

Bagawat Geeta Class 63, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 24:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In shloka: Brahma-panam means wooden spoon for offering.

Shloka # 25:

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे गन्तव्यो ब्रह्मण्यो
 ब्रह्मसमाधिना ब्रह्मसमाधिना 4.25

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Shloka # 26:

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

Here two more Yagnas are enumerated.

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

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

legitimate sense pleasures. This enjoyment is Yagyaha.

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

Shloka # 27:

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

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

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta Class 62, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 20:

कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा कर्मजन्तुर्मुक्तः ।
कर्मणोऽप्यसङ्गो भूतः सिद्धयि ॥४.२०॥

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

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

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

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

Grihasta Gyani is liberated because of his Gyanam not due to his work. Work comes to him in waves, one after the other. He finds rest despite it all. He is a Nithyapatya. He is a

Nirashayaha. He does not depend on people. Even in action he is free. The popular saying, “ When shoe fits, you don't feel its presence. You feel it when it does not fit” fits him perfectly. For Gyani Karma is not a hurdle.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 4.21

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

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

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

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

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

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 4.22

Content with what is gained by chance, beyond dualities, rid of competitive spirit, equanimous in gain and loss, one is not bound in spite of working.

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

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

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

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

You can strengthen yourself. The protection is Gyanam that will protect you from the pair of opposites. He is one who has gone beyond competition. Current thinking is that competition

brings the best in people. Shastra says competition is bad. One tends to compare with the winner. This leads to depression, jealousy and cheating. Love and cooperation is better than competition. Matsaryam (competition) is a very bad quality.

According to Vedanta, success is the ability to manage failure in life. If there were a method of succeeding all the time, Sri Krishna would have taught us that. He teaches us to work for success but be ready for both, success and failure. This is called Samaha. Such a person is very active and without shackles. All actions become leela for the Gyani. For an Agyani it is all a struggle.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.23 ॥

Whose attachment has vanished, who has been liberated, whose mind has been established in knowledge and who works as a sacrifice, all works are dissolved.

This shloka is also about Grihastha Gyani. Many people wonder if one has to take Sanyasa. Sri Krishna says physical renunciation is not required. Inner detachment is, however, a requirement.

Grihastha Gyani has given up his claims. Everything belongs to God. Everything I have is a gift of God. We should use it for inner growth. God can take anything at any time including my body. I am thankful for God's gift. Everything around me belongs to God.

He is associated but not hooked to anyone or anything. With this approach he has freedom from tension and anxiety. Only then can one grow old gracefully. This is mukti. It is not a mysterious thing. It is freedom from worry, anxiety etc. He obtains it by detachment. Detachment comes from knowledge. His mind never loses sight of Atma Anatma Viveka. When body comes from the world and goes back to it, he is not attached to it.

He performs all actions as Ishwara Puja.

An Agyani expects results. He acts for Poornatvam. Gyani acts out of Poornatvam. His actions dissolve punyam and papam like a roasted seed. It is like a normal seed but it cannot germinate. Gyani's karma does not produce punyam or papam.

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे
ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे 4.24

The means of sacrificial offering is Brahman; Brahman is the oblation placed in the fire of Brahman and Brahman makes the sacrifice. This sacrificer, who concentrates on the act that is Brahman, reaches Brahman alone.

With this shloka Sri Krishna concludes Gyanam topic. It is a deeply philosophic shloka. A big leap of Vedantic significance is now made here.

Until now he said Gyanam is Atma-Anatma Vichara. Everyone is a mixture of the two, that is Consciousness and Body-mind-thought principle.

Consciousness is all pervading, unlimited, survives after death of body, and surviving consciousness cannot interact without a body. This we learnt from Second chapter shlokas 12-25. This was also discussed in chapter four, shloka 18.

First step of vedantic knowledge is Chetana-Achetana vibhaga. After this knowledge, I must now claim Consciousness as myself. I must now say, " I am" rather than " I have".

I must know I am not a part, product or property of the body. The body does not limit me. I will survive this body. This " I " cannot transact in the world as medium of transaction (body) is not there.

First stage: So, the first stage of vedanta is seeing "I"-as-Consciousness, and body-mind-and-the-world as

matter. I am consciousness while

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

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

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

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Chapter 4, Class 61

Greetings All,

Shloka # 18:

कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्
कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्कर्मणो भवेत्4.18

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

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

The higher-I atma has been talked about in the second chapter, where Sri Krishna pointed out that this atma is of the nature of consciousness, distinct from the body and all pervading. It is an akarta as it does not perform any action. It is only a witness. And this akarta-atma, this eka-atma; this poorna atma is my higher nature; and I have got a lower-I also called ahamkara; and this lower-I is nothing but the mind. The mind-principle is called the lower-I. Mind by itself is inert. It becomes sentient through the blessing of Atma. Citing example of a bulb, it is similar to the filament in a bulb that needs electricity to energize it. Such a mind when blessed by Atmatvam becomes sentient and is called Ahamkara. This finite

Ahamkara is my inferior "I" or ego. Ahamkara has to perform action, as it is its nature. Ahamkara, thus, accumulates Punyam and Papam. And this ahamkara alone takes another body and again exhausts the punya papam and in the process acquires fresh punya papam; and thus the punarapi jananam; punarapi maranam, samsara cycle continues for ahamkara. There is no way of stopping this ahamkara, because this ahamkara is motivated, activated, because of our identification. Sri Krishna says, by self-knowledge, we learn to own up to the higher-I, rather than the lower-I.

The moment the shift to higher "I" happens, the lower "I" loses momentum and it will stop. A Gyani is not a patron of Ahamkara. This shift from lower "I" to higher "I" is called wisdom. I own up to my Akarta nature, even while Ahamkara is active. This detachment from Ahamkara is the benefit of the wisdom. The question comes up, as to who is leading the dog? Is it the owner or the dog? Right now Ahamkara is leading me. Ahamkara has a function, but I should not be enslaved by it. The word Swamy means one who is master of his own Ahamkara. The word Aswamy means the opposite of Swamy.

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

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

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

Shloka # 19:

विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान्
विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् विद्वान् 4.19

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

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

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

His actions are not due to lacking anything or loneliness. Without performing activity too he is full. He is free from the desire to fulfill himself. He is free from future projections. Thus, we are not comfortable with ourselves. Thus, one asks: How will I look in this dress; with this girl;

with this house; etc? There is a big gulf between the small "I" and the higher "I" in such a person. This causes restlessness in him. I am not happy with the present, I am a dissatisfied "I". That is why Swami Dayananda Saraswathi says: I have rejected myself and when I cannot accept myself, I cannot accept the world also; I find fault with every person, every job, every set up and every house. The problem is not with the world rather the self-rejection expresses itself in the form of world rejection. Conversely, self-acceptance, expresses itself in the form of world acceptance. Again Swamiji beautifully says: a Gyani is at home with himself as he is and therefore at home with the world as it is. There is no dreaming and projections. He lives in the present. I am fine as I am; and enjoy doing whatever I can do, and whatever I have to do. He does not travel from unhappiness to happiness. He is always in a state of happiness.

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

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

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

to Pandita.

Shloka # 20:

शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि
शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि 4.20

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

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

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

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

Shloka # 20, second line:

Grihastha Gyani:

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

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta Class 60 – Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 15:

ॐ कर्मणो भवतु फलमात्रं हि ज्ञानात् ॥
ॐ कर्मणो भवतु फलमात्रं हि ज्ञानात् ॥ 4.15 ॥

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

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

Arjuna is experiencing all this on the battlefield. He wants to escape his Karma. Sri Krishna, however, is teaching him not to escape karma. Maximum you can do is you can change the karma from one action to another action; and often you find that when you change

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

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

Shloka # 16:

कर्म कर्मणि कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं

कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं कर्मण्येवमाद्युक्तं4.16

What is work? What is non-work? In respect of these questions the sages even are deluded. Therefore, I shall elucidate the

nature of work, by knowing which you will be delivered from evil.

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

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

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

An Agyani is enslaved by situations.

A Gyani is master of situations.

Shloka # 17:

ॐ कर्मणो भवति भोगो भोगो भवति मृत्युः ॥
ॐ कर्मणो भवति भोगो भोगो भवति मृत्युः ॥ 4.17 ॥

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

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

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

This is an introduction to Gyanam as an insulating material.

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

Shloka # 18:

शुद्धचित्तोऽपि च कर्मण्यपि न विद्यते
न च कर्मण्यपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि च कर्मण्यपि न विद्यते 4.18

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

From # 18-24, Sri Krishna deals with knowledge or solution to all problems. This shloka is the core of chapter #4. It is a very impotent shloka in the entire Gita. It condenses the teaching of all Upanishads. Hence Gita is also considered an Upanishad. Essence of Upanishad is Gyanam. It is discussed in chapter # 2 of Gita and now in Chapter # 4 as well. Shloka # 18 is very significant and a difficult one to understand. This shloka has language of contradictions.

The literal translation is as follows:

“Wise person sees action in in-action.

Wise person also sees in-action in action.”

The contradiction:

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

Shankaracharya has written a large commentary on this shloka. This shloka has also been called a knotty shloka of Gita. In chapter 2, shloka 2.69 is also a knotty shloka. These verses are called the knotty verses because when Vyasa wanted Mahaganapathy to become the scribe; Mahaganapathy put a condition that once I start writing, I cannot stop. Therefore, you have to continuously dictate and if you stop for some

reason I will leave. Vyasa agreed to this condition of Ganapathy but he placed a condition on Ganapathy as well. He said when you take down my commentary you should know the meaning of it, as well.

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

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

1) Anatma: Consisting of the body, mind thought complex.

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

Wise person also sees in-action in action."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Wise person sees action in in-action."

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

When action overwhelms me we don't know how to get out of it. We feel overwhelmed. It is like catching the tail of a tiger, after sometime you will tire while the tiger will not. You

then look for a place without action or shantam or shivam. This place is my own shanta swaroopam. So a wise person knows how to dip into his own tranquility. Sri Krishna wants to give us a taste of this shantam. This is provided to us during sleep. At that time you don't have a Karta personality. Deep sleep is absolute Ananda. This is Atma Swaroopam.

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

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 59, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 13:

चतुर्वर्ण्यस्य व्यवस्थां प्रकृत्या विधातुं मे
व्यवस्थां प्रकृत्या विधातुं मे 4.13

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

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said,

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

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

Are there any gradations among the three?

In Jati, all four are created equal.

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

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

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

Puranic stories such as Nandanar are about a non-brahmin

although he was a Guna Brahamana.

Jati: Do we have a choice regarding Jathi?

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

Guna: Do we have a choice regarding our Guna?

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

So, we have to move from Tamas pradhana to Rajas Pradhana. Rituals (karmakanda) can help us in this process. And then, move from Rajas to Satva Guna. One should learn to be contemplative. Upasana kandam helps with this change. Thus, after I become a Guna Brahmna, one has to go to the Nirguna state (Ishwara Aikyam) through Gyana Kanda.

Do we have a choice regarding Karma or occupation?

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

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

Both have advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages:

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

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

Guna:

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

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

Drona and Vishwamithra are examples where Jathi was dominant.

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

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

Sri Krishna says even though I have created the four-fold class of humanity; still I am active all the time. However, these actions do not bind me. So, Arjuna do not escape your Karma. You can, even performing your Karmas, enjoy peace. Even though I do all activity they don't disturb me. I am not affected.

Shloka # 14:

॥ कर्मफलं न प्राप्नुयान् कर्मणोः प्रियदाता ॥
॥ श्रीकृष्ण उवाच ॥ अहो भूयस्त्वया धर्मज्ञः ॥४.१४॥

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

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

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

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

just happens.

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

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

Shloka # 15:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ 4.15 ॥

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

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

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 58 – Chapter 4

Shloka # 12:

पुण्यं कुरुष्विह जगत्पुण्यं कुरुष्विह जगत्पुण्यं
पुण्यं कुरुष्विह जगत्पुण्यं कुरुष्विह जगत्पुण्यं 4.12

People in the world offer scarifices to gods, desiring the success of their works. For, in this human world, quick is the success born of works.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, up to shloka # 12 Sri Krishna talked about Avatara's. He began the chapter by glorifying Vedas. Once Sri Krishna stopped, Arjuna raised a doubt. Answering him Sri Krishna explained how an Avatara happens. And thereafter Krishna said that even by this avathara gyanam one can get

Liberation although most of the people are not interested in Ishvara gyanam, they are only interested in karmas which will produce material result; He said most people are not interested in moksha; rather most are interested in karma. To obtain moksha is not Bhagawan's decision, rather it is our decision to make. Most people are interested in material goals only. With this Avatara rahasyam is over.

Now Sri Krishna is entering Gyana-Karma-Sanyasa teaching. Arjuna is not interested in doing his duty as a Kshatriya on the battlefield. Rather, he wants to take sanyasa. Arjuna is afraid of Karma. Sri Krishna wants to take the fear of Karma from Arjuna. As long as a human is alive one has to perform Karma. We cannot live even a moment without action. The types of actions we perform may be different. You will always have one job or another. Sri Krishna says you cannot escape Karma. Only death can cease karma. Even the smallest of atoms is active as is the huge Sun. Both at micro and macrocosmic level

there is constant action and it is inevitable. Now with Karma there are always side effects. Karma means responsibility, tension, and the end result may not be always the way we desired. Because of this there is also mental disturbance. Sri Krishna says we must accept Karma as a part of life but we also need to find solutions for the side effects. This is much like some of the drugs we take. I should remain in action without being disturbed. To accomplish this one method is adopting Karma Yoga. Here Sri Krishna also talks of Gyanam as another solution. With Gyanam one is not affected by action or its results. Citing example of the ooze coming out of a Jackfruit, Swamiji says this white ooze sticks to your hands. People apply oil in their hands so that the ooze does not stick. So also Gyanam is the oil that prevents Karma from sticking to us. And this is the topic of this chapter as well.

Sri Krishna says look at me and my life. I have gone through a lot including failures. In spite of my activities I remain untouched by action or results of my karma.

Sri Krishna as creator also had a lot of duties. He was a creator, sustainer and destroyer. I also designed a way of life for human beings to lead and it is in a manual called the Vedas. It teaches a life of harmony for both the individual as well as society. Such a life style is the Varna Ashrama Plan. **It has Varna**, the four fold division of society. This division allows social harmony and growth in individual, community, nation and cosmos.

Ashrama, describes the four stages of life of an individual that is: Brahmacharya, Grihastashrama, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa ashrama.

In this shloka Sri Krishna talks of Varna Ashrama.

Swamiji described Ashrama as follows:

Brahmacharya: This is the life of a student. In this stage he learns about the human goals. One goal is a material goal of

how to earn a living. The second goal is a spiritual goal for inner growth. One goal is outward facing while other is inward facing. A balance has to be struck between outer and inner growth.

Grihastashrama: Life as a householder. This is the implementation stage of the learning from Brahmacharya. It is a Karma Pradhana life. Activities are extrovert in nature. Hinduism also supports material growth and is not just a religion of escapism, as some would have us believe. All desires are fulfilled in a legitimate manner. Background should be spiritual. His desires will gradually be refined. It is a stage full of activity. Pancha Maha Yagna is usually practiced in this stage to purify the mind. Pancha Maha Yagna was detailed in Chapter 3.

3) **Vanaprashtha:** is a stage of turning the mind inward. This is an Upasana Pradhana Ashrama. Inside or outside his house he will turn inwards.

4) **Sanyasa Ashrama:** He takes Sanyasa either in the house or leaving the house. Either way he will dissociate mentally. He will handover everybody's responsibility to Ishwara. He is in a more detached state of mind. This is a Gyana Pradhana stage.

Through these four ashramas the individual has catered to Self and Society. This is like a tree that gives fruits for the benefit of others but also produces seeds to ensure its own propagation.

This is known as ashrama vyavastha.

Shloka # 13:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.13 ॥

The fourfold class-system according to the divisions of Prakrti's constituents and works, has been ordained by Me.

Though I am its author, know Me to be the immutable non-agent.

Varna Vyavastha:

Broadly there are four varnas. They are Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. While these are the four divisions there are three perspectives on how they are based.

The first basis is Character or Guna or Svabhava. Thus there is Guna Brahmana, Kshatriya etc.

Second is based upon profession or Karma. Thus we have Karma Brahmana, Karma Kshatriya etc.

The third is based upon birth or Janma or Jathi. Thus we have Jathi Brahmana, Jathi Kshatriya etc. Swamiji clarified that Jathi is not the same as caste.

Guna Perspective:

What character makes what?

Guna Brahmana is one in whom Satva dominates, or it is Satva Pradhana. Rajas and then Tamas follow it. Satva pradhana represents tranquility and intellectual efficiency. It has been detailed in chapter # 14 of the Gita. Rajo Guna is a state of hyper activity. Tamo guna is a state without Satva or Rajas or during sleep. It suppresses inner and outer activity.

Swamiji classified them as follows:

SRT: Thus in Guna Brahmana it is Satva (S), followed by Rajas (R) and then Tamas (T).

RST: In Guna Kshatriya it is RST. Here one is active, but selflessly.

RTS: Rajo Guna dominant backed by Tamo Guna. He is also active but is very selfish. This is Guna Vaishya.

TRS: Tamo Guna pradhana. Most of his time is spent in sleeping. Unskilled, mechanical person. This is Guna Shudra.

Profession or Karma perspective:

1. Karma Brahmana: All intellectual work. Teaching, research, spiritual and non spiritual etc.
2. Karma Kshatriya: Maintenance of law and order, defense etc.
3. Karma Vaishya: Producing wealth, Industry, Trade and business.
4. Karma Shudra: All activities that help all three above. Unskilled work.

Thus karma Brahmana need not be a Guna Brahmana. A Karma Brahmana selling Gita books may be more a Karma Vaishya.

Jathi Perspective (by birth):

- Jathi Brahmana. He can also become a Karma Kshatriya.
- Jathi Kshatriya
- Jathi Vaishya
- Jathi Shudra

Thus there are many permutations and combinations of these Varnas.

From Jathi (birth) perspective all four Varnas are considered equal. Thus, birth does not provide any superiority. All jathi's should be equally respected.

From Karma Perspective as well all professions are equally important. None is superior. Purushasuktham shows the four parts of the body of God as representing the four Varnas.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 57

Chapter 4 Sloka 10

freed from attachment, fear and anger
absorbed in Me taking refuge in Me
many by the fire of knowledge purified
My Being have attained.

freed from attachment, fear and anger
absorbed in Me taking refuge in Me
many by the fire of knowledge purified
My Being have attained.

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, many have attained to My Being.

In Verse 10, Krishna talks about the spiritual disciplines followed by the people of the past. He talks about the various stages that one goes through.

Obsessed with the thought of Me (God). Keeping Godhood as the primary goal of life. It is an obsession born out of intense yearning; the obsession is Godhood – the primary goal. From the Vedantic angle, Godhood is nothing but our own higher, superior or healthy nature. Vedanta presents God as an external goal but ultimately Godhood is my own secure, healthy, full, contented self symbolized as God. So, that they are tired of their own mental sickness in the form of raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, that they want to convert that sick mind into a mind of compassion and a mind of love and security. This inner conversion is called attainment of Godhood.

This is not an easy task. No doubt your effort is a must, but it should also be backed by Ishvara anugraha. This is

indicated in the words **शुद्धचित्तं** taking refuge in Me or surrendering unto Me. With determination, there is appropriate use of freewill. **शुद्धचित्तं** corresponds to our freewill and **शुद्धचित्तं** corresponds to Ishvara anugraha.

Once these two are there, you are ready for the journey but what is the direction? **शुद्धचित्तं** you should learn to handle these inborn weaknesses that are in the form of raga, bhayam and krodha.

According to Vedanta, the world is neither a source of joy nor a source of sorrow. I, myself, am the source of joy and sorrow. An intelligent person will understand that the problem is within them and this leads to having raga and dvesha being managed. **शुद्धचित्तं** one who handles (raga and dvesha); not a slave of likes and dislikes. The first direction is to manage raga-dvesha. Convert all desires into non-binding desires. Consequent to this is **शुद्धचित्तं** wherever there is attachment, there is fear. KrodhaH is the result of obstructed desires. The anger is directed at the person who has thwarted the desire. Anger is also directly proportional to the attachment. Raga-dvesha-krodha-bhayam all go together. The first stage in spirituality is learning to handle them. This can be handled by the wisdom of knowing that I am a contributor not a controller of future events.

If this understanding is not there, the next method is devotion or surrendering to the Lord. Oh Lord, the future is not in my control. At least give me sufficient strength to face the inevitable. As Krishna has said in Chapter 2, Verse 27, 2nd line: An intelligent person is prepared for the inevitable or choicelessness. Take the help of the Lord.

Either rely on yourself through wisdom or rely on God through surrender to handle intense attachment/hatred/fear/anger. The one who has mastered this is called **शुद्धचित्तं** |

Once the mind is purified and is no longer a slave of these

four, it is only a pure mind. It is not yet a wise mind. Karma yoga can only give you purity but not wisdom. So, having handled the raga-dvesha of the mind, you have to separately work for knowledge. Krishna calls this `अभ्यास` because this is a type of austerity. To come regularly to Gita class, to remember, study and progress, etc. requires austerity.

By the practice of `अभ्यास` , `अहंकार` got completely purified. Handling the raga-dvesha is only partial purification. Handling the kama-krodha is also only partial purification. You have to remove the basic impurity of self-ignorance for complete purification. Krishna says that by the practice of jnaana yoga, they rid themselves of the final layer of impurity. Grosser method is used to remove the grosser impurity and subtler method for removing the subtler impurity and the subtlest method to remove the subtlest impurity. It has to follow the stages in order.

The grossest impurity is raga-dvesha, the first layer called malam.

The subtler impurity is extrovertedness, the second layer called vikshepa.

The finest impurity is ajnaanam, the third layer called aavaranam

Malam is likes and dislikes.

Vikshepa is the wandering mind which is subtler.

Self-ignorance is the subtlest one.

We have to use three processes in the appropriate order to remove the three different types of impurities.

Karma yoga removes malam.

Upaasanam removes vikshepa.

Jnaana yoga removes aavaranam.

Therefore, many people have totally purified themselves by finally practicing the jnaana yoga. By removing all the impurities, they found they discovered that "I minus impurities" is God. God plus impurity is I, the jeevaatma. Jeevaatma minus impurity is Paramaatma. Paramaatma plus impurity is jeevaatma.

So, Arjuna, you also have to go through these four stages:

Spiritual goal must become top priority. The material goals need not be eliminated but they should be remembered as subservient to spiritual goals. This is setting direction in life.

Resorting or taking the help of the Lord in this grand journey because you can never travel this individually. Surrender to the Lord.

Purification of the mind by reducing the impact of raga-dvesha-bhaya-krodha.

Study the scriptures and gain self-knowledge.

Arjuna, many have done this and you can too.

Chapter 4 Sloka 11

Who who in whatever way Me approach them so even reward I My path follow men 0 Partha in all ways.

Who who in whatever way Me approach them so even reward I My path follow men 0 Partha in all ways.

In whatever way people surrender unto me, I reciprocate with them accordingly. Everyone follows my path, knowingly or unknowingly, 0 son of Pritha.

Krishna gives the suggestion that spiritual goal must be the primary goal but He says that He doesn't want to impose this goal upon you. Not everyone may be interested in spirituality or in attaining moksha. Krishna says "I suggest and recommend to you that moksha is a worthwhile goal". Krishna's philosophy is "As a person seeks, so I will bless him".

Let any seeker approach Me with any desire. Let a person seek anything and I will help him. The only condition is for the desires to be legitimate and the means of accomplishing them to also be legitimate. Enjoy life following the rule of dharma. In fact, enjoyment is part of life and then to finally grow out of it. Otherwise it can lead to suppression.

I will approach them only with the object they desire. As Vivekananda has said, to a hungry person, the Lord should approach with food. Let a poor person seek money. And for a moksha seeker, Bhagavan will give moksha.

Why do I bless them with all these goals?

Because all my devotees approach me through appropriate effort (like puja, karma, japa, upasana).

they have come in the proper method.

Chapter 4 Sloka 12

4.12

those who long for success of actions sacrifice in this world quickly because in the human world success is attained born of action.

In this world, those desiring success in material activities

worship the celestial gods, since material rewards manifest quickly.

Krishna says I have presented two paths in the Vedic scriptures.

The first path is karma maarga – a life of activity; a life of effort where you go through certain processes. The second path of jnaana maarga is presented in the final part of the Veda (called Veda-anta).

Krishna presents both paths which produce the end. The difference in the result is that all the results of karma are finite in nature and it's full of defects.

Accomplishment is a pain, preservation is a greater pain, and the final loss is the greatest pain. Any amount of accomplishment will not give satisfaction; they will become more dependent on the external factors. These are all defects of karmaphalam.

Krishna says in this sloka, कर्मफलं प्राप्नुयान् कर्मणः फलं प्राप्नुयान् many people are interested only in karma phalam, the finite results or dharmarthakaamaa. Both the finite and infinite are available for human beings but the intelligent ones choose the infinite whereas the unintelligent or mandaH chooses the finite. Krishna says कर्मणोऽपि फलं प्राप्नुयान् कर्मणोऽपि फलं प्राप्नुयान् they seek finite results. And once you choose karma phalam, the Vedic rituals are elaborate. It specifies that you should go to that temple, you should offer this item and on certain days; numerous conditions and if you fulfill all these conditions, you may get the result (it's not definite).

कर्मणोऽपि फलं प्राप्नुयान् they go after varieties of Deities. Why?

कर्मणोऽपि फलं प्राप्नुयान् कर्मणोऽपि फलं प्राप्नुयान् because the karma phalam is quicker compared to jnaana marga. In jnaana marga, jnaana phalam is quicker – the result of knowledge is very quick (getting knowledge is very easy) but preparation for knowledge

is a tough job. Like a wedding which takes place in one day but the preparation for it starts months ahead. Similarly, jnaanam only requires one statement. "I am what I am seeking". Drop seeking and own up your true nature. This alone is Vedanta. But for this statement to work, (Swamiji recites Chapter 6, Verse 45, 2nd line:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 45 ॥

you have to start from many janmas before.

Krishna says ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ people are not interested in purification which takes a lot of time. They are interested only in the limited fruits of action.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय Chapter 4 Sloka 13

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 4.13 ॥

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय the fourfold caste ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय be Me ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय has been created ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय according to the differentiation of Guna and Karma ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय thereof ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय the author ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय also ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय Me ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय know ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय nondoer ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय immutable.

The four categories of occupations were created by me according to people's qualities and activities. Although I am the creator of this system, know me to be the non-doer and eternal.

Krishna says by following the prescribed lifestyle, a person can accomplish both material and spiritual end. Normally, spiritual and material ends are diagonally opposite but Bhagavan says the He has designed a unique lifestyle by which a person can accomplish both the spiritual end and material ends. This should be such a lifestyle that a person must be able to fulfill materialistic desires. Vedic lifestyle

encourages one to fulfill their desires. While fulfilling these desires, it presents certain disciplines to be followed. If you fulfill your materialistic desires following the Vedic discipline, the beauty is that you gradually grow out of these materialistic desires without suppression. And in that place, you discover the spiritual desire as the most natural one. And you discover this desire to such an extent that the pursuit of spiritual desire will not be considered as a denial of materialistic desires. So, when you come to spirituality, you will not miss anything in life. This gradual conversion must take place. Such a life design is the Vedic life design called varnaashrama dharma.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 56

In the beginning of Chapter 4, Lord Krishna talked about the glory of the Gita as vedasaarah and that He alone taught the Vedic wisdom in the beginning of creation and is teaching the same Vedic wisdom now, in the name of Gita.

Upon hearing this, Arjuna has a doubt due to the teacher being the same with a great gap in time. Lord Krishna introduces the topic of avatara to answer this question. He says "I am the original Vishnu who gave out the Vedic wisdom then, and that Vishnu is now in the form of Bhagavan Krishna". Not only is the Lord teaching now but he says I am aware of the fact that I am Bhagavan. I alone have taken all the janmas as Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, etc. I have now taken Krishna shariram. I know all my previous avataras, therefore I am Bhagavan Vishnu's avatara.

Both the avatara and the jeeva-janma take a body. However, there are fundamental differences between the two in the

Cause, Nature and Purpose.

The Cause: Jnaanam is the cause of Ishvara avatara. Ajnaanam is the cause of jeeva-janma.

The Nature: The Lord's shariram is directly born out of maya. Jeeva's body is not directly born out of maya but through the intermediary process of the five elements.

The Purpose: Jeeva arrives to exhaust his prarabhda punya-paapa. Ishvara arrives to uplift the world.

Lord Krishna points out these three differences. The third difference of purpose is in Verse 7.

Chapter 4 Sloka 7

Chapter 4 Sloka 7

whenever there is decline of righteousness, 0 Bharata, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

whenever there is decline of righteousness, 0 Bharata, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

Whenever there is decline of righteousness, 0 Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

Whenever there is a decline in dharma. Dharma, as seen in Chapter 3, means cosmic harmony or rhythm. If you take the whole universe as a body, the cosmic orderliness is called cosmic health. At the cosmic level, if there is harmony, it is called dharma. And this harmony alone protects the universe. Dharma alone is the health of the world. It alone sustains the world. Once the orderliness is disturbed, the whole cosmos will be destroyed and we will not be able to survive. And if this inbuilt system doesn't work, Bhagavan will have to interfere.

Krishna says here, as a sthiti karta of the universe, I will come. Not very often but whenever there is a declension of dharma. And naturally, when the adharma, corruption increases. Then, I myself will consciously, deliberately, voluntarily, take the body.

Chapter 4 Sloka 8

for the protection of the good for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness (I) am born in every age.

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness, I am born in every age.

How will the Lord protect dharma and destroy adharma? Krishna says that dharma is protected by protecting the people who follow dharma. Therefore, Krishna says, – I take an avatara to protect the dharmic people. How is adharma destroyed? Only by destroying the people that are the cause of adharma.

We should note that the adharmic people can be destroyed in two ways.

One method is by converting them from adharma to dharma by sama, dana, bheda. When you convert a person from adharma to dharma without doing himsa, you have destroyed the adharmic person. The second is by destroying the adharmic person itself. Bhagavan tries this first, giving them sufficient opportunity to change. Krishna goes as a messenger to

Duryodhana and suggests to compromise with the Pandavas but he refuses. This means that sama, dana and bheda have failed. Therefore, Krishna said कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः (from Chapter 2, Verse 18). Arjuna, destroy them!

Krishna says, कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः |

Bhagavan established dharma in a different way. A kshatriya and a brahmana can establish dharma, each in their own way. A kshatriya promotes the dharmic people and punishes the adharmaic people. A brahmana sustains dharma by teaching which is the better form of promoting dharma. Punishment is only temporary and will not promote dharma permanently. The ultimate promotion of dharma is for a person to have value for dharma. To know the long term effects of violating dharma requires a sensitive mind. Sensitive mind is developed only by teaching not by advising. A kshatriya protects dharma by protecting the dharmic people and punishing the adharmaic people. A brahmana protects dharma by teaching. Bhagavan’s avatara has done both. Krishna protected dharmic people like Dharmaputra and destroyed adharmaic people like Duryodhana. This was Krishna’s kshatriya job. Then he taught Gita, or taught dharma. This is why he said कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः | This is the reason that among the 10 avatars, Rama avatara and Krishna avatara are considered the most important ones. Teaching dharma is involved only in these two avatars. Rama taught by living dharma and Krishna, by teaching dharma. Ramayana is Rama ayanam means the way of life led by Rama.

कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः I am born or take avatara. कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः every yuga or every time it is required.

कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः

Chapter 4 Sloka 9

कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः कुरुकुलेऽपि भद्रं कुरु पूर्वैः पापैः ॥4.9॥

My birth and action and My divine nature thus who knows in true light having abandoned the body again birth not gets to Me comes he 0 Arjuna.

He who thus know, in their true light, My divine birth and action, having abandoned the body, is not born again, he comes to Me, 0 Arjuna.

In this verse, Krishna tells, knowing the nature of God also leads to liberation.

However, Krishna had mentioned that atmajnaanam is the means of liberation in Chapter 2, Verse 55. Which actually leads to liberation? Are there two paths? Is there a choice?

The scriptures have mentioned that there is only one means of liberation. Therefore, it must be that self-realization and God-realization are identical. Swamiji gives an example of a wave. When a wave knows its true nature, the realization is that it is water. The ocean's true nature is also water.

Therefore, whether you talk about the true nature of the wave or the true nature of the ocean, the true nature is one alone; there is only one central truth. Similarly, whether you realize your true nature which is the self or whether you realize the true nature of God, you arrive at one "sat chit Ananda svaroopam".

If a person says, I have realized the self but not God or vice versa; it means he knows neither God nor the self.

Krishna says in this verse, suppose a person knows or realizes, or understands the true nature of my avatara. The true nature is that Krishna shariram is not the real Krishna because Krishna shariram is subject to arrival and departure.

Real Krishna is, as we saw in Verse 6:

शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं |

शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं || 6||

Real Krishna is शरीरं (birth less), $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ (imperishable) real Krishna is free from birth and death; whereas Krishna shariram is subject to arrival and departure.

What is the real Krishna? Not the shariram but the Krishna Paramaatma behind the body. The one who knows this fact, and $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ the one who knows Bhagavan's sports (the divine sport is $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ from Chapter 4, Verse 8); the one who really understands the Lord, $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ means in His true nature... $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ that person does not take a body again after death; he will attain liberation. So, the knowledge of the real Krishna will lead to liberation. What is liberation? $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ he will become one with Me. After death, he will have $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ or $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ |

शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं

Chapter 4 Sloka 10

शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं |
शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं ||4.10||

$\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ freed from attachment fear and anger $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ absorbed in Me $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ Me $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ taking refuge in $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ many $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ by the fire of knowledge $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ purified $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ My Being $\text{शरीरं जन्ममृत्योरुत्थं}$ have attained.

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of knowledge, many have attained to My Being.

Realization of God has two stages.

First it is the realization of the Lord with a form.

The next is the realization of the Lord without a form.

This topic will be elaborated from Chapter 7 onwards.

The realization of the Lord with a form is in two stages.

One is appreciating the Lord with one form, as Rama or as Krishna or as Devi. We should all start with this for emotional health. Talk to God privately, as your confidante. The more you build this relationship, the more the Lord will become real. Then expand it further into realizing Bhagavan as One with the whole universe as his form. The final stage is the formless Ishvara. Every one has to go through these three stages, as they mature in their understanding.

The stages a seeker goes through is described in this sloka.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ the first stage is to have realization of God in form and follow karma yoga by dedicating all your duties to the Lord and by accepting all situations as Ishvara prasada. The first stage is to surrender to Ishvara and converting the life into worship. By following a karma yoga way of life, we will purify the mind. This will result in getting rid of certain unhealthy ways of thinking. The mental impurities are of raga, bhaya and krodha. Raga is attachment. The attachment will gradually be shifted from the risky and fluid world to the permanently and secure God. The second stage is going from world dependence to God dependence. The raga or attachment to the world has shifted to attachment to Bhagavan. Then Bhagavan dependence will be converted into self-dependence. From world dependence to God dependence to self-dependence – where you discover the Bhagavan as the very self. When raga comes down, bhayam also comes down because fear is directly proportional to the attachment. Then krodha also will come down.

Bagahwat Geeta, Class 55

In Chapter 2, Krishna gave a gist of Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

In Chapter 3, Karma Yoga was elaborated.

In Chapters 4 and 5, Jnana Yoga is elaborated.

The 4th Chapter is the “jnana yoga pradhana”. There is a small diversion in the first 8 verses before diving into jnaana yoga. In the first three verses, Lord Krishna glorifies this knowledge consisting of Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga. The very essence of karma and jnana has already been taught in Veda at the beginning of the creation and this was received by Surya Bhagavan. This same wisdom is revived again in the name Gita. Veda was received by Surya Bhagavan and Gita is received by Arjuna. Therefore, it is an ancient and time-tested wisdom making it a reliable and a valid one.

Arjuna has a doubt about the timeline between creation and his current time. The times are different by few millennia, students are different yet the teacher is the same!

Krishna says in Chapter 4, Sloka 1:

मया तदात्मना ज्ञानं प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं तदात्मानं । (मया प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं I taught)

And now also, Chapter 4, Sloka 3:

मया तदात्मना ज्ञानं प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं तदात्मानं । (मया प्रोक्तं तदात्मानं taught by Me).

Arjuna asks “Your birth is recent but your initial student’s birth was too long ago. How can a recent person teach an ancient student?”

Krishna answers Arjuna from Verse 5 though Verse 8.

Chapter 4 Sloka 5

Chapter 4 Sloka 5

Chapter 4 Sloka 5
Chapter 4 Sloka 5
Chapter 4 Sloka 5 04.5

Chapter 4 Sloka 5 may be My Chapter 4 Sloka 5 have passed away Chapter 4 Sloka 5 births Chapter 4 Sloka 5 thy Chapter 4 Sloka 5 and Chapter 4 Sloka 5 0 Arjuna Chapter 4 Sloka 5 them Chapter 4 Sloka 5 I Chapter 4 Sloka 5 know Chapter 4 Sloka 5 all Chapter 4 Sloka 5 not

Chapter 4 Sloka 5 thou Chapter 4 Sloka 5 knowest Chapter 4 Sloka 5 0 Parantapa.

The Blessed Lord said Many births of Mine have passed as well as of thine, 0 Arjuna; I know them all but thou knowest not, 0 Parantapa (scorcher of foes).

Lord Krishna introduces the topic of avatara in his answer to Arjuna. The Lord's incarnation is different from a human birth. Human birth is called janma but when the Lord appears in creation, it is called avatara. Krishna wants to point the differences between janma and avatara.

Swamiji elaborates on the topic of birth and incarnation before explaining Verse 5.

The differences between manushya janma and Ishvara avatara are:

Cause, Nature and Purpose

FIRST: the cause; at the cause level there is "kaaraNa bheda".

In the case of the birth of a jeeva, it is caused by ignorance of the jeeva.

Because of ignorance, the jeeva has the problem of ahankaara (ego).

Because of ego, there is the problem of karma.

Because of karma, there is the problem of punya and paapa.

Because of punya and paapa, there is the janma.

The birth of a jeeva is due to ignorance, so we can call this as a "fall of a jeeva".

In the case of Ishvara, His birth takes place never because of. It is because of His omniscience. Because of the knowledge alone, Bhagavan chooses to appear on Earth. This is knowledge and compassion based. Avatara means coming down out of compassion. There is a difference between falling into a well (helpless phenomenon) and going down the well. kaaraNa bheda is the first difference.

SECOND: the nature; svaroopam is different; "svaroopam bheda".

Since jeeva-janma is because of ignorance, jeeva continues to be a samsaari. He is a bound person, born with sorrow. He is helpless, not a master of himself. Janma is samsaaraH.

Since Ishvara avatara is backed by knowledge, it is nitya mukta svaroopam or asamsaari.

Jeeva is samsaari while Avatara is asamsaari.

Another technical difference that Krishna points out is that all the bodies are made up of matter whether it is manushya shariram or avatara shariram. But the scriptures say that there is a difference between the two sharirams. The jeeva shariram is not directly born out of prakriti or maya. Jeeva shariram is indirectly born out of maya. Maya or prakriti gets converted into five elements called pancha bhutani and these five elements get converted into paancha bhoutika shariram. Thus maya does not directly produce the body (jeeva shariram) but it produces through the five elements alone. Jeeva shariram is called paancha bhoutika shariram. From maya to bhutaas to the physical body.

In the case of Ishvara avatara, the maya does not go through

the intermediary stage of five elements. Maya directly gets converted into Ishvara avatara shariram. Avatara shariram is called mayika shariram. From maya to the physical body.

So the second difference is in the nature of jeeva shariram and avatara shariram.

Jeeva shariram is bound or samsaari shariram; paancha bhoutika shariram.

Avatara shariram is free or asamsaari shariram; mayika shariram.

This is the svaroopā bheda.

THIRD: the purpose; “karya” or “udheshya bheda”.

When a jeeva is born, it is purely to exhaust the punyam and paapam, which have been acquired in the past, called prarabdha. The prarabdha has to be exhausted. Prarabdha punyam is exhausted through sukham and prarabdha paapam is exhausted through dukham. To experience pleasure and pain, we require the body medium. It is the prarabdha that determines the type of the body for exhausting punya-paapa. The very design of the body is for the purpose of punya-paapa exhaustion. The purpose of jeeva-janma is for the depletion of punyam and paapam.

What is the purpose of an avatara? Avatara is not ignorant, not a samsaari, and does not suffer from the problem of ego. Since there is no ego, there is no question of punyam or paapam. Therefore, Ishvara does not need to take an avatara to exhaust punya-paapa.

Krishna tells an avatara’s purpose in Chapter 4, Verse 8:

शरीरं कर्तुं यत्प्रयत्नं तद्विनाशायै तदात्मने ।

शरीरं कर्तुं यत्प्रयत्नं तद्विनाशायै तदात्मने ॥ ८ ॥

To protect the righteous, to annihilate the wicked, and to reestablish the principles of dharma I appear on this earth, age after age.

Ishvara Avatara's purpose is for the protection of dharma and destruction of adharma by protecting the dharmic people and destroying the adharmaic people. This is why the very nature of avatara shariram is designed for protecting the people and establishing dharma. The design is determined by the type of protection that is required. Before every avatara comes, there is a portion in the Puranas, where all the noble people pray to the Lord to save them from some rakshasa (Hiranyakashipu, Ravana, etc). Rama Avatara's purpose was destruction of Ravana. The design of the body depends upon the situation.

Ravana's peculiar boon is that he cannot be killed by anyone or anything, except he didn't include humans, out of over-confidence. So, if Ravana had to be destroyed, Bhagavan's avatara had to be human. Hence the design of the body is determined by the purpose of the avatara. When the atrocities were done by Hiranyakashipu, the design for the avatara had to fit the loop holes of his boon. He could not be killed by humans nor animals nor any weapons; and not during the day nor night. The avatara was Narasimha with sharp nails.

In summary: the difference between janma and avatara:

Cause: kaaraNa bheda – ajnaanam vs jnaanam

Nature: svaroopA bheda – samsaari vs asamsaari

Purpose: udheshya bheda – depletion of punya-paapa vs protection of dharma

Krishna tells in this sloka that since avatara is not restricted by ignorance, the avataras know the past, present and future. Krishna says that He knows all his previous incarnations. However, in the case of jeeva-janma, since ignorance limits the jeeva, the jeeva cannot know the past

janmas.

How do you know if one is avatara or janma? We really don't have a method of knowing. We accept one as avatara wherever there is scriptural support ie. Rama is an avatara as written in the scriptures. If it is not mentioned in the scriptures, we cannot prove is one is an avatara or janma. It then becomes our personal belief.

If you consider people with extraordinary powers to be an avatara; then rakshasas will also fall under this. Having extraordinary powers is not proof that this person is an avatara.

Limitations does not disprove avatara. Certain avataras showed limitations. For example, Rama, who is accepted as an avatara, had several natural limitations. It is one's personal belief to accept someone as an avatara even with limitations and not accept someone with extraordinary powers as an avatara.

One consolation is that we do not need to know if one is an avatara or not for our spiritual growth. We need purity of mind! To attain purity of mind, worshipping any form of God is good enough.

The next thing required for spiritual growth is knowledge. This requires a Guru; who need not be an avatara. Even if an avatara has to bless, the blessing can be only by becoming a Guru. Krishna can never give moksha to Arjuna by any method other than by being his Guru.

Swamiji recites from Dhyana Slokas:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥

And

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

Therefore, for knowledge we don't require an avatara. Nor for knowledge. There may or may not be an avatara right now. I may be willing to accept someone as an avatara. The important aspect is to purify, know and be free.

We all uniformly accept Krishna as an avatara. Krishna says, "Arjuna, I am an avatara, different from you. My cause of birth is knowledge, my nature is moksha, my purpose is moksha (Chapter 4, Verse 8). This is the topic of avatara given in this portion.

With this background, let's look at Verse 5. Krishna says, Hey Arjuna, Many janmas have gone by for you. I have also taken many sharirams. The number of sharirams does not prove superiority. So what is the difference between you and me? I continue to be a free person; a therefore I know all the past sharirams. What about you? You do not know your past sharirams. 0 Parantapa (Arjuna).

Chapter 4 Sloka 6

unborn also being of imperishable nature of beings the Lord also being Nature My own governing come into being by My own Maya.

Chapter 4 Sloka 6

Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet, governing My own Nature, I am born by My own Maya.

Krishna talks about the nature of the avatara.

I know that I am birth less Brahman; I know my nature. I know I am birthless reality and this shariram is a simple `शरीर` (assumed appearance) I have put on for a certain purpose. I know I am `जन्म` meaning `न` `जन्म` `शरीर` `शरीर` (no birth). `अमर` `अमर` I am of changeless nature, not subject to decay and death; `शरीर` `शरीर` (devoid of old age and death).

`जन्म` means `जन्म` `मरण` and `अमर` means `अमर` `अमर` | Not only am I free from birth and death, `अमर` `अमर` | I am the master of all living beings. I am not a limited entity but I am `अमर` – I am the master. I have not helplessly come down to this world, I have chosen to come.

How do I manage to come down? `अमर` `अमर` – by keeping the prakriti, the matter, the material body under my control I am born. I am surrounded by matter; just as the jeeva also is surrounded by matter. The difference, however, is that I am the master of the matter whereas the jeeva is the slave of the matter (or shariram). Both the avatara (Bhagavan) and the jeeva are surrounded by the body-mind complex (`शरीर`) but Bhagavan is in control of the body-mind complex whereas the jeeva is controlled by the body-mind complex.

`जन्म` `जन्म` I take a body. How? `अमर` with the help of maya tattvam; by producing `शरीर` `शरीर` | This means that I don't require the five elements. Instead from maya I can directly convert into the shariram. This is why Bhagavan does not require the regular process of creation. Even `अमर` in case of Rama avatara is not the regular process. This is why it is said that the Lord entered into the garbha. In the case of Narasimha avatara, etc., there is no question of a father or mother. From where did the body come? They appear in full-fledged form. How is this possible? It is because of direct conversion of maya, otherwise called `अमर` | Therefore, Krishna says `अमर` `अमर` | And when do I take an avatara? See Sloka 7.

`अमर` Chapter 4 Sloka 7

Whenever dharma declines, values decline. And whenever adharma increases, unrighteousness and corruption increases. Then, I create myself. I choose whenever it is required.

Whenever there is decline of righteousness, O Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

Whenever there is decline of righteousness, O Arjuna, and rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest Myself.

The purpose of the avatara is explained in this verse.

Whenever dharma declines, values decline. And whenever adharma increases, unrighteousness and corruption increases. Then, I create myself. I choose whenever it is required.

From a scientific viewpoint, the world can be compared to human body, a cosmic body. Like a body or an organism, it functions in harmony. Any harmonious system, will have its own intrinsic protection device. Our body has built in self protection. Suppose something enters your nostril, you sneeze automatically. The sneeze is involuntary; it is intrinsically built into the system. A natural system has natural protection. This faculty will not be operative all the time (like sneezing). Whenever the system's harmony is disturbed, the system itself produces an appropriate remedy. The universe is a cosmic system, the Bhagavan's shariram, and whenever there is a disturbance, the world itself will find an appropriate method of defending the dharma. It will become active whenever it is required. The avatara is like the immunity system of the universe, the cosmic immunity system. Whenever it is required, an avatara will automatically happen.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 54

In the first chapter of Geeta, Vyasa chariyar revealed the human problem of samsara in the form of raga (emotional dependents of external factors), sogaha (grief or sorrow) and moga (delusion or conflict or indiscriminate). When Arjuna had this problem in the battlefield, he tried to solve this problem himself and was not successful and took the action of surrendering to the Lord. Lord Krishna accepted the role of Guru

In the second chapter, Krishna took the approach that the self-knowledge is the only solution. No other solution can solve the problem. And therefore, Krishna tried to give the self-knowledge to Arjuna. Geeta talks about many topics but Gaeta's primary teaching is atma vidhya. In this chapter, Krishna gives the entire range of sadhanas for this knowledge. In this chapter, Krishna taught the two sadhanas: Karma yoga and gyana yoga. Karma yoga is prescribed as a means of mental purity. Krishna makes it clear that karma yoga can only give preparatory knowledge. Gyana yoga involves self-inquiry through the scriptures under the guidance of a competent guru. The second chapter is the summary of Geeta.

The third chapter is elaboration of karma yoga. The fourth and fifth chapters are expansion of gyana yoga.

Krishna takes a small diversion initially to discuss two topics of chapter 4. The two topics are and glorification of Geeta and avatara ragasyam. Krishna wants to emphasize that the teachings of Geeta are vedic teachings and are beginning-less.

Verse 1

The Lord said I imparted this eternal yaga to Lord Sun. Lord Sun taught the same to Manu. Manu taught it to Ikshvaku.

I have given the same teaching in the form of Veda. Krishna says Geeta is the new name for Veda. I revealed this wisdom to Surya Bagawan. This teaching can never go out of date. It is relevant even now in the 20th century.

Surya Bagawan taught this teaching to Manu. Manu taught this to the King Ikshvaku.

Verse 2

Oh Arjuna! The royal sages knew this which was thus traditionally handed down. Due to long passage of time that yaga is lost in this world.

All the raja rishis (kings) knew this teaching. Gradually people started losing interest in this teaching. Therefore, Krishna is revising this teaching in the form of Geeta.

Verse 3

That very same ancient yoga in this which has been taught by Me to you now, because you are My friend and devotee. This indeed is the highest secret.

Veda Purva teaches karma yoga and called karma kandam. Veda Anta teaches gyana yoga and is called gyana kandam. This is the oldest teachings. Krishna chose Arjuna for this teaching, because Arjuna asked for it and because Arjuna is the friend of Krishna.

Self-knowledge is the greatest secret, because what we are searching for is within ourselves. Therefore this wisdom is called uthama ragasiyam.

Verse 4

Arjuna asked: Your birth is later. The birth of Lord Sun is

much earlier. How am I to understand this statement of Yours that You have taught Lord Sun in the beginning of the creation?

Vedas are called sruthi because the Rishis heard internally; all other scriptures are called smirhti.

Arjuna says that I can understand that you are teaching me Geeta, but I can't understand how you can also teaching Surya Bagawan at the time of creation, when we both are of the same age. What is the secret of your contrary statement? If you have taught Surya Bagawan, you can't teach me. If you are teaching me, you can't teach Surya Bagawan. As an answer to this question, Krishna will discuss Avataras.