

Bagawat Geeta 2: Dhyana Shloka

Continuing his introductory remarks for Bhagawat Gita Swamiji today discussed the invocation prayer called Gitagyana Shloka. Madhusudhana Saraswathi wrote this Shloka. Madhusuadana also wrote a commentary on the Gita called Bhagavad-gita-gudhartha-dipika.

The Gitagyana Shloka has nine verses. In these Shlokas we are offering namaskara to: Bharathi, Gita/ Saraswathi, Vyasa and Lord Krishna.

Expanding on the Gitagyana Shlokas, Swamiji discussed each shloka.

Shloka # 7:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
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This Shloka is our namaskara to Bharatha. Mahabharata is a part of Itihasa or partly based on history. It is a mixture of fact and fiction. Itihasa means it happened in this manner. It deals with Bharatha Varsham. While Gita has 700 verses Mahabharata has 100,000 verses.

In Shloka 7, the prayer is that, may my study of Mahabharata help me transform and grow spiritually. The Mahabharata here is compared to a lotus flower due to its beauty, fragrance and honey. Swamiji says study of Mahabharata at home is good and acceptable. There is a superstition that Mahabharata should not be studied at home. He says this is not true.

While the lotus is born in a pond, Mahabharata was also born in the speech (pond) of Parasarya (son of Parasar), Vyasa. It is a pure lotus. Lotus is usually found in muddy water. This Lotus is very attractive because of its fragrance; the fragrance of Gita. More people know Gita than Mahabharata. The many small stories of Mahabharata are compared to the filaments of the Lotus. The Lotus flower is a full one. It is full of Hari Katha as well. It contains deep wisdom in many aspects such as religion, politics, philosophy and human relations. All are in Mahabharata. What is not found in Mahabharata is not found anywhere else. So, for all students, it is like honey. Noble people are the ones who have an open mind and reverence towards Mahabharata. They drink the honey of Mahabharata and specifically Gita repeatedly, day in and day out. This knowledge can destroy the problems of materialism of Kaliyuga that we face today.

Shloka # 1:

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

This Shloka is our namaskara to Gita. The author addressing Saraswathi asks the Mother to nourish him at the right time with the right food. Mother Gita nourishes us with the knowledge of Karma Yoga, Upasana Yoga and Gyana Yoga in a teaching given to Arjuna, taught by Lord Narayana himself. It is a blessing to society even today. Vyasa, an Avatara of Vishnu, compiled it. He is most experienced among Rishi's. He has also has given us the Puranas. In the middle of Mahabharata is Shanthi Parva composed by Vyasa. It showers the knowledge of Advaita. Gita consists of 18 chapters and

700 verses.

Gita knowledge gives us moksha from Samsara. Samsara is all kinds of dissatisfactions that we experience including physical, emotional and intellectual. Moksha is satisfaction with myself. Gita gives us Mokshatvam. I meditate upon such a Gita.

Verse #4:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
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ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

Continuing, Swamiji says, Gita is not Krishna's philosophy. It is the teaching of Vedas from time immemorial. The last part of Vedas is Upanishad. Gita is the essence of Upanishad or Vedanta. Upanishad here is compared to a cow. Krishna is an expert cowherd. So he knows how to milk the Upanishadic Cow. To milk such a cow, you have to keep a calf in front. For the Upanishadic Cow, Arjuna is the calf. Out of milking this cow comes the Gita Amrita milk.

Verse # 2:

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

This Shloka is our namaskara to Vyasa. Vyasa means divider and expander. Originally Vedas were one. Vyasa gave his four disciples the task of creating the four separate Vedas from the original one. He also expanded on Vedas through the Puranas. Vyasa's original name was also Krishna. Both were dark in complexion. He is also known as Krishna Dvaipayana (island born Krishna). He was an Acharya of great knowledge. His eyes were like Lotus petals. You have lit the lamp of wisdom with the oil of Mahabharatam stories,

says the devotee. So, to you, I offer my namaskaram.

With my good wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Bhagawat Gita 1: Introduction

Greetings All,

This is my summary of the first class (October 1, 2015) of Bagawat Gita .

Swamiji introduced the Bhagawat Gita today. He says all human beings pursue goals in life. Some are long term and some are short term in nature. Goals also vary from individual to individual, from time to time, and from age to age. There are infinite numbers of goals that differ by age, by time, and they also change with times. If analyzed, we will note that there are some goals common to all human beings. Even animals have goals but they are instinctive. Thus, these are three common goals:

1. Security, safety and survival related goals. Consequently food and shelter are important goals. Even animals have these goals although they are driven by instinct.
2. The desire to lead a peaceful life, comfortable with myself, is another goal. In search of this goal we go from Ashram to Ashram, says Swamiji.
3. The desire for happiness and fulfillment

Everybody is running after these three goals using different methods. Some think real estate will do it, some think surrounding themselves with people will do it and others think of gold, jobs and so on and on. All these are means of security. Different people seek peace also in different ways.

Swamiji says, our scriptures offer some comments and suggestions regarding these goals. Scriptures say:

1. All three basic needs are available within us.
2. The also say they are within "you" only.

Strangely, Swamiji says, scriptures are telling us that these goals are not available to us outside ourselves. By seeking them outside, the goals will evade you. It will be a misplaced search for something in a place it is not available. So, we should search where it is available. Why do we commit such mistakes asks Swamiji? Why struggle so much? Answering the question he says all these needs within us are hidden. It is hidden under layers of covering. To get to them we need to remove these layers through a process of "Discovery".

What are these layers? Swamiji says, per scriptures, there are three layers, from gross, subtle to subtlest. They are known as Malam (impurity), Vikshepa (extroverted-ness) and Aavaranam (Ignorance).

Malam: It refers to mental problems. They are six fold in nature:

- 1 Kama – lust
- 2 Krodha – anger
- 3 Lobha – greed
- 4 Moha – delusory emotional attachment or temptation
- 5 Mada or ahankara – pride, hubris
- 6 matsarya – envy, jealousy

Vikshepaha: is mental restlessness, extroverted-ness and all that cause turbulence of mind also called Chanchalam.

Aavaranam: or ignorance that I am the source of all peace and security also called Ananda.

We need to remove the three layers by appropriate Sadhanas or following spiritual disciplines. Each discipline is called Yogaha. Yoga means the seeker unites with his destination.

Three yoga's are recommended. They are:

Karma Yoga is for first layer of Malam.

Upasana Yoga is for the second layer of Vikshepa and

Gyana Yoga is for third layer of Agyana Nivrithihi or removal of ignorance.

Karma Yoga is a life style consisting of proper action with proper attitude. It removes all Malam. Proper action is any action that reduces the six Malas. Proper attitude is a healthy attitude towards the proper actions and the results from such action. This attitude will help one grow through any aexperience including a very painful one. Mala Shudhi is also called Chitta Shudhi.

Upasana Yoga consists of forms of meditations. They help quiet one's restless and extrovert mind. It results in Vikshepa Nivrithi or a steady mind. It also called Chitta Nischalathvam.

Gyana Yoga is Enquiry into one's real nature. Do I need peace from outside? Am I ever secure? This self-enquiry and analysis is also called Atma Vichara.

Our scriptures guide us on how to practice these Yoga's. The scriptures are called Vedas. Veda means source of knowledge. Vedas are revelations by Lord himself through Rishis. Vedas are divided into four parts; they are:

1. Mantra Bhaga
2. Samhita Bhaga
3. Brahmana Bhag
4. Upanishad Bhaga.

Brahmana Bhaga deals with Karma Yoga and is also called Karma kandam

Aranyaka Bhaga deals with Upasana Kandam or Vikshepa.

Upanishat deals with Gyana Yoga and is called Gyana Kandam.

Mantra Bhaga or Suktam deals with prayers to Deities. Swamiji

says,

Bhagawans grace is vey important in this quest and prayers help us with changing the direction of our mind towards spirituality.

Vedas are a huge literature and include Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana Vedas. For many people Vedas are not accessible. So, God has given us a condensed version of all Vedas called Bhagawat Gita. It has 700 verses. It is Veda Sara. It is narrated as a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. Just a study of Gita will give us the direction we need for life.

This is what we will study next. We will start with Gita Gyana Shloka. While Shankara wrote a commentary on Gita so did Madhu Sudhana Saraswati. Madhu Sudhana Saraswati also wrote the Gita Gyana Shloka. This invocation prayer offers namaskras to Bharata, Gita/Saraswathi (knowledge), Vyasa (composer) and Lord Krishna (Jagat Guru) in nine verses. Swamiji says, we must start any endeavor with a prayer to ward off any obstacles.

Note: During discussion it was suggested that we check out the site:

www.yogamalika.org It contains Swamiji's lectures on special occasions like New Years.

Dhyana Shlokas – Bagwat Gita

Bagwat Gita Dhyana Slokas in Sanskrit, along with grammatical interpretations and translation and meaning in English. Page 11 will be of interest to Vedantic Students.

GitaDhyaanShlokas