialist people is they will value only artha kama purusharta. A materialistic person is defined as that person, who looks upon only two goals in life; artha and kama alone. He will not understand what is dharma; he does not want to understand what is dharma; He will not understand what is moksha; He does not want to understand; At least if he blindly follows the vedas, it will be fine; but he does not have faith in the Vedas; So, no faith in god; no faith in vedas ; no faith in gurus; and himself, he cannot understand as well.

These people, artha kama pradhana, are called materialistic people.

Sri Krishna is very strongly criticizing these materialistic people; he said; their goal is work for 5 days, enjoy for 2 and then die.

They do not know the higher possibilities of human life, the wonderful ananda born out of dharma and moksha; they do not understand what is inner growth; they are short sighted people; And when I try to talk about dharma, they only argue.

They say, I do not value dharma or ethics, morality or devotion; I see many dharmic and religious people going through all types of problems. Devotees are suffering; ethical people are suffering; while all those adharmic people are enjoying. This is the argument

they give. They ask, what is the use of being a bhaktha?

This is the silliest argument, because, if you look at life in this manner, you cannot accept any law of life. For example, there are so many rules prescribed for good health in health magazines. They talk about do's and don'ts with regard to health. But if you observe, you will certainly find that there are many people who follow all the health rules and they fall sick. They do not smoke; they do not drink; they do not eat meat; they exercise regularly and yet they suffer heart attack. And, there are others who violate all the health rules and yet enjoy without any diseases.

Now can I argue, therefore, that all the health rules are meaningless. They say cigarette smoking is injurious to health; yet there are people who smoke, and who are healthy. And there are people who do not even touch a cigarette and have cancer. Therefore, can you say that rules of health are meaningless. We can never give such an argument. Similarly, we say dharma is good; adharma is bad. This is based on a shastric vision. To argue that dharmic people suffer while adharmic people enjoy, is the silliest approach.

So, we should not argue that dharmic suffer and adharmic people enjoy. Adharma is not good for our spiritual health. Dharma alone protects our spiritual health and this asuric people will not accept and they argue.

We can only pray for them.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says, they are short sighted and they will take to violent lifestyle; because even though himsa is adharma, they do not believe in adharma, whatever is an obstacle to them, they want to destroy; and thus, they are enemies of the world. As I said in the last class; violation of dharma will create an imbalance in the cosmic order; imbalance in the cosmic order will cause the destruction of the universe. And therefore, they are enemies of the world and they cause destruction.

Shloka 16.10:

Giving

themselves up to insatiable passion, filled with vanity, pride and arrogance, adopting bad abjectives due to delusion, and having impure resolves, they engage in actions.

There

is no limit to materialistic desires. Fulfilment of worldly desires can never give total satisfaction. So, it is like a mirage; from distance there seems to be water; when I go near, it recedes further. And similarly, we have a false hope that the fulfilment of materialistic desires will give us satisfaction, but we find once, one set of desires are fulfilled; the next set is ready; Swami Chinmayanand nicely says: Happiness is the Number of desires you fulfil divided by the Number of desires you have.

But

the problem is we only study the increase in the numerator

while we are assuming that the denominator, the number of desires, will remain stationary.

The problem is that the denominator also increases very fast. You will find that you have fulfilled so many desires; but instead of increasing, the happiness decreases, because there is no end to the fulfilment of desires.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says, nobody is satiated; and they say it is like pouring ghee into the fire; you want it to subside; you want it to quench; reality is that they will never quench by offering of ghee; it only increases. So, having fulfilled their petty desires; they get dambha, pomp and show, ostentation; and mana meaning pride and mada; meaning haughtiness or arrogance; they are full of these negative traits. All because of delusion. Now, what is the delusion? Finite plus finite is equal to finite only. By effort whatever I achieve in life; will be limited both in time and in size. I start as a finite being; by adding any number of finite goals, I only go from finitude to finitude; infinitude will not come. This they do not understand, because of delusion.

So, it means they believe in false values that the external objects will give me security not realizing that the external object itself is insecure. Money is insecure; inflation problem and interest is coming down; And the expenditure is

increasing; cost of living increases, and the interest decreases; What security do we have? Therefore, money is insecure, property is insecure, people around are insecure; job is insecure; so, by holding on to other insecure things, how can I find security. But the human being never thinks.

They have all kinds of vratams; which are all asuchi or Evil resolves; So instead of taking the religious vratams, like sabarimala vratams they take to evil resolves. In the olden days 41 days Vratham was taken to go to Sabarimala; now no vrathams are taken anymore.

But these people have got asuchi vratams; What is their resolve or Vrtham? Resolves such as, I will finish that competitor. Their resolves are usually negative ones.

Their vrithams are like those of rakshasas. They also follow religious discipline but for the destruction of the world.

Shloka 16.11

16.11

Beset with innumerable cares which end (only) with death, holding that the enjoyment of desirable objects is the highest goal, feeling sure that this is all.

These materialistic people learn only to depend more and more on external factors; their very acquisitions indicate they want happiness and security that are based on external factors. Therefore, the number of external factors they depend

upon increases gradually. Whereas the vedanta tells us to reduce dependences. The fundamental motto of **Vedanta is sarvam paravasham Dukham or dependence on external factors is sorrow.** External factors may be person; may be things; may be situations. **Vedanta says, sarvam atma vasham sukham or Non-dependence on external factors or self-dependence or independence is joy.** Whereas materialistic society is a consumerist society; And the more the number of external factors are, the more unpredictable my life will be; because which factor will fail, how and when, I do not know; so therefore, hidden variables will increase, unpredictability increases. Therefore, I do not know what will breakdown tomorrow and therefore whether I am happy or unhappy will depend upon perfect functioning of so many gadgets from telephone; computers and so many things. And, therefore, the problem is, the more life becomes unpredictable, the more the stress will be. Unpredictability leads to stress and strain; And the materialistic person depends upon more unpredictable external factors for his comfort and happiness; whereas the spiritual person requires only one thing; atmni eva atmana tushta; Fortunately, atma will not break down; and therefore, these materialistic people are full of stress and strain.

So, they have limitless worry and sleepless nights, whereas, a devotee who is a karma yogi, a man of daivi sampath, he says, let whatever happen, happen. Let not my peace depend upon these unpredictable factors, Oh Lord. Therefore, Oh Lord give me the inner strength, spiritual strength.

This devotion, the materialistic person does not have. His worries have no end at all.

He remains committed to money and entertainment.

These materialistic people are miserable and unfortunately,

they convert other people also to materialism because that is a more tempting philosophy.

Shloka 16.12:

16.12

Bound by hundreds of shackles in the form of hope, giving themselves wholly to passion and anger, they endeavour to amass wealth through foul means for the enjoyment of desirable objects.

So, these materialistic people are shackled by countless attachments; whereas the daivi sampth approach is, I do not own anything. His attitude is everything belongs to the Lord; I use them with the grace of the Lord, that is why when I build a house, I do not enter without placing the picture of the Lord. The idea is this house is not my house, it is a temple; and I am using that house with the grace of the Lord.

Therefore, a satvic person disowns everything; whereas the rajasic, tamasic and materialistic people; they hold on to things.

They are rich in kama and krodha. And unfortunately, a materialistic society praises only these rich people. When there is a humble person who has value for dharma; society does not honor him. Vedic society always valued renunciation. If Buddha was valued it was because he renounced everything.

A materialistic society will value possessions.

They are also given to kama and krodha as the ultimate thing.

They

are busy people, workaholics; and they have no time for pancha maha yagna. They

work for amassing wealth and all is done for entertainment.

Earning money

itself is not bad; when you earn more and own less; you become a blessing to

the society. In fact, a karma yogi is one who earns more and owns less. A karmi

is one who earns more and owns more; because when I earn more and own

everything I earn; he has no money to share with others.

While

Karma yogi is the most important person because he earns plenty and owns less;

that means he has a big buffer which is available for pancha maha yagna.

Therefore,

we are not against earning, but what we are against is earning and owning all.

These are the people who earn wealth and but do not give to others.

Shloka

16.13:

6.13

'This has been gained by me today; I shall acquire this desired object. This is in hand; again, this wealth also will come to me.'

So generally, these people are

busy and their philosophy is: Time is money.

Therefore, they do not waste time, they

utilize all the time to convert into money. This is the philosophy; therefore, generally they do not have free time; and even if they have some free time, they only think of how to increase their money and not about God.

In these three verses, Sri Krishna talks about the thought pattern of the materialistic person.

And what is their thought pattern?

They are always calculating the money they possess and planning to expand their possessions. They do not have time to think of anything other than artha and kama.

In short, the idea is: he also meditates; only

difference is the object of meditation is Lakshmi rather than Vishnu. Therefore, his is money dhyanam.

Shloka 16.14:

16.14

'That enemy has been killed by me, and I shall kill others as well. I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am well-established, mighty and happy.'

And once there is inordinate greed, naturally I will see all other people as my competitors. So, greed means I see enemies everywhere; as obstructing my goals; and therefore, shatrus increase; And in business field, liquidation of the competition is part of the program, and therefore different normal and

abnormal methods are used to finish off the other people. So big companies swallow the small ones.

They even use goondas and even physically liquidate the people, because of their inordinate greed.

Initially there may be some guilt but after sometime, their heart gets benumbed that there will be no regret or guilt also.

Once I have destroyed all the competitors and I have got the monopoly in that field, nobody can come in front of me. I am the one who will enjoy all the wealth as the Siddha or successful person; I am the most successful person, but how he attained success is a big question.

I am the strongest person, even the law cannot do anything because police are in my hands, because I know what is their rate; once I know the rate, everybody can be fixed. And politicians no problem. So therefore, I hear that all the politicians are in the hands of big business groups. So therefore, all are in my hands.

He thinks, I am the happiest person in the world; thus, these people dream their future.

Take Away:

Dharma means inner refinement or refinement of the mind.

Vedanta says

dependence on external factors is sorrow. External factors may be persons, things or situations.

Vedanta

also says, non-dependence on external factors or self-dependence or independence is joy.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawad Gita, Class : Chapter , Verses 4 to 9

Shloka 16.4:

16.4

0 son of Prtha, (the attributes) of one destined to have the demoniacal nature are religious ostentation, pride and haughtiness, [Another reading is abhimanah, self-conceit.-Tr.], anger as also rudeness and ignorance.

Greetings,

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said,

In the 16th chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna is talking about two types of lifestyles, one that is conducive to spirituality and moksha and the other one non-conducive to spiritual goal and these two lifestyles are called daivi sampath and asuri

sampath.

We can roughly translate it as spiritual value system and materialistic value system; and the based on this, the spiritual value systems were mentioned in the first three verses; and the materialistic value system, Sri Krishna summarized in the 4th verse and he will elaborately deal with that from the 7th verse up to 21st verse later on. But before elaborating the asuri sampath, Sri Krishna points out that if you want to gain moksha, then your life style should be governed by daivi sampath. This is mentioned in the 5th verse and we will read:

Shloka

16.5:

16.5

The divine nature is the Liberation, the demoniacal is considered to be for inevitable bondage. Do not grieve, O son of Pandu! You are destined to have the divine nature.

Sri Krishna says, the spiritual value system which I gave out in the first three verses will take you towards Moksha. It is conducive to self-knowledge. Whereas the asuri sampath, the materialistic value system; will keep you in Samsara and bondage. And naturally Arjuna is worried as to which category he belongs to, therefore, Sri Krishna pats Arjuna and says, Arjuna fortunately, you are with daivi sampath only.

You

are born with spiritual inclination. You have a value for spiritual growth; Interest in spirituality is possible only if inherited from the previous birth.

Sri Krishna

has said before that spiritual development takes place through

many janmas. If we had such a lifestyle in this birth, we will have a natural inclination for religious or spiritual life. Arjuna, you are born with such an inclination. You have got a satvic tendency; you are a guna brahmana by birth itself and therefore you can feel happy. And you can nourish that spiritual tendency more and more.

Shloka

16.6:

16.6

In this world there are two (kinds of) creation of beings: the divine and the demoniacal. The divine has been spoken of elaborately. Hear about the demoniacal from Me, O son of Prtha.

So, here, Sri Krishna says, O Arjuna, the entire humanity can be divided into two groups. Not merely Indians; not merely the vedic people, the entire humanity can be divided into two groups; based on their tendencies; their values.

One group of humanity we can call daiva group, which means naturally having a spiritual tendency. They might be born in a materialistic society; but something pulls them towards spiritual people, spiritual books, spiritual topics, something attracts them, they themselves do not know the reason.

And there is another group, asuric; utterly materialistic group, down to earth group, as a Yamadharmaraja said in kathopanishad. Yamadharmaraja calls them Shreyas and Preyas

group. So Asura meaning People with materialistic tendencies; even though they born in a spiritual family; surrounded by Vedas, surrounded by Brahmanas, surrounded by temples; father himself may be a Gyani, but in spite of all these influences; these are people who turn towards materialism. Therefore, known as asuraha.

And, I have talked about the daiva group, the spiritual people, who have a spiritual value system, I have talked about them in the first three verses, but I have not elaborately talked about the materialistic value system. and I have briefly mentioned that in the fourth verse, but Sri Krishna feels that it should be elaborated. Therefore, he says the elaborate study of Asuri sampath, Arjuna, may you learn from me; so that you can avoid such a tendency. Thus, Sri Krishna gives an introduction to the asuri sampath; and hereafter He will elaborate on that.

Shloka 16.7

16.7

Neither do the demoniacal persons understand what is to be done and what is not to be done; nor does purity, or even good conduct or truthfulness exist in them.

All the human beings by nature and by birth are materialistic in character. Nobody knows that there is a such a goal called Moksha. And nobody knows that there is such a thing called dharma, because dharma is not visible to our eyes; moksha is also not visible to our eyes. Both of them are called apaurusheya purushartha; goals not available to our sense organs; or even to science. And since these two goals are not known, every human being has got only two purusharthas called artha and kama. Artha means money, and wealth. And the second thing is kama pleasure or enjoyment; therefore, everybody by birth has a value for artha kama purushartha's; and therefore,

our mind develops its own raga-dvesha's. raga means likes and dvesha means dislike. Right from birth, our life is governed by raga-dveshas, our instinctive likes and dislikes; which are again based on artha kama purushartha; and our scriptures point out that this raga-dvesha based life is OK in the beginning stages. But once a stage is reached when we are capable of discrimination and thinking, this raga-dvesha based life should be changed; and a new value system should replace the old value system; and the new value system that is prescribed by our scriptures is the spiritual value system. And we do not know the importance of spiritual goals, because we are immature people at that time. And, therefore, we should be guided by the scriptures which we look upon as Veda mata.

Just as a baby does not know what is good for it and what is bad, a baby surrenders to the mother, and the mother decides what is good for the child. And as long as the child goes by the mother's decision, it is ultimately for the good of the baby only. Just as mother decides what is good and bad for us, because we are immature. Similarly, Veda is the mother, who decides what is ultimately good for us and as per Veda the ultimate goal of human life has to be spiritual alone. Therefore, the shruti says: You do not know what is good for you. I am deciding what is good for you and therefore follow what I tell you. And the Shruti replaces the materialistic value system by a spiritual value system. It tells what is good and it is called vidhi. Vidhi means a thing which is good for me and nishedha means that which is not good for me. vidhi means kartavyam; Nishedha means akarthavyam and the **Shruti asks us to replace the raga- dvesha based life by vidhi-nishedha based life.** And this transformation from the materialistic value system to spiritual value system is considered the second birth of the human being. This transformation is from the prakrta to the samskrta purusha; and it is generally symbolized by the sacred thread ceremony.

Sri Krishna says that the asura purushas are

those people who do not go through this transformation of life. Because they do not want to follow the spiritual value system prescribed by the scriptures. And therefore, he says **people who are materialistic people, asuras, who are governed by raga-dveshas, likes and dislikes**, they do not educate themselves scripturally. They are literate materialistically, because they may know physics or chemistry or economics, but spiritually they are illiterate. And therefore, this transformation does not take place.

They do not know what is to be done, for spiritual growth.

They do not have dharma adharma viveka. And, therefore, they do what they like.

So, the vedic scriptures give us a daily routine to be followed for spiritual growth. The scriptures give us instructions on what we need to do from the moment we wake up every morning till we go to bed.

So, the first advice the scriptures give is to get up before Sunrise. Most of us don't follow this.

So, Shastra says wake up before sunrise so that Surya Bhagavan can bless us.

This is the first spiritual value or achara.

And thereafter **start the day with lighting the lamp and then doing some prayers, apply some tilakam, and this is supposed**

to be the greatest protection against materialism. The onslaught of materialism is so powerful that if you have to protect, they say put some kumkum or chandan or vibhuthi.

The vibhathi is prepared by chanting a lot of mantras. Vibhathi preparation is a very elaborate ritualistic process, and therefore, it is not an ordinary ash, it is an ash with lot of mantra. And not only it has mantras' spiritual values, even when a person is applying vibhuthi he is supposed to chant mantras or names of the Lord or namas. And that is why in vaishnava sampradhaya it is called nama.

Vibhuthi means Bhagavan mahima. When you are wearing the Vibhuthi, one has to chant the triyambaka mantra.

This mantra says that Vibhuthi means it is glory of the Lord. Since you remember the glory of the Lord, the ash itself got the name Vibhuthi and since this tilakam is associated with God, it is supposed to protect us from the onslaught of materialism. Therefore, get up early in the morning; do snanam, light up the lamp, chant the prayers, and remember the Lord and remember the goal of life as well. And until you complete all these things, not even a drop of water should be drunk.

Start your day with achara. There is no sense of religious purity at all for materialistic people; So, they walk with the night dress all over the world, with the half-cleaned teeth, with the brush in the mouth, with toothpaste, walking all over with a newspaper. It is certainly not a vedic lifestyle.

Even brushing the teeth is a religious rite and there is a prayer mantra addressed to vanaspathi devatha, because in the olden days, they used the twigs of the trees for cleaning the teeth and therefore prayer to the twig: Hey Vanaspathe, I am brushing my teeth to remove my danta malaha, the impurities of the teeth; along with that, Oh Devathe, cleanse my mind also". And for what purpose? For Atma Gyanam. All these are wonderfully designed by the Veda right from the very young age to be followed; materialistic people do not believe in any one of them.

So, they do not have the religious Discipline; what about values? They do not believe in the values also; their argument is, whatever is convenient is value; I will speak truth also when it is convenient.

So, values also they do not believe in. This is the beginning of materialism. Now we can imagine the details.

Shloka 16.8:

16.8

They say that the world is unreal, it has no basis, it is without a God. It is born of mutual union brought about by passion! What other (cause can there be)?

They are totally irreligious people. They do not connect with religion or spirituality, which is based on the vedic scriptures. First, they do not believe in the Vedas or believe

in Asthayaam. Sathyam here means Veda pramanam, Asathyam means that they do not believe in Veda pramanam, even though Veda is like thousand mothers.

Shankaracharya tells us, elsewhere, that the Vedas are superior to thousand mothers and fathers; it is interested only in our wellbeing but in spite of that; they do not believe in Veda pramanam. They are utterly nastika people. And if they do not accept Veda pramanam; they also do not believe in Dharma. Pratishta means dharma; dharma means moral or ethical order of the universe. Vedas say Dharma or morality alone sustains the creation.

Dharma means that which sustains the universe. Moral order alone sustains. Once the morality goes from the society, there will be utter distress and confusion and a society cannot survive for long; And therefore, scriptures talk about Dharmas and these people do not believe in dharma because dharma is not visible to our eyes. They believe in the physical order of the universe, because it is scientifically provable. They believe in the scientific laws of the creation; like the law of gravitation; like the ecological laws, etc. but the laws of dharma they do not believe because it cannot be scientifically proved. And therefore they say there is no dharma or adharma; there is no punyam or papam and therefore, there is neither previous birth or next birth. Enjoy this life; following whatever you feel like doing.

And then who is the creator of this universe?

They do not believe in God as well.

They say creation can come by itself; the scientists have proved that the big bang took place at such and such time, thereafter the world has evolved by itself with the help of chemical and

physical laws; we do not see any intelligent principle behind it; and therefore we do not require a God.

They reject everything; they believe in only money and entertainment. Therefore five days of a week, earn and two days of a week, go all out and enjoy. Continue that till death. This is the philosophy of materialistic people.

Whereas what is the belief of the traditional people? We say, God is the creator of the world; and along with the world, God has created the Vedas also. And Vedas are the manuals which are meant to guide our life; so that we can extract the best out of this human life. And the best we can extract is moksha itself.

So, do not have materialistic friends; until you clearly understand the Vedas and understand the value of dharma. Until you understand the concept of pramanam, avoid materialistic people.

These people argue that there is no Ishvara; no Vedas and there is no dharma.

Then how did this creation come?

We are created by our parents because of the male-female union, which is caused by kama or passion, we are born. And how are our parents born? because of their parents; and how are their parents born; because of their parents. Why is God required for this? They argue that spending money on temples is useless, rather give money to the poor.

And when we listen to those arguments, we also start having doubts, perhaps they are correct; whereas Vedas says spending money on God or dharma or puja etc. can never be a waste; it is like pouring water at the root of the tree; when you pour water at the root of the tree; water directly goes to the root; but in an invisible manner the water goes to all the branches; I do not see it, but every cell of the tree gets the benefit.

Similarly, Bhagavan is the root of this creation; where did we see this? In Bhagavat Gita chapter 15.

Abhisheka you do, naivaidyam you do, nothing goes to waste, ultimately it is for the benefit of humanity. But a materialistic person will not accept that.

Shloka 16.9:

16.9

Holding on to this view, (these people) who are of depraved character, of poor intellect, given to fearful actions and harmful, wax strong for the ruin of the world.

So, these Asuric people hold on to the materialistic philosophy. Their philosophy is whatever sense organs can see that alone exists. That there are things, beyond our sense organs and which can be known through other means of knowledge, they do not accept. It is like a person with four sense organs. Imagine a person has only four sense organs by birth. He does not have eyes. He has got ears, tongue, nose and skin.

And I talk about the field of colors, I say that there is a world of colors. He says, I do not believe in that; I do not accept that; because I am not able to appreciate the colors with my four sense organs. And I say no, that you cannot know

that, because the available four sense organs do not have access to the colors. It has to be known through the fifth sense organs, eyes, I tell. But this person argues that I do not believe there is a fifth sense organ. I want to prove the colors with the help of the 4 sense organs I have; he wants the proof for the colors through the ears, or prove the color through the nose, through the tongue, skin, through the available four pramanas. He is not interested in the fifth sense organ which reveals a field not available for these four.

Similarly, our culture talks about a sixth sense organ. What is the sixth sense organ?

It is called Veda. And we want to prove that with the help of the available five sense organs, we can only say that the available sense organs do not have access to that; you have to use the sixth. And if a person refuses to use the eyes, which is the fifth sense organ, who is the loser? If I will not use the eyes, I alone am going to be the loser, neither the eye nor the world of colors. If I should benefit from the world of colors, I should be willing accept a fifth sense organ called the eye; which sense organ can never be proved by the other four sense organs. Veda is the sixth sense organ which can never be proved or disproved by the available five sense organs. You use the Veda pramana and study with faith, you will be opened to a new and wonderful field, which is not accessible to science; which is not acceptable to the sense organs.

By rejecting the Veda, Veda is not the loser; I am going to be the loser. But materialistic people will never understand the

significance of the sixth sense organ. They claim that they are rational people, they will believe in only those things which can be sensed through five sense organs. Like the fool who wants the proof for the color with the help of the other 4 sense organs; how can I prove it; it is not possible.

And therefore, the materialistic people will never understand.

They are lost souls, because they are losing a huge chunk of the creation which is accessible only through Veda pramana. The very definition of the Veda is what: Veda is a sixth sense organ as it were; which will reveal a new world which is not accessible to these regular five sense organs. How can you define the fifth sense organ the eye; eye is a fifth sense organ, which reveals the colors, which are not accessible to the other four sense organs. Similarly, Vedas reveals a completely new field. It is for you to operate or make use of the Vedas; otherwise you are going to be the loser.

So, they are lost souls. All because they do not understand the concept of pramana. What the eyes reveal, the ears can never prove; the ears can never disprove; what the eyes reveal. Suppose I say this is orange color is revealed by eyes; suppose the eyes want to verify the orange color. No, the ears are great; but the ears can never prove or disprove, because their field is different.

Similarly, Vedic field is different; scientific field is different. Science has got access only to a particular field; therefore, science has no right to prove or disprove the Vedic teaching.

This is the significance of pramanam.

Therefore, they try to prove the Vedas scientifically. That is the greatest foolishness. It is like trying to prove the colors with the help of the ears. They will never succeed; and when they do

not succeed, instead of understanding their foolishness, they reject the Vedas.

Vedas are unscientific and therefore I won't believe. That is the greatest foolishness to have. Therefore, Sri Krishna says: idiots; they try to prove Vedas through science; They hold on to a materialistic philosophy and once artha and kama becomes dominant in life; when dharma is not valued, then compromise with values become natural. Violation of values become natural. Telling a lie will become very comfortable; first it will prick, second lie it does not matter, the third lie we are comfortable; thereafter, lying become natural, cheating becomes natural, himsa becomes natural; therefore, they will be hurting the moral order of the universe. Ugrakarmanaha means they are people of violence. Violating what? the ethical or moral order of the creation; violating dharma which is the health of the universe. It is like violating the rules of health; by following the rules of health; I keep my body fit. If I violate those rules, the body dharma is disturbed; which becomes sickness physically, similarly when dharma is violated, the society becomes sick. Adharma is the sickness of the society. A sick body cannot survive; a sick society cannot also survive.

And therefore ugrakarmanaha, they hurt dharma; and the society indirectly prabhavanthi;

And jagataha kshayaya; they become the cause of the destruction of the humanity; And the tragedy is when the scientific knowledge increases, and value for dharma decreases, the scientific knowledge also will be used for adharmic purposes. And science gives enormous power and the increased power will be used for consistent akramaha. If medical science increases and kidneys can be replaced; kidney racket comes up. Thus, Knowledge without wisdom becomes dangerous. Knowledge is material knowledge, wisdom is dharmic knowledge; When material knowledge increases, without dharmic knowledge, that society will have problems. They will then

cause destruction of universe. Militants will increase; terrorists will increase, train accidents will increase; naxals will increase. They will have even atom bombs and chemicals. Science will become a curse of humanity. Science will be blessing only when it goes along with dharma.

Therefore, these people will become a curse to the society.

Therefore, they become enemies of humanity.

Thus, educated people without dharma will become enemies.

Sakshara rakshasa bhavanti. Sakshara means literate people, they become Rakshasa.

Take Away:

Asuras means Materialistic people.

Shruti

asks us to replace the raga- dvesha (likes and dislikes) based life by vidhi-nisheda (good vs bad) based life.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawad Gita, Class 200: Chapter 16, Verses 2 to 4

16.2

Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, control of the

**internal organ, absence of vilification, kindness to creatures,
non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, freedom from restlessness;**

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said, in the beginning of the 16th chapter, in the first three verses, Sri Krishna is giving a list of virtues which He names daivi sampath; and when a person lives a way of life; taking into account these virtues; then it will become conducive to atma Gyanam. We completed first verse in the last class and in the first verse, I had left out one word and I am happy that the students noted the omission and pointed it out to me. First, I will take up the omitted word, tapaha, in the second line.

If you split it; the word tapas or Tapaha has several meanings. Sri Krishna will talk about tapa elaborately in the 17th chapter, and He will divide tapas into three types, satvika, rajasika, and tamasika tapas. Here we will see one of the meanings of the word tapa; it is deliberately and willfully going through a painful experience for toughening one's physical and mental personality. Voluntarily, deliberately going through some painful experience; of course, within a limit, in a controlled way; going through a painful experience, so that my body and mind will get toughened enough, immunized enough, to withstand pain or difficulty. So, immunization of the body, toughening of the body is the purpose of any form of tapas. And we have got many types of tapas, in the form of vrthams. For example, those who go Sabarimala, the Ayyappa temple in Kerala, they take a 41 day or 48 days of vow. And during these days; they willfully give up certain comforts. Certain types of physical comforts are given up, and the body is allowed to go through discomfort and similarly they walk 48 miles through thorns, stones and all those, without wearing a chappal; is a voluntary invitation of physical pain. Even though nowadays they can go through a very short route; they do that; Sometimes we can see people going

to the Himalayan shrines of the Kedarnath and Badrinath, at higher altitudes, very cold; there also they go without proper cover, without chappal they go; this is a clear invitation to physical pain; but you do not call it suffering. A suffering is a suffering only when it is forced upon me by somebody else.

Whereas a suffering becomes a tapas when I myself, voluntarily, force on myself for the sake of toughening my body and mind. I have talked about this before; the difference between fasting and starving, is purely based on the attitude. When I want to eat food, and food is not available, it is starving; but food is available, but deliberately today happens to be Ekadasi and one stays away from food.

In Srirangam there are people who fast the whole day, even when food is available; I deliberately forgo and go through the pang and discomfort of hunger; and this voluntary suffering is called tapas. Shankaracharya calls it sharira pidanam; pidanam word he is using; but it is voluntary. The benefit, advantage of this tapas is the body gets a capacity to tolerate; tolerance of heat; tolerance of cold; tolerance of pain; **so, increase of titiksha or tolerance is the benefit.** And in Vedanta, tolerance is considered to be a very useful sadhana. It will help a person in several ways spiritually. One benefit is that if I toughen myself and develop tolerance when I have to go through choiceless pain. Everyone will have to face pain in life. Sometimes there are remedies, but there are occasions when a person is forced to go through pain and there is no cure or remedy. Like incurable disease or anything, I have got tolerance, choiceless pain in life will not disturb me too much. Thus, tolerance prepares myself to face choiceless pains in life; which is caused by prabhala prarabhada.

Durbhala prarabhda, gives me pain but I have remedy for weaker prarabhda, but there are prabhala prarabhda, which will give me pain for which I can have no remedy. How to face such

choiceless pain? There is only one way; I have to raise my level of withstanding power; just as the military people develop that power; so, they have to learn to starve for days together; living with water; they have to survive with whatever they get; They have got endurance tests; thus, every human being requires increase in endurance power; And therefore, titiksha is useful to face choiceless situations.

The second benefit of tapas or increase of tolerance is we can avoid impulsive reactions to situations. Any impulsive reaction is because of lack of tolerance. I cannot tolerate nonsense. I cannot tolerate adharmic action; I am extremely sensitive; many people say. When I am sensitive and intolerant, the greatest disadvantage that I face, I impulsively and immediately react to the situation without thinking. Any thoughtless action is reaction; and any thoughtless reaction is improper; because we are not even judging whether our actions are right or wrong. The only solution for impulsive reaction is developing the tolerance power, so that even if somebody is doing improper action, I can wait, analyze, think well and react at the proper time. And when I react at proper time deliberately thoughtfully, it is no more a reaction; it is an action. If I have to postpone my reaction, and deliberately act, I require titiksha or tolerance and that tolerance comes by practicing tapas. This is the second benefit;

The third benefit of tolerance is this. Bhagavan has kept pain

in life; not merely for hurting us. The role of pain is not merely wounding us, but Bhagavan wants to teach certain important lessons through pain also. So, sufferings also have a very important role in human life. And the important role of suffering is teaching; especially spiritual teaching; and if I should have the capacity to learn from suffering, I should enjoy an undisturbed mind. If suffering emotionally disturbs me, I will not be able to learn from suffering. I will go through sufferings but will continue to be where I am. So how can I learn from suffering? Only when my mind is calm, I can go through suffering and learn; and that is possible only when there is titiksha; there is tolerance. Therefore, the third benefit of tolerance is developing the faculty of learning from pain. Learning from suffering.

In fact, the very first chapter of the Gita is Arjuna vishada yoga. So Arjuna's suffering taught a lot; At least he learned that he requires external help to solve the problem of raga, shoka and moha. And that is how he decided to surrender. Therefore, pain also has a role in spiritual growth; and I can make use of it only if I have tolerance. Thus, tapas plays a very important role in developing tolerance and therefore it is included in spiritual sadhana.

And now coming to the second verse, we saw the word Ahimsa, satyam, krodha and tyaga. The word tyaga, I pointed out, refers to renunciation; renunciation can be either external or internal. External renunciation is taking to a monastic life; internal renunciation is mentally dropping the ownership notion; I do not own anything. Bhagavan is the only owner; I am a trustee; I am supposed to only maintain things or maximize the use of things for the time being. This freedom from mamakara is called tyaga; mamakara tyaga.

The next value is shanti; shanti means the equanimity of mind; poise of mind; tranquility of mind; freedom from stress and strain. Another word they use is anayasa;

inner relaxation. And this Shanti is a virtue, which we have to try to maintain throughout the day, which Sri Krishna called samatvam yoga uchyate. The very karma yoga way of life is to maintain this poise. And why is this shanti important? Only when the mind has shanti, intellect will be active and functional.

When the mind is disturbed, it will jam the intellect and it will not work. A Vedantic student has to do sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam, all the three require an equanimous mind; therefore shanti. We can say, it is the samatvam attained through karma yoga. It is otherwise called samaha.

Then the next virtue is: Apaishunam. apaishunam means not publicizing the defects of other people. It is very enjoyable thing; it is a very juicy topic; to talk about the things happening in the neighborhood. Therefore, whatever defects are there; whatever deficiencies are there; whatever weaknesses are there, I enjoy talking about and whatever virtues are there; I carefully avoid. Shastra says it is never correct. If at all you want to talk about others, talk about their virtues. Cover up your virtues; publicize others' virtues.

Therefore, he says apaishunam; never talk about the other people's weaknesses.

Then the next virtue is Daya bhuteshu. Daya means compassion, bhuta means all living beings; human beings, animals, towards all of them, have compassion, i.e. learn to look at their suffering by standing in their shoes. Temporarily imagine what will it be if I am in their position. So, then, certainly it will be impossible for us to injure others.

Therefore, bhuteshu daya, or bhuta daya is considered to be a very important virtue.

Then the next one is aloluptvam; aloluptvam means not yielding

to the temptations of sense objects. So the world is full of maya. And the world is full of temptations, my sense organs can very easily become an addict to anything. So even when such temptations are there; not yielding to them, that self-control is called aloluptvam. Previously we saw the word dama; dama is in a general sense control; aloluptvam is specific sense control; when there are temptations.

Saying No to drugs; because there are certain temptations like drug, liquor, cigarette, etc. We have to yield only once; first time it is a deliberate mistake, and second time, that object becomes the master and I become a slave. First, I am master, the cigarette is slave; second time, the cigarette become stronger; then time, it will still become stronger; after sometime, I am utterly helpless that I cannot even imagine giving it up.

You will find that once a person becomes an addict, it is almost impossible to get out. You have to read the book of Alcoholic Anonymous. They say God alone can help such an addict; For that, one has to surrender to God. even that becomes difficult. And therefore, always say No first.

Therefore, better not to go in front of it, at all; and therefore aloluptvam.

Then the next one is mardavam; mardavam means gentleness, in handling people, in handling things, gentleness or politeness in manners; Not being rude is called mardavam.

The mind of the wise people is very unique. It has got two

opposite virtues. One angle it is stronger and harder than even diamond; and from another angle they are tender; more tender than even flowers; How come one mind is both hard and tender. It is said when they are receiving experiences such as people insulting, people criticizing, people misbehaving; when they are facing adverse situations, their mind takes the mode of hardness; the mind is so strong that any adverse situation cannot affect it; like the rock of Gibraltar, it will not get affected; but the very same wise people when they are handling other people, when they are talking to other people, their language and behavior is more tender than even flowers. So, as a karta they have a tender mind; as a bhokta they have a diamond like hard mind. But the problem of the ignorant person is the other way around. He also has a hard and soft mind. When he faces situation, it is too soft; that at the slightest insult he is affected; When he handles people, it is so rock like and rude, neither he is happy nor the other people around are happy. So, gentleness in handling other people.

Then hrih means modesty, and also a sense of shame; a healthy sense of shame. There are two types of shame, one is a healthy shame. A healthy shame is defined as that, which obstruct a person from doing wrong actions. Sometimes we feel ashamed to do certain things in front of others, when that shame restrains us from doing adharmic actions, that sense of shame is a worthy sense of shame and it has to be cultivated. Shamelessness in that respect is an evil thing.

Therefore, healthy shame is called hrih or modesty.

Then the next virtue achapalam; chapalam means restlessness expressed at the body level. Restlessness which is primarily a mental condition and when the mind is highly restless, it overflows to the body level and through the body language, the

person shows he is uncomfortable. Hands and legs are moving; face is twitching. He is biting the finger; first nails then finger. They eat pencils and pens; all kinds of things happen; fidgety character is called chapalam; where the body does lot of movements purposelessly. Moving the legs purposelessly, moving the hands purposelessly. All of them are called cheshtai. When we are children, parents used to tell us sit quietly without doing any cheshtai. That indriya cheshta is called chapalam; achapalam is freedom from that; body also is relaxed.

Shloka 16.3:

16.3

Vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, freedom from malice, absence of

haughtiness-these, O scion of the Bharata dynasty, are (the alties) of one born

destined to have the divine nature.

Then next virtue is tejaha. teja means not being a victim of exploitation; goodness; Simplicity, it does not mean ideocracy. Being simple does not mean, being simpleton, it is not required; Be gentle; be good; be tolerant; all these virtues are very good; that does not mean that we should become door mats of other's exploitation. If somebody is committing a mistake; if somebody is improperly behaving; it should not mean I should silently suffer and be a victim. I can certainly take appropriate action. I need not be taken for a ride in the name of being a Gita student. Do not cheat and do not get cheated.

It does not mean I should impulsively react and get angry. It is not necessary, we can study the situation and first, then we can use non-violent methods of handling and later, even if we have to take violent steps; by all means take violent steps. If that is the

ultimate necessary
evil.

So not victimizing one's self is called tejaha; because just as we should not hurt others, we should not hurt ourselves also. We have a duty to our own body; our own mind; it does not mean I should unnecessarily suffer; it does not mean I have to put up with non-sense. Need not. So, a no-nonsense attitude is tejaha.

Then the next virtue is Kshama. Kshama is otherwise called Shanti in the 13th Chapter and it is called titiksha in the 2nd chapter.

And this word Kshama has several meanings; one meaning is tolerance, which we saw before; Kshama is the benefit gained through tapas. While explaining Tapas I said, by practicing tapas, a person will get forbearance or tolerance. This is one meaning.

But, Shankaracharya gives another meaning for the word Kshama by contrasting it with the word akrodha. Akrodha means capacity to handle anger. When the anger rises inside; before it is expressed outside, I allow that it to go through the filter of discrimination. Before expressing, if I can use my discrimination, discreet expression of anger; or discreet non-expression of anger; or discreet partial expression of anger; that is the management of anger. This was called akrodha in the second verse; Shankaracharya says **kshama here means the mind becomes free from anger**. Very tough; In the first stage, anger was allowed but it should be under your control; let it be but it should be within your control; but **kshama means enjoying a mind in which anger does not rise at all. So non-arrival of anger is kshama; management of arrived-anger is akrodha**. Is it possible for a person to avoid the rise of anger at all; looks it is almost impossible. In fact, even psychologists say anger is a healthy sign; healthy part of a regular mind; psychologists will not accept that; But

Shankaracharya says it is possible. but he does not say how. We get a clue in the third chapter; we get the clue in the third chapter. There **he defined anger is nothing but expectations converted to irritation; when it is obstructed; obstructed expectation gets converted to irritation. And since irritation is the converted form of expectation, if you have to handle irritation, you have to handle your expectation. Lesser the expectation, lesser the scope for anger; and even if expectations are unavoidable, try to make them into preferences.**

And therefore, reduce the expectation and whatever minimum you have, have non-binding expectation or we can call it preference.

That is the only way to avoid anger. There is no other remedy. Therefore, Kshama is anger-lessness.

Dhrti means fortitude, perseverance, or will power is called dhrti; the capacity to continue a sadhana in spite of obstacles, in spite of hurdles, is called will power.

Sri Krishna will talk about the importance of willpower in the 18th chapter; And there He will talk about three types of willpower; satvic willpower; rajastic willpower and tamasic willpower. I will not talk about it now; I hope you will have the willpower to continue the classes until the 18Th. Therefore, dhrti; Dru means holding on to. Dru, dharane; holding power; willpower.

Then the next virtue is Shaucham. This also has come in the 13th chapter.

Shaucham is

cleanliness and orderliness. It should not stop with cleanliness only. We should include orderliness, of the surroundings, from our street, visible from the surroundings. We have the best teaching and least implementation; we have got the best scriptures in the world; but we never implement. And the other countries; they do not have such scriptures; and they seem to implement. We have the enclosure for putting the rubbish; but it is put everywhere else, but in that particular place. So, therefore, cleanliness of the surrounding; cleanliness of our dress; cleanliness of the body. And above all, the toughest is the purity of the mind;

I have talked in the 13th chapter, and therefore, I do not want to go to the details.

Then the next virtue is Adroha; adroha is ahimsa at the mental level; not even desiring to harm others; not even tending to harm others. So, they will not even think himsa.

Shankaracharya says, not only you should not hit others, even raising the hand saying that I will hit, not doing that is adroha; not even intending to harm others is called adrohaha;

Then the next one is natimanita. This is amanitvam of the 13th chapter.

Freedom from pride, freedom from superiority complex, or positively put, humility; humbleness is called natimanita. This is supposed to be a very important

virtue for a spiritual student. Because, a spiritual student has to do the namaskara to the guru.

If I have got arrogance, namaskara is the most difficult thing. And that too, namaskara to another human being is very difficult; and if a person does not have that humility; knowledge will not flow down; because if something has to flow down; it has to be from higher level to lower level. If the knowledge should come; I should bend humbly. And therefore, natimanita means Humility;

All these virtues will be present in a person who has got daivi sampath; who is born with daivi sampathi. So, one who is born with satva guna, or one who is a satvic person, he or she will have all these virtues and if these virtues are not there from birth; we have to cultivate them. Most of us do not have them. Therefore, in Vedanta, cultivating these virtues alone will take more time. **Vedantic study really does not take time; maximum time is in getting this daivi sampath;**

Shloka 16.4:

16.4

0 son of Prtha, (the attributes) of one destined to have the demoniacal nature are religious ostentation, pride and haughtiness, [Another reading is abhimanah, self-conceit.-Tr.], anger as also rudeness and ignorance.

So having talked about the daivi sampath, that is the virtues belonging to a spiritually oriented person. Now Sri Krishna

wants to talk about asuri sampath; which is naturally there; in a materialistic person. As I said asuri sampath does not mean a person who has got the protruding teeth like a demon, it means one with materialistic tendencies. And what are they? Sri Krishna is going to enumerate them in this verse, He presents them in a nutshell and later, from the seventh verse, He will elaborate the very same asuri sampath, till verse No.21.

What is materialism? We get a very beautiful list. What are they?

Dambhaha means

pomp and show; exhibitionism of their wealth; their position; their status etc.

which is also called ostentation;

Then the next materialistic tendency is darpaha. Along with money and power, comes arrogance. Disrespecting people, disrespecting elderly people etc.,

Therefore, darpaha means arrogance.

Then abhimana; superiority complex, looking upon oneself as puja yogya. One who deserves honor, reverence etc.

The difference between darpah and abimana is; darpaha is externally expressed arrogance; manitvam is unexpressed internally thought. One is at bhavana level another is at the karma or action level;

Then krodha; krodha is

anger; because there is power; because there is position; and therefore, he

does not mind ill-treating anyone; krodha means anger; rudeness, harshness, impoliteness; mannerlessness; all are called krodha.

Then Agyanam, means ignorance and here the

word ignorance means ignorance of Dharma Shastra. We are not talking about spiritual ignorance; because we are not dealing with philosophy in these two chapters. Chapters 16 and 17 are dealing ethics and morality; And therefore, the word ignorance here means ignorance of ethics, ignorance of morals; dharmadharma aviveka.

These are all naturally there in a person who is born with rajasic and tamasic tendencies. Especially if he belongs to a rich family, then he may not know what is humility, and that becomes a very big obstacle.

Take Away:

Anger is nothing but expectations converted to irritation; when it is obstructed; obstructed expectation gets converted to irritation. And since irritation is the converted form of expectation, if you have to handle irritation, you have to handle your expectation. Lesser the expectation, lesser the scope for anger; and even if expectations are unavoidable, try to make them into preferences.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawad Gita, Class 199: Chapter 16, Verses 1 & 2

Shloka # 16.1:

16.1 The Blessed Lord said Fearlessness, purity of mind, persistence in knowledge and yoga, charity and control of the external organs, sacrifice, (scriptural) study, austerity and rectitude;

Greetings,

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said, as I said in the last class, Sri Krishna is dealing with the way of life that a spiritual seeker should lead, so that it is conducive to the reception of spiritual knowledge; as well as the assimilation of spiritual knowledge and this way of life, Sri Krishna calls Daiva marga. And this daiva marga, the spiritual path, the satvic path involves the observation of certain virtues in daily life, and Sri Krishna enumerates those virtues in these verses, which the Lord calls Daivi sampath. In the first three verses, we are getting the list of these virtues. We were seeing the first verse in the last class; abhayam, satvasamshuddhi, Gyanayogavyasthiti. Abhayam means spiritual courage; to cross all the hurdles which come in the way of my spiritual path; the inner courage, satvasamshuddhi is the purity of mind. Then Gyanayogavyasthiti, which means, Vedanta sravana manana nidhidhyasanam. Gyanam, means sravana, mananam, and yoga means nidhidhyasanam. So Gyana plus yoga is equal to sravana manana nidhidhyasanam, I have talked about this before, I hope you remember. And this one is the primary sadhana which should go along with the others, without Gyana yoga any amount of virtues will remain incomplete. Without morals, Gyana yoga is impossible, without Gyana yoga, a moral life is incomplete. It can never lead to liberation;

therefore, they are complimentary; therefore, they should be given due importance.

Gyanayogavyasthiti; the word vyasthiti means committed pursuit. It is nishta, it is a sincere and serious and pursuit therefore he uses the word vyasthiti; commitment.

Danam:

Now we will go to the second line; danam or charity is another important virtue highlighted in the scriptures. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad enumerates the three virtues of Yajna, danam and tapas as the most important disciplines and Sri Krishna himself highlights these three virtues again. So danam means charity and why do we say danam is a very important virtue and also a very difficult virtue; we can follow everything else but danam is difficult. Why do we consider this important?

Danam has significance from different angles; the first benefit of danam is that it serves as a remedy for a very serious mental problem called lobha. Lobha is a very serious mental problem; which is caused by the sense of insecurity. One fundamental human problem is continuous sense of insecurity.

This insecurity, continues all the time. And we do not know why the insecurity is caused; and the generally we have a misconception that this sense of insecurity will go away if we hold on to external possessions. We think that possessions are the only remedy for the problem of insecurity; even though there is no truth in that conclusion. Because there are people who have lot of possessions and continue to be insecure. And there are many people who do not have any possessions and they have full sense of security. From this it is very clear people with possessions continue to be insecure while people without

possessions feel secure; from this it is very clear, that the possessions and the security have no connection; but even though this is the truth; we have got the strongest moha that the insecurity will go away as we increase our possession. And this sense of possession is so strong; and this alone is called lobha; and this lobha or sense of possession expresses in two-fold ways; one way is, it wants to grab more and more; get more, get more, get more. The other expression is: whatever you get, you very carefully hold on to and never give away.

Therefore, get more and give less. This is lobha. In English we translate it as greed and miserliness is equal to lobha and this greed miserliness problem, lobha, is because of the misconception that the greater the possession, the greater the security.

And this lobha leads to several problems in life. The first problem is that a person wants to grab more and more; and therefore, unknowingly he begins to compromise with dharma; because beyond a limit; greed will force a person to cut corners to comprise with dharma. Thus, it will lead to adharm; it will lead to papam; it will lead to himsa; thus, lobha is a very serious mental problem. and not only this is the problem, this person with lobha begins to suspect every human being who comes near. Because we do not know whether he is coming for me for whether he is coming for my money. Whether he loves me or my money? Thus, the eye of suspicion will be there all around, even I look at my family members differently.

Thus, lobha is a serious problem and the only remedy for lobha is gradually developing the sense of charity. Danam is the only remedy for lobha disease. And therefore, danam is important.

And the second significance is, if danam is not there in society, a person goes on amassing and accumulating without

sharing, there will be a big disparity between the rich and the poor and when this gulf increases, then that society will have lot of problems like crime etc. Most of the crimes, economic crimes like kidnapping for ransom; murdering for gain, burglary, all these things will happen when there is a big gulf between the rich and the poor. And when we read such news items more and more in the newspapers, the rich person will feel, more and more insecure than secure. The irony is that he has got lot of money for security; the very same money has thus caused insecurity, because of the fear burglary, kidnapping and all those things. And therefore, a healthy social order requires people who are willing to able to share with one's who need. Therefore, danam takes care of social order.

And the third significance of danam is that it is the only touchstone to find out whether I have detachment or not. If I do not have detachment, danam will be the most painful affair; even though for social purposes, I give, it will be with a lot of heart burn. If I have got inner detachment, danam will be the happiest discipline or sadhana that I practice. Therefore, danam becomes a test for my detachment. And therefore, danam is significant.

And fourthly, danam is considered a very important prayascitha karma. We all have acquired lot of papams; durithams; for which we have to do prayaschittams and varieties of prayaschittams are mentioned in our Shastra; and one of the prayaschittam karma is danam and that is why at the time of death; or immediately after death; varieties of danam are given. In fact, we are supposed to do that before we die; but we will not have that mind; we will rather lose our life rather than loosen the purse. So, Danam is a very important prayaschitta karma. This is the fourth significance;

And fifthly and finally, danam is a beautiful sadhana, which

makes our death peaceful; because death is an event in which everything that I have carefully earned will be taken away from me. Whether it is house or bank balance; anything I have earned, everything including my physical body; after death, I cannot even own my physical body; everything I have to give back to the World, God or Lord, as you look at. This release of all my possessions should be comfortable to me, I should have practiced danam in my earlier days; and if I have enjoyed danam in my life; I will look upon death also as a form of danam.

Till now, I held on to every possession and then Yamadharmaraja snatches them away and I die painfully.

Death will be peaceful for a person who has learned to enjoy giving away. **Therefore, danam is a very, very significant spiritual sadhana.** Initially at least we should give away what we do not want.

They say, among a hundred persons there will be one Suraha, courageous person; there will be one scholar at least among one thousand people, among one lakh people, at least you can find one good teacher. Even though they are rare, a real giver is very difficult to find. It is difficult, but we have to practice as I said, start giving what you do not want; and thereafter we can find whether we can give even those things that we want. If it is useful for somebody else more. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, danam.

Damaha:

Damaha means indriya nigraha or sense control. Sense control does not mean suppression of sense organs; we never encourage suppression, because any form of suppression is an oppression. It will lead to depression, we never encourage.

By damaha, what we mean is voluntarily directing the sense organs which is born out of my conviction. I decide what is good for me for my spiritual growth and I decide what is not good for me; and with conviction, I myself turn away the sense organs. It is called mastery over the sense organs.

But when I turn the sense organs away; because of somebody else's enforcement. then it is called suppression.

The difference between suppression and mastery is, when I do it for another's sake, it is suppression, when I do it out of my own conviction, it is never a suppression; It is called indriya jayaha. It is victory. Suppression will lead to mental health problems; mastery will lead to mental growth. Therefore, damaha is mastery of the sense organs.

Yagnaha:

Then the next virtue is yagnaha. Yagnaha literally means worship of the Lord. Yaj means to worship; yagnaha means the practice of worship and our scriptures talk about two forms of worship; one is the regular ceremonial worship, in the form of puja and homas or puja in the temple etc. which is the regular ceremonial ritualistic formal worship. And there is a second form of worship which is conversion of all our activities themselves into a form of worship. As the well-known saying goes; work itself is a worship and this conversion is brought about by a change of attitude which is called karma yoga attitude; **I look upon every karma as an offering to the Lord and therefore I cheerfully do all the karmas; Enthusiastically**

wholeheartedly, sincerely, cheerfully, I do, whether it is mundane action or the most important action. And that is called Ishvara arpana bhavana and more importantly I prepare my mind to face any consequences that will come out of my action. This is called prasada bhavana; Ishvara arpana bhavana with regard to karma; prasada bhavana with regard to karma phalam will convert every karma into a yagna.

And therefore, formal external puja is a must and in addition to that, we also require second type of puja, of converting every action into worship. Karma yoga rupa puja; and in this yagna itself, in the third chapter, I talked about pancha maha yagna.

Svadyaya:

svadyaya means scriptural study. So, this is waning from our society; previously these things were there; but slowly we are forgetting that; this was called in the third chapter, we named it Brahma yagna. All part of the Hindu society; it was all part of vedic karma. So therefore, scriptural study is called svadyayaha. This study is two-fold, one is called parayarana. Parayarana means recitation, which is considered to be a beautiful kavacham against any type of evils, including materialism. In fact, whether ghosts are there or not, I consider the most powerful ghost is materialism. It is catching up fast with our society and our culture is eroding; Everybody may not or need not know sandyavandanam; some prayer chanting is a must. It is called shabda avriti. And there is another type of svadyayaha; which is artha avriti; dwelling upon the meanings of the scriptures. So, first one is shabda pradhana, the second one is artha pradhana, the first one is simple recitation, even without knowing the meaning, the recitation will bless the home; This is svadyaya.

Arjavam:

Then the next virtue is Arjavam. Arjavam means integrity.

Uprightness, enjoying a harmonious personality; we have talked about five layers of personality in Tatva bodha; annamaya, the physical body; pranamaya, the pranic personality; manomaya, the emotional personality; vignana maya, the rational or intellectual personality; all the different layers of my personality, which is normally expressed as the thought, the word and the deed; all of them should be harmonious. So harmonization, integration, concordance of all my personality is called Arjavam; all my personalities are in one line. I do not have a crooked personality; There is no hypocrisy. A hypocritical person says one thing but does something else. They lead a very stressful life. Hence Arjavam is essential.

Shloka # 16.2:

16.2

Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, control of the internal organ, absence of vilification, kindness to creatures, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, freedom from restlessness;

Ahimsa:

The next virtue is Ahimsa. This also I have talked about elaborately in the thirteenth chapter; therefore, I do not want to go to the details and we also know its importance. **ahimsa is avoidance of non-violence at the kayika, vachika and manasa level. And the simple rule is what I give to the world, that alone I will get back ultimately. So therefore, it is like throwing a ball against a wall; when I throw the ball, it hits the wall and comes back to me only. And the force of the ball will be directly proportional to the force with which I throw. And therefore, we should remember that the ultimate truth is what I get will be what I give.** From the bank what I can take is what I have deposited in the bank. If I deposit violence in the bank called the world, it will come back to me

alone, if not now, later. And therefore, for my own peace of mind, I have to avoid himsa. Of course, we never say that ahimsa is absolute.

There may be occasions when himsa becomes a necessary evil. And the best example is the Bhagavad Gita itself.

In several places, Sri Krishna talks of Ahimsa, then he asks Arjuna to fight as well. Is Sri Krishna contradicting himself? Here we should remember, ahimsa is a general value, but every value has an exception, including ahimsa, as there are cases when nonviolent methods miserably fail. And when non-violent methods fail, and for the protection of dharma, the only available means is himsa; then there is nothing wrong in taking. In fact, Sri Krishna goes one step further and says: This dharma yuddha will not give you papam, on the other hand, it will give you punyam. And therefore, we should not blindly talk about ahimsa.

Misplaced ahimsa will have very, very negative consequences. Imagine a doctor who does not want to treat the patient, because it is painful. A Doctor has to do that; and therefore, judicious ahimsa is a value.

Satyam:

Then the next value is Satyam. Satyam means truthfulness; or more correctly, avoidance of untruth. Because if speaking the truth is going to hurt a person; then we have to follow the value of ahimsa and avoid speaking the truth; but that does not mean that we should speak untruth; avoid speaking untruth. So therefore, Satyam is equal to asatyavarjanam.

And suppose you have to tell the truth to correct a person, and telling the truth is going to be painful; what to do? We have to tell the truth for correcting the truth; it may hurt; may be your own child, may be your own family members. And what is the method; speak some other pleasant truth; there are unpleasant truths; but there are so many pleasant truths;

therefore, talk about the pleasant truth predominantly and when the person's mind is well-cushioned, speak the unpleasant truth; do not dwell upon the unpleasant truth. Speak more of pleasant truth; dwell upon pleasant truth; Therefore Satyam.

Akrodhaha:

Then the next one is Akrodhaha; akrodhah means learning to handle the problems of anger. Anger is a very powerful emotion; which can hurt the angry person, and which can hurt the people who are around the angry person. And therefore, one has to necessarily learn to handle anger. How to do that? Several methods are there; one of the methods is understanding anger as a form of emotional pain. Understanding anger as a form of expression of mental pain or emotional pain; because anger is the name of a mental condition. Anger is an emotion belonging to the mind; shouting cannot be called anger; Shouting is a consequence of anger. Hitting is not anger; it is a consequence of anger; anger has nothing to do with the body. Others know only the expressions of anger; anger is purely a mental condition; which is a form of pain. And this mental pain is very similar to physical pain. If you understand the role of physical pain, we can understand the role of mental pain or anger.

Any pain indicates that things are not functioning properly; therefore, it is red light. And therefore, management of anger is understanding anger as an internal signal. I should intelligently use it to find out a remedy to the cause of that anger; This is called akrodha; so, management of anger.

Tyaga:

Then the next one is Tyaga that means sanyasa or renunciation. The moment we say renunciation, everybody gets jittery. So the renunciation is two-fold, one is the external renunciation; such as taking taking to a monastic lifestyle; Monasticism is one meaning of tyaga.

And there is another meaning for the word tyaga; which is not external renunciation, but inner renunciation called detachment; so vairagyam or detachment is called tyaga. And what is detachment; it is an appropriate attitude towards my possessions. A right attitude. What is the right attitude towards the possession? It is the understanding that I really do not possess anything; I really do not possess anything; everything belongs to the Lord and Lord alone; and God out of his infinite kindness, has provided me with certain possessions for my use; and growing spiritually; and I am supposed to use them and grow; and it has to go back to the Lord alone; I can never hold on to anything; including my own body. So, everything belongs to the God; and God can choose to take back anything as he wants.

And if God chooses to take away anything from me, I will voluntarily return it to the Lord, with a note of thanks. This attitude is called tyaga.

So, therefore, this readiness to lose anything is called renunciation.

Shanti:

Shanti is next virtue.; Shanti means equanimity of mind. Freedom from violent emotional disturbances. Balance of mind is called Shanti.

Take Away:

Ahimsa is avoidance of non-violence at the kayika, vachika and manasa level. And the simple rule is what I give to the world, that alone I will get back ultimately. So therefore, it is like throwing a ball against a wall; when I throw the ball, it hits the wall and comes back to me only. And the force of the ball will be directly proportional to the force with which I throw. And therefore, we should remember that the ultimate truth is what I get will be what I give.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawad Gita, Class 198: Chapter 16, Verse 1

CHAPTER – 16: Yoga
of division of attributes, divine and demoniac.

Greetings,

Continuing his teachings Swamiji said, having completed the 15th chapter, now we will enter into the 16th chapter of the Gita. The two chapters 16th and 17th have a subject matter, which is different from the main subject matter of the previous three chapters, 13th, 14th, and 15th respectively.

There is a shift in Sri Krishna's teaching. And this shift in the subject matter is based on a very important principle and that principle is that the goal of life of a person; a person's goal of life and a person's way of life, both of them are closely related. The way of life and the goal of life; when I say goal, the primary top most goal of life, these two are closely connected; each one will influence the other; **the goal of life will influence my way of life, and my way of life in turn will influence my goal of life also.** Therefore, these two things cannot be

separated and therefore, if a person wants to successfully accomplish his goal of life, he has to take into account his very way of life also. One cannot ignore the way of life, and fix the goal of life alone. One should pay attention to the way of life, and ensure, that there is alignment between the way and the goal.

The way of life should be conducive to the accomplishment of the goal. This our scriptures consider as very important. You cannot hope to lead any way of life, and yet hope to accomplish goal of Life. Just as the environment and the type of plant, both are interconnected. You cannot grow any type of plant in any type of atmosphere. It is impossible; both are interconnected.

And therefore, the Veda purva bhaga, the beginning portion of the Vedas concentrate upon the way of life while the final portion of the Veda, the Vedanta concentrates on the goal of life. Indian culture can never be understood without keeping Vedanta in mind. And, therefore, Sri Krishna feels that he has talked about the spiritual goal of life; He has talked about the self-knowledge as the goal of life, in the 13th, 14th and 15th chapters, and now he feels that His teaching is complete only when He talks about the complimentary part; viz., the way of life, which is conducive and which will promote the goal that He has presented in the previous chapters. Therefore, previous three chapters deal with the goal, these two chapters, 16th and the 17th deal with the way of life, because they cannot be separated.

And the way of life, a person leads is heavily determined by the character that a person possesses. The way of life is heavily influenced by, determined by, controlled by, directed by, the character, the personality, the make-up of an individual.

Therefore character determines the way of life, and the way of life will determine the goal of life. Therefore all these three are inter-connected; Character, Way and Goal. And trying to tamper one alone, without taking into account the other two, will be a lopsided approach, which will not be successful. All the three, we should take into account. And based on this, our scriptures divide the character of the human being. Our scriptures have made a thorough study of the possible human characters; because character will determine life, which will in turn, determine the goal.

And this human character is divided into several types in different contexts; sometimes they classify into four types; sometimes they classify into three types; sometimes they classify into two types; different classifications are there, depending upon the context. And for our study, we will see the three-fold classification of human character. The three-fold classification of human character is:

The first classification is called dvesha pradhana svabhava, a character in which lot of dvesha or dislike is predominant. We do not know why; it may be because of purva janma; it may be because of present janma; it may be because of the childhood experiences; it may be because of the parental upbringing; it may be because of the friendship; whatever be the cause, that we do not study now, one type of character is dominantly dvesha pradhana; a character in which I dislike most of the things. I have complaint almost against everything, almost a cynical character. I have complaints against the government system; complaint against family members; complaint against television; and complaint against God as well.

And this dvesha pradhana character, as he accumulates this dvesha, because one is not able to express outside, because of suppression, parental suppression where child was asked to shut up often; the child has lot of complaints but could not express. And this accumulated dvesha leads to lot of anger suppressed inside; anger against everything. So dvesha

pradhana character is generally krodha pradhana character and this leads to himsa pradhana character; a person who is highly short tempered, highly volatile. Even the smallest incidents will cause an earthquake or volcano. The shastra class it rakshasa svabhava. Why does the shastra call this rakshasa svabhava? Because when a person is so volatile and short tempered, about to explode all the time, what will be the attitude of other people? Do the other people love to come near him; or will they try to run away from him? Try to avoid him at all cost. Swamiji says that in some houses, when the father comes from office, all the children say: appa has come, let us go inside; as though volcano is coming; In some cases, it may be an amma as well. So therefore, rakshasa svabhava is that svabhava from which people want to protect themselves; hence called rakshasa. It is derived from raksha to protect; a svabhava, from which people would love to run away. This is called dvesha pradhana svabhava.

It is generally, insensitive to others' feelings. Generally, rude and gross minded and generally goes on hurting people, often without awareness about it.

This character is not conducive to spiritual growth and still worse; this character brings a person down spiritually. It leads to spiritual regression. Not progression.

Then comes the second character is Raga pradhana svabhava. An svabhava, which is heavily raga-oriented; attachment oriented; which leads to lot of kama; lot of desires; what type of desire? Desire for name, fame, money, possession, position, revelry and merry making. Life is meant for enjoyment and therefore, they have no goal. It is a let go philosophy. They do not harm others; but they like raga and kama and this

svabhava are also supposed to be uncondusive to spiritual progress, because a person does not have time or inclination to turn inwards. Raga pradhana svabhava is an extrovert; all the time bothered about these few little things like my status, etc.

And this svabhava does not lead to spiritual downfall, because this person does not harm others. But this person or character will lead to spiritual stagnation. There is no downfall; but there is no scope for spiritual growth because generally, these people do not consider religion and spirituality is relevant for life. They wonder for earning money and enjoying life why do we require God. One lady was telling that she wanted to bring her husband also to Gita classes. And that person argued it seems: Religion is meant for the weak minded and sick minded people; I am healthy and fine; I do not have any problem at all; why are you unnecessarily introducing me to all these things? Most of these people, belonging to the second variety, they are harmless, even well behaved, and good mannered but they tend to be nasthikas. They consider religion is not required; Vedanta is not required to lead a comfortable and happy life. In fact, they may even go one step further and say religion is a problem. According to them, religion and spirituality contributes to only problems in society. In fact, they feel if they are banned or abolished; it is better. This is the second variety. They are Materialistic people, in simple language. They won't negate God often; but they feel God is not relevant to our life. Spirituality is not relevant, scriptures are not relevant; it does not appeal to them. And in fact, most of our youngsters are tending to this alone.

There was an article, somebody gave me, in Indian Express it seems, whether it was fact or fiction, I do not know. A couple had visited a family and it is in connection with some marriage proposal and after the visit, the couple had gone, this girl says, I do not want to get married to this family at all. Why; because they are all Talibans, Afghan Muslim

fundamentalists. This girl's parents were shocked; why are you calling them Talibans? The reason is that both the parents have come with lot of religious marks on their forehead. Our children do not believe in it. They think that it is religious fanaticism. And that girl argued that because of these clear cut religious marks alone, we are dividing the society as Hindus, Christians, Muslims and it is only causing, division, disparity and quarrel, therefore why do we require it. Simple application of the vibhuthi or kumkum, the younger generation looks upon as religious fundamentalism. It may be a fiction, but what I want to say is the tendency of the next generation. This is raga pradhana svabhava and they are not bad or evil or immoral. They are wonderful children; thinking children, but they end up as materialistic people; totally away from our culture, which is a non-materialistic culture. This is the second group of people and Sri Krishna calls them asura svabhava. Asura does not mean people with tusks and horns, and all; it is derived from asusu ramante iti asuraha. asusu means the sense organs. Ramante means revellery. Asurah means a person or a society or a group, which values sensory revelry; noise making, merry making alone. So this is asura svabhava. These people will not fall down in spirituality; but there is no scope for spiritual growth. Therefore the second character leads to spiritual stagnation while first one that leads to spiritual regression or downfall.

Then

comes the third character, which is Gyana pradhana. Which considers spiritual knowledge as the goal. That is why a child is initiated into Sandhya vandhana mantras, for knowledge. And knowledge, especially the spiritual knowledge, is symbolized, as lamp in our culture and therefore lighting the lamp is the first thing that we do, whatever be the undertaking. Early morning starts with lighting the lamp.

Any function starts with lighting the lamp; even the so-called secular functions such as Film festivals. They show all violence, but the cinema actors come nicely dressed, showing all the 32 teeth's and they light the lamp, because even when India turns materialistic, spirituality cannot be taken away from India. Therefore, Gyana pradhana, those who consider that Gyanam is the top priority and whatever is required for that Gyanam that also is top priority. Not that they dislike money or name or fame; it is not they are against them, but they never think of that; at the cost of spiritual growth. Keeping in mind the spiritual growth, whatever can be accomplished, whatever entertainment is there; or music, dance; the whole family can watch the dance, because the theme is Krishna, Bhagavatham, Ramayanam; and the Jivatma, pining for Paramatma; that is our dance theme, and the lyrics also written by saints and sages. There is a scope for all, but it is in keeping with spirituality, similarly, in dance. There is program called deepa pradakshinam as is Radha Kalyanam. Alternatively Overnight pubs are also coming up.

In our culture we have dancing and singing all centered on spirituality. It is Gyana pradhana way of life; that is the third svabhava; and Sri Krishna calls them daiva svabhava.

Daiva svabhava: means it stands for knowledge, wisdom and brightness.

So, these are the three svabhavas; deva or daiva; asura; and rakshasa svabhava. All these three characters are compared to a wealth that a person possesses. All these three people possess their own wealth, in the form of these characters. And these characters are compared to wealth because with that character, they can buy; they can accomplish their goals. How? Character decides the way of life. Way of life, decides the goal; therefore character purchases your goal. And therefore it is called sampath.

Therefore in the 16th chapter, Krishna wants to talk about daivi

sampath; otherwise called daiva svabhava; which is the inner wealth of character; which will accomplish a particular type of goal; then, asuri

sampath or asura svabhava, the 2nd type of inner wealth or character,

which will purchase another type of goal. And the third one is rakshasi sampathi.

And having presented the three characters or inner wealths, Sri Krishna wants to say:

O Arjuna, if your goal is spiritual knowledge, or moksha, the only conducive way is daiva svabhava. If you do not value, spiritual knowledge, I have nothing more to tell.

But Sri Krishna says if you value spiritual knowledge, if you value

Moksha

then the way of life, which is in alignment, which is conducive to it is daiva svabhava. Therefore you have to take into account, your way of

life,
every small or big thing that you do, right from the food that
you eat, right
from the entertainment that you have, right from the type of
magazine that you
read, right from the TV programs that you watch, right from
the type of the
friends you move with, right from the type of the way you
spend your leisure
time. Every minute thing contributes to the way of life, which
is in the
long-term going to determine the goal; whether you reach it or
not.

And therefore Arjuna! I have talked about the goal;

I have talked about the Veda anta bhaga;
better let Me talk about the Veda purva
bhaga
also, because Veda purva and Veda anta are inseparably
interconnected and therefore the 16th and 17th chapters deal
with the way of
life conducive to this spiritual goal. And the subject matter
is picked from
the Veda purva bhaga. The previous three
chapters are about Veda anta bhaga. These two chapters are
about Veda purva bhaga. With this background, we will enter
into the
chapter.

Shloka

16.1:

**16.1 The Blessed Lord said Fearlessness,
purity of mind, persistence in knowledge and yoga, charity and
control of the
external organs, sacrifice, (scriptural) study, austerity and
recititude;**

Sri Krishna begins the teaching, even without Arjuna's asking for it, because he feels that this teaching is complete only when he talks about this topic.

Atma Gyanam can work only when a particular way of life is adhered to. That is why culture becomes very important. And in the olden days, when they glorified our culture, and banned our people from mixing with other cultures, it is not because we look down upon other cultures, every culture is beautiful, but we had values, because this culture is designed for a particular goal. Others are designed for their particular other goals. There is no inferior or superior culture; but what you want in your life, and therefore Sri Krishna feels the teaching is complete, only when the way of life is also prescribed. Therefore in these three verses, he gives a list of virtues or traits, that are conducive to Vedantic study, initially, and later conducive to Vedantic assimilation. Both are equally important; reception of knowledge is important; assimilation of knowledge is equally important, only after reception and assimilation, transformation can take place. And therefore he gives a list of virtues called daivi sampath. And they are not new; Sri Krishna has talked about them, in the thirteenth chapter; from verse No.8 to 12th.

In the four or five verses, Sri Krishna even gave a name to those virtues, the name of Gyanam.

So the lists of virtues are as follows. The first virtue that Sri Krishna emphasizes is said abhayam. Abhayam means courage. Self-confidence. Faith in myself; faith in God is important; faith in Guru is important, faith in the scriptures is

important, but above all, faith in myself that I can follow and accomplish. **This self-confidence is important because spiritual life is an adventure. It is a greater adventure than reaching**

Everest, than going to Arctic circle or Antarctic circle. So many adventures are there; but this is the greatest adventure; the most challenging adventure. And therefore, it requires tremendous inner courage or inner strength.

Mundaka Upanishad says:

A man who does not have the inner courage cannot succeed in spirituality, and therefore it is an adventure or challenge. And a person can continue with perseverance only when he appreciates its value, which is not that easy. Value of money you can easily appreciate. Even a child knows that. Value of position everybody knows. Value of possessions everybody knows. Value of power, everybody knows.

If

I have to perseveringly continue I should know the worth of spiritual goal. And

since this requires lot of inner maturity, it is a very rarely understood thing.

Most of the people do not know its value; therefore most of the people will not

vote for this; Sri Krishna said in the 7th chapter that we are in the minority.

Spiritual seekers all are always in minority, and therefore the spiritual

journey is often a lonely journey. Therefore it requires tremendous courage to continue.

Therefore,

Abhayam, means self-confidence, courage to continue in spite of obstacles and

in spite of being in a minority. How to get Abhayam? One is, once I have a

value for the goal, I would not mind the obstacles. So the size of the obstacle will depend upon the value for the goal that you have. If the value is lukewarm, the obstacles appear bigger, and if the value is intense, the obstacles will appear smaller. Obstacles do not have a size of its own; the size and the weight are determined by your subjective projections. There are people who go to Everest while there are people who hesitate even to walk to the bus stand if there is a little rain.

Therefore one method of discovering courage is learning to appreciate the value of the goal.

Courage will come from somewhere. The second is of course, surrender to the Lord; seeking strength from the Lord.

Imagine a person who becomes a sanyasi, without having any security around him. It is surrender to Lord that gave him courage. And therefore through Bhakthi and Viveka one has to discover abhayam, fearlessness.

The next virtue is satvasamshuddhi. Purity of mind, Satva here means antakaranam, samshuddhi means purity. And what do you mean by purity; these are types of thoughts that keep the mind healthy. Those which are not toxic to the mind or mental health; just as for the physical body, we have got items which are conducive to health and which are not conducive.

For the mind, the toxic ones are, certain patterns of

thinking; certain types of thoughts like jealousy; hatred, fear; These are all toxic thoughts, which if they remain in the mind for longer time, they will cause erosion and make the mind weaker. And therefore satvasamshuddhi means maintenance of healthy thoughts.

Then

the next virtue is Gyanayogavyasthiti.

In and through all this way of life, you should not forget what is the goal or

purpose for which this way of life I am following that is spiritual knowledge.

And knowledge never happens naturally; knowledge never happens naturally. Many

other things happen in time, you need not work for it; wrinkles, you did not

work; just survive; wrinkles will come; grey hair; you need not work, it will

come; Tooth loss, you do not require a sadhana;

it will come. Many things will happen in time; **knowledge is one thing, which can never naturally happen;** any

knowledge including physics knowledge does not happen in time it is a separate

pursuit you should undertake; you require a physics guru, a physics book and

you have to study and only then physics knowledge comes.

The word bhododayam

should not be misunderstood; Buddha got bhododayam,

Buddha got enlightenment under bodhi tree and many people sincerely believe that knowledge

happens; either a leaf might fall, or a fruit might fall, knowledge will not

fall or descend down, you have to work and work hard.

Therefore

Sri Krishna says: committed pursuit of Gyana yoga, which means sravanam, which is

consistent and systematic study of the Vedantic scriptures for a length of time, under the guidance of a competent teacher.

Therefore, sravanam, then mananam, reflecting over that and understanding and removing doubts and nidhidyasanam, internalizing to such an extent that between my life and my knowledge, there is no disparity; what I know and what I am, there is no disparity.

Vyavasthithi means commitment to Gyana yoga.

Take Away:

The goal of life (Vedanta) will influence my way of life (Veda purva), and my way of life in turn will influence my goal of life also.

Abhayam:Self-confidence is important because spiritual life is an adventure. It is a greater adventure than reaching Everest, than going to Artic circle or Antartic circle.

Vedantic knowledge is one thing, which can never naturally happen. One has to work at it.

**With Best
Wishes,**

Ram Ramaswamy