

Baghawat Geeta, Class 11

Lecture 11 Notes : Bhagavad Gita Chapter 1 Summary 1/09/16

Swamiji gives a Summary of Chapter 1 and an Introduction to Chapter 2.

Summary of Chapter 1

To live a healthy life – consider these 2 factors:

1. The surroundings should be hygienic so that it doesn't cause diseases. This is an external factor; objective factor (the environment)
2. A person's body must have sufficient resistance to face the external world; build up immunity in your body. Subjective factor (immunity)

In addition to having a sterilized environment for surgery, the patient also needs to resistance. All vitals conditions are checked in order to proceed with the surgery. A physically healthy life depends on objective and subjective factors. The environment alone is not responsible for giving you the disease. You also have low immunity to catch it.

This same principle can be extended for mental health as well. Mental health means a mind free from all psychological diseases in the form of fear, anxiety, stress, strain, worry, jealousy, anger, inferiority complex (Kama, kroda, lobha, moha, madha, maatsarya are all psychological diseases). We have a tendency to blame the external factors ie. the world is responsible for my worry, my spouse is responsible for my tension, etc. Scriptures point out that we need to consider two factors for mental health. The external world is not totally responsible for my psychological problem. The weakness of the mind is also responsible for our psychological problem.

For a healthy life the environment and sufficient resistance are needed. For a healthy mental life (a secure, relaxed,

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1. Part 3: Arjuna's discovery of his weakness and the consequent problem of RagaH. Verses 26 – 28

The first weakness presented is the problem of attachment or psychological dependence on external factors. This is called a weakness because psychological dependence for your happiness is no longer in your own hands but it is connected to external factors. Since the external factors are not under your control, depending upon an unpredictable, external factor is risky for your happiness. You should not allow an external factor to determine your state of happiness. For example, the disobedience of your child causing you sorrow is due to the fact that you are depending on your child being obedient for your happiness (external factor). This displays your lack of resistance. Vedanta says that you should not depend upon a certain condition to be happy. This psychological need or dependence is called the problem of ragaH. Arjuna has this problem because he expected these people to be around him all the time and could not imagine even a hypothetical separation. Arjuna imagined a life without Bhishma, Drona etc. and broke down.

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is a sin. Imprisoning a criminal is a duty of the court. Arjuna as a Kshatriya has to protect dharma, even if it resorts to war.

Confusion 2: Arjuna sees running away from a righteous war as dharma. If a Kshatriya runs away from a righteous war, he is shirking his duty, which is considered a sin of omission. The sin of omission is called अकारणप्रवृत्ति "akaraney prathavayaH" (absence of action is a sin).

The 2nd type of sin is Sin of commission. Note – A common thread in all religions:

- Sin of Commission – committing an amoral act
- Sin of Omission – failure to do some ritualist act

If Arjuna runs away , this action is paapam for him but he sees this as the best decision. धर्ममोह "dharma adharma avivekaH" – utter delusion where he cannot distinguish between dhaarmic and adhaarmic actions. Arjuna's delusion is complete and it has overflowed into his intellect. The intellect will not be able to fight the weakened mind and so the intellect will justify the weakness.

Confusion 3: Arjuna's intellect tries to justify his delusion by telling Lord Krishna:

सर्वधर्माणां कर्मणोऽङ्गत्वात्तन्मया धर्मो ज्ञेयः ।
सर्वधर्मेषु त्वत्कर्मणोऽङ्गत्वात्तन्मया धर्मो ज्ञेयः ॥1.40॥

In his argument, Arjuna points out that family is very important for maintaining culture. This is a true statement. A society in which family life is not respected, culture will breakdown after one generation. The eternal dharma will be destroyed, pitr will be affected, people will lose faith in karma, rituals, dharma, religion, God, etc.

Due to his confusion, Arjuna quotes these true facts incorrectly to support his stand. RagaH, ShokaH and MohaH

(attachment, sorrow, delusion) are called samsaaraH. A samsaari is one who suffers from these three problems. If a person handles these three samsaaraH, he is a liberated person (muktaH). Throughout Gita, Lord Krishna emphasize, married or unmarried, being internally free is what matters.

Even though Arjuna has discovered the problem of samsaara, Lord Krishna has not started giving the solution yet. Discovery of the problem alone is not enough for the solution. Some more steps are required.

1. Diagnosis of having the problem(know that you have a problem); Discovery of problem. But when we discover the problem, we try self medication first. Only when you realize that you cannot solve it yourself, do you go to the next stage of feeling....
2. Discovery of helplessness (know that you cannot solve the problem) I have a problem don't know how to get out of it; I require help from another firm person Vedanta Shastra (Dainya bhavaH) affliction, state of being; or (kaarpanyam) pitiful circumstances.

We will be studying this in Chapter 2:

Arjuna has discovered the problem of samsaara. He is in a state of helplessness. He is in a state of (Dainya bhavaH) affliction, state of being; or (kaarpanyam) pitiful circumstances. 2.7

1. Surrender to someone who will give me a hand. Called (sharanaagati)
2. Solution is given, Medication Arjuna has only gone through the first stage – discovering the problem of samsaaraH. Arjuna has to go through stages 2 and 3 before Lord Krishna gives his advice. Therefore Lord Krishna observes silently. Since Lord Krishna has not spoken, Arjuna thinks his conclusion is right and so throws down his bow/arrow and sits down in the chariot.

So, Vyasa completes the first chapter by saying that Arjuna sat down, afflicted by shokaH (ragaH shokaH mohaH):

Arjuna said: "I am now
dejected, my mind is
confused, and I am unable to
act. I am in a state of
1.47"

Introduction of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 gives a comprehensive picture of the whole "treatment" (for the disease) as given by the Gita. This chapter is the essence of the entire Gita and it can be divided into 4 portions. Swamiji gives a high level overview.

Portion 1: Arjuna surrenders to Lord Krishna; Arjuna sharanaagati Arjuna going through the other stages(he discovers the helplessness). Arjuna decides to quit the battlefield but his inner conscience feels that this is not a good decision. The decision to go to war was made after years and years of adhaarmic actions done by the Kauravas. This was a sudden decision to quit the battle. He realizes that he is confused and not able to make the correct decision. He knows he cannot solve the present problem.

Swamiji recites Chapter 2, Verse 6, Line 1:

Arjuna said: "I thought I had made the right decision but now my mind is wavering and I am not able to determine if my decision is right or wrong. On one hand, the war is for a dhaarmic cause; but my emotional mind is unable to come to terms with knowing the casualties of war (my guru and other relations). Arjuna realizes his wavering and accepts his helplessness by saying(Ch 2, Verse 7, line 1):

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Once he discovers his helplessness, he needs to surrender to

developed inner resistance, and who has solved raga, shoka, moha.

नन्दति नन्दति नन्दत्येव “Nandati nandati nandatyeva” Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice! A psychologically healthy person enjoys life thoroughly.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 10

Arjuna shows the close connection between the institution of family and a dharmic way of life. These are intertwined so closely that when one is affected, the other has an impact and then it spirals into a vicious cycle. If family is destroyed, then dharma is destroyed, and with dharma destroyed, the next generation of the family is destroyed as well.

Vedic teachings have 3 aspects of Dharma:

1. Values of life: like truthfulness, generosity, non-violence, love, concern for others
2. Attitude or basic reverence: towards things and beings ie earth, sun, moon; parents, teachers, and others in the society.
3. Rituals: this is a very important aspect and one that is not appreciated much anymore. A ritual is a concrete expression of the abstract values and is required for communication.

The Vedic religion considers rituals as one of the most important aspects of Dharma because:

a. Since the first two aspects of Dharma(Values and Attitude) are abstract

b. Rituals is one of the methods to keep a group together. Every member of a (belonging to the mind) they cannot be communicated or expressed. Hence "rituals" need to be physicalized/verbalized, making it easier to teach babies/toddlers. To communicate the concept of "respect" to a child, you will have to physicalize it...by symbolizing respect in the form of namaskara.

Friendship/love is also conveyed by verbalization or physical embrace, shaking hands, etc. Psychologist point out that physicalization or verbalization is very important for any relationship. Family takes part in a group ritual. Eat together, pray before a meal etc.

The psychological and sociological benefits of Rituals:

1. Give concrete form to an abstract value
2. Way to communicate the abstract value to the children
3. Maintain the togetherness of a group

Whenever there is reference to "dharma", these three aspects are of importance: values, attitudes and rituals. The communication of values via rituals vary between religions and even between communities of the same religion. Krishna says that once the ritual part of religion is ignored, then there will be varna sankaraha. The values are universal to all religions. Religions differ only from the stand point of rituals. Varna sankaraha is the immediate consequence of sacrificing rituals. This can occur even in a family where rituals are accepted, a person wants to maintain religion, gets married within the same community, etc. If the rituals diminish in importance and leads to the questioning of the cohesiveness of religion and of community, the consequence of this is varna sankaraha.

No particular religion is needed to follow the attitudes and values – any religion is okay. The religion becomes important only when you value a particular way of performing the ritual.

But once rituals are given lesser importance, the next consequence is that the separation of religions and the segregation of community will go away and this is varna sankaraha. There is another worse consequence of varna sankaraha.... disappearance of the family institution. A family institution was required for

1. Vedic Rituals to be followed; a family is not required for Values and Attitudes. A Brahmachari, a vanaprahsta, a sanyasi cannot perform the ritual of giving dakshina nor annadaanam. Only a grihasta can.
2. Fulfillment of artha – wealth, security
3. Fulfillment of kama – enjoyment, pleasures

Once the rituals are not respected, a family institution remains for artha and kama; but with changes in a society, artha and kama will become available without families. The government provides the security and if one has money, all artha and kama can be bought. Values and attitudes don't need a family life. And if artha and kama can be obtained without a family, why is family is needed? A family was required to maintain religion expressed in the form of Vaidika karma. All these are relevant because of karma. Once karma goes away family will be disintegrated. Without a stable family, there will be no karma nor values and attitudes. Who will teach values and attitudes to the next generation? No one will preserve Brahmana dharma – studying of scriptures and propagating it.

Chapter 1 Sloka 42

वर्णसंकरात् समाप्तं वैश्वदेवैः कर्मैः ॥

वर्णसंकरात् समाप्तं वैश्वदेवैः कर्मैः ॥ 1.42 ॥

confusion of castes for the hell also of the slayers of the family and of the family and fall the forefathers verily their

deprived of the offerings of riceball and water. Once the varnasankara (intermingling of 4 groups) takes place, even mathasankara (religious confusion). the attitude and value of dharma may remain but ritual part of dharma will not remain. Ritual part of religion will have to be given up with varnasankaraha. Rituals are the method of communicating our feeling.

– because of the confusion, this will lead to naraka because all karmas are sacrificed. – naraka for both the victor of the war and for the vanquished, because they will lose all the values for religious practices; not only they fall spiritually but Vedic religion prescribes five fold compulsory rituals for every or Pancha maha yagna: Brahma or Rishi Yajna; Deva Yajna; Pitri Yajna; Bhuta Yajna; Manushya Yajna

pitri yagna – respect to our forefathers; blessing of our forefathers are needed for our material or spiritual growth. All rituals in family is started with Naandi sradha – invocation of the grace of the forefathers. Once dharma goes away – all these rituals will be sacrificed. Forefathers will be deprived of pinda kriya- srardham, udaka kriya- tarpana; lupta deprived of. Forefathers will be deprived of this karma. These days people replace pitri yagna with manushya yagna but it can only be a supplement not a substitution.

the forefathers will fall. In a society where rituals were considered important, Varnashrama dharma had value.

If there are no rituals, varnashrama dharma has no meaning. Morals and attitudes can be practiced with out varnashrama dharma. Varnashrama dharma is important only from the perspective of rituals.

Chapter 1 Sloka 43

द्वेषेण कृत्यैः कृतेषु कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः

द्वेषेण कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः 1.43

Destroyed by evil deeds (by) these destroyers of the family causing intermingling of castes are destroyed religious rites of the caste family religious rites and eternal. because of these defects in which the ritualistic part of dharma is degraded, responsible for the intermingling of various communities, religion, caste etc casualty is certain practices purely based on varna. According to Veda –certain rites can be done only by some varnas only. Rajasuya yaga can be done only by a raja a brahmana can assist the raja. Vedic rites will have to be given up. within one varna itself, the vedic practices differ from gothram to gothram a child of mixed varna cannot choose any vedic dharma; Rituals are gone. dharmas from a long time ago, destruction takes one generation

Chapter 1 Sloka 44

द्वेषेण कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः

द्वेषेण कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः कृत्यैः 1.44

whose family religious practices are destroyed of the men 0 Janardana in hell for unknown period dwelling is thus we have heard. Without rituals, the religion can continue with values and attitudes. But for these a family is not required and so after 2 to 3 generations, when it is realized that with money one can obtain artha and kama, the question arises if a family is needed at all. The negative side to not having a family is that you lose the people that you can call your own, those that you can trust and those that

give you unconditional love. The psychological anchor or psychological security will be lost. This leads to sociological disaster when people without the family anchor exist in a society (crimes increase, etc).

Even when alive and after death, w/o family, w/o love and trust, it is like hell; when svadharma is not done (sradha, tarpana), according to vedic rules it is pratyavaya paapam; will lead to narakam. Arjuna says we have heard this repeated in the vedic mantra (not that he has seen).

Chapter 1 Sloka 45

Arjuna says we are prepared to do a great sinful act; killing all these people which will lead to varna sankaraha, jaathi (family) sankaraha, dharma nashaha, downfall (pitarnaam patanam) because of our short-sightedness; we were interested in royal pleasures; due to our misplaced greed for the pleasures

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Arjuna's monologue continues as he thinks of the current and future repercussions of the MB battle. Arjuna says we are prepared to do a great sinful act; killing all these people which will lead to varna sankaraha, jaathi (family) sankaraha, dharma nashaha, downfall (pitarnaam patanam) because of our short-sightedness; we were interested in royal pleasures; due to our misplaced greed for the pleasures

Arjuna has forgotten that this is a fight between dharma and adharma and says we are prepared to kill these people.

Chapter 1 Sloka 46

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1.46

if me unresisting unarmed with weapons in hand the sons of Dhritarashtra in the battle should slay that of me better would be. Arjuna says I have decided not to contribute to this tragedy but the beginning of the war has been signaled by conches. Therefore Duryodana may start the war but I will not retaliate. I am prepared to die but will not contribute to the pending chaos of the society. the kauravas may choose to kill us we, who have decided not to resist; we are with out weapons I consider sacrificing my life for the sake of dharma; I consider this a good fortune for me to have realized this in the nick of time.

Having said all these, Arjuna has shown raga, shoka, moha. Krishna maintains silence. Therefore Sanjaya says...

Chapter 1 Sloka 47

1.47

1.47

1.47

thus having said Arjuna in the battle on the seat of the chariot sat down having cast away with arrow bow with a mind distressed with sorrow.

Sanjaya gives a picture of Arjuna – who symbolizes a maha samsaari. – Arjuna’s mind is totally grief stricken – indicating the problem of raga and shoka; completely overpowered by attachment and intense grief he has thrown away the bow and arrow; For a kshatriya, the bow and arrow represent fighting

for/establishing dharma, his duty. The physical action of throwing his bow and arrow represents Arjuna giving up his duty. **Arjuna** **paradharmam** "Sva dharma tyagaha" – indicating conflict or mohaha; **Arjuna** **svadharma** – wants to run away from the battle, wants to do tapas(dharma of a sanyasi); a grihasta has to do his family duty first; this is called mohaha: **Arjuna** **svadharma** **paradharmam** paradharmam(taking the duties of another caste), svadharma parithyagaha(deserting your own duties) **Arjuna** **svadharma** **paradharmam** having uttered all these words to Krishna, Arjuna did this

Arjuna **svadharma** he sat down on the chariot seat

At this crucial juncture, Vyasacharya says:

Arjuna **svadharma** **paradharmam** **svadharma** **paradharmam**

Arjuna **svadharma** **paradharmam** **svadharma** **paradharmam**

Arjuna **svadharma**

This portion comes at the end of every chapter.

Arjuna **svadharma** Om tat sat – all 3 words are names of the Lord. Said at the end of every chapter to thank the Lord for the successful completion. There are various meanings in different context. Swamiji gives the simplest meaning for these:

Om – **Arjuna** **svadharma** avati iti om; Avati is the protector; protected us from all obstacles

Tat – one who is beyond sense perception; **Arjuna** **svadharma** and **Arjuna** **svadharma** Para (beyond) and Aksha (eye); **Arjuna** **svadharma** beyond the cognizance of the senses

Sat – eternal (past, present, future); From Tatva Bodha: **Arjuna** **svadharma** **paradharmam** **svadharma** **paradharmam** The eternal protector who is beyond our sense perception.

Arjuna **svadharma** **paradharmam** – oh Lord, by your grace, we have completed the 1st chapter called

Arjuna **svadharma** **paradharmam** – the grief of Arjuna. The main theme is

vishada – raga, shoka and moha.

सर्वोपनिषदो गवो दुग्धा गोपालानन्दानाः पार्थवत्साः
सुदुर्भक्ता दुग्धम गितमृतम महत्

– presented as a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna

Samdavaha – most healthy form of communication, is a dialogues between a guru and a shishya – attitude of guru is love and compassion towards the disciple and the attitude of shisya is faith and reverence towards the guru; Name of this dialogues is called सर्वोपनिषदो गवो दुग्धा गोपालानन्दानाः The full name of Gita – upanishad means knowledge which liberates the person from sorrow. Wisdom which is taught by, revealed by, Srimad Bhagavaan. Meaning of Bhagavan – one who has Bhaga – 6 fold virtues.

The original upanishad, part of Veda, was in existence even before Krishna was born. Krishna's teaching is the essence of upanishad. Swamiji recites Dhyana Sloka #4:

सर्वोपनिषदो गवो दुग्धा गोपालानन्दानाः पार्थवत्साः
सुदुर्भक्ता दुग्धम गितमृतम महत्

sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopalanandana: parthovatsa:
sudheerbhoktha dugdham gitamrutam mahat

There are only two topics in the entire Gita(theme of the entire dialogue):

Religion + Philosophy = Gita; Total contentment is the benefit.

1. Religion (सर्वोपनिषदो योग शास्त्रा): सर्वोपनिषदो Veda poorva bhaga(first part of Veda); सर्वोपनिषदो karma kanda – which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites. This is a way of life which prepares you to be competent for philosophy; gives fitness for knowledge; makes you a योगयोग्य ज्ञाना योग्याता (eligibility). First part of life get fit, then gain knowledge
2. Philosophy (सर्वोपनिषदो ब्रह्मा विद्या): सर्वोपनिषदो Veda antha bhaga(latter part of Veda); सर्वोपनिषदो ज्ञाना

kanda – which relates to knowledge of the one Spirit
Philosophical part – gives jnanam (knowledge)

Bagawat Geeta, Class 9

Chapter 1 Sloka 38

अज्ञानं च मोहं च कामं क्रोधं च
अहंकारं च भयं च शोकं च
द्वेषं च संशयं च ॥ १.३८ ॥

अज्ञानं though मोहं these च not अहंकारं see अहंकारं with
intelligence overpowered by greed अहंकारं in the
destruction of families अहंकारं evil अहंकारं in hostility to
friends च and अहंकारं sin

Swamiji explains that Vyasarcharya shows the intensity of Arjuna's samsaara in the battlefield. Samsaara is raga, shoka and moha (attachment, sorrow and conflict).

Attachment was shown in the 1st line of Verse 28: अहंकारं
अहंकारं अहंकारं अहंकारं The intensity of attachment grows in Arjuna when he thinks of the possible loss of his relatives that have assembled on the battlefield. He always had this attachment but it remained hidden. But once this attachment overpowers him, he suffers the immediate consequence of sorrow. Sorrow is directly proportional to the attachment. Hence, his sorrow was equally intense and it affected his physical body (his limbs were trembling, his arms are weak, etc.). This is shown starting with Verse 29. Vyasarcharya shows how raga and shoka is leading him to moha:

conflict or confusion.

Moha is भ्रम भ्रमण भ्रमणं “dharma adharma avivekaha” aviveka – absence of judgement or discrimination, not being able to judge between dharma and adharma. When there is a confusion, dharma appears as adharma and vice versa.

Arjuna's duty as a kshatriya is to fight this war and this yuddham is dharma for Arjuna. But Arjuna sees this dharmayuddham as adharma. This is the first conflict.

Secondly, a kshatriya should never run away from the battlefield. This is shirking his duty. Arjuna is seeing भ्रमणं भ्रमणं “adharma palaayanam” as punya karma. Arjuna's confusion is complete.

When the emotional mind(attached and confused) begins to overpower a person, it stifles even the educated and well informed intellect. The intellect, not being able to overcome the emotional mind, begins to support the mental weakness. If the mind has a feeble addiction, the intellect can fight and overcome this weakness. If the addiction is intense, the intellect will justify the mental weakness.

From Verse 38 through 46, Arjuna, having been deceived by his intellect, talks about the evils of war. He says to Krishna, the Kauravas do not see the evils of war. भ्रमणं भ्रमणं – heads of the family are killed, thus destroying the families, and the consequences of destroying families are terrible.

□□

भ्रमणं भ्रमणं □ भ्रमणं – hurting our own kith and kin; another mahapaapam which they are not seeing but we are seeing clearly. We should help our friends. Let us decide to withdraw from war.

Chapter 1 Słoka 39

□□ □ भ्रमणं भ्रमणं □ भ्रमणं भ्रमणं

Arjuna, feels that the Kauravas are confused but now that his thinking is clear, he says to Krishna: **1.39**

why I not should be learnt by us from sin this to turn away in the destruction of families evil clearly seeing O Janardana.

Arjuna, feels that the Kauravas are confused but now that his thinking is clear, he says to Krishna:

Hey Janardana, we are able to clearly see the negative consequences of destroying families.

Having seen this evil clearly, why can't we withdraw? a sin (this war) which involves the destruction of families..

Why should we have a false ego? Regardless of what others may say, let us withdraw from war. Arjuna is pleading for Krishna's support to retrieve. Krishna, however remains silent because he feels that Arjuna is not yet ready to hear his advice. Talking to a non receptive person is called *vana rodana* – crying in the forest.

Chapter 1 Sloka 40

Arjuna, explains the consequences of family destruction. **1.40**

in the destruction of a family perish family religious rites immemorial spirituality being destroyed the whole family impiety overcomes indeed.

Arjuna further explains the consequences of family destruction. What are the consequences if there are no healthy families in society (have broken families)? Arjuna wants to say that without family life, dharma, religion and culture can never grow. Spirituality is never possible. These grow in a

society where the family is strong, stable and long lasting.

Our scriptures give a lot of importance to family life. Without good family structure, cultural growth is inhibited. A stable family is required for Cultural/Ethical growth, Dharmic growth and Spiritual growth. These are known as **कुलधर्म** Kuladharm (practice or observance particular to a group or family).

□□

So Arjuna says, **कुलधर्मो ह्यस्मिन्** without a stable family, kuladharm will perish.

कुलधर्मो ध्वंसो – when this dharma is destroyed

कुलधर्मो अधर्मो – adharma (life in which importance is given to **वस्तु** and **शक्ति**); only material values become important. This materialistic lifestyle will overpower all the good values.

Chapter 1 Sloka 41

अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्
कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन् कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन् 1.41

अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन् from the prevalence of impiety **कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** 0 Krishna **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** become corrupt **कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** the women of the family **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** in women **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** (being) corrupt **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** 0 Varshneya **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** arises **अधर्मो भवति कुलधर्मो ध्वंसोऽस्मिन्** caste mixture.

Swamiji first explains the importance of a stable family for cultural growth.

A stable family is needed for a cultural or a healthy personality trait to be formed in a child. This needs to be done at a very early stage in life. A baby or young child does not have the capacity to discriminate/judge what is important or valuable. A child learns to value things based upon the set of values of the parents(god like to the child). While child is developing values for various things, the respect it

develops towards itself (self value) is also learned. The self image development is also very important. A newborn does not have an idea about itself – “am I a wonderful child or useless child; respectable or a rejected child”. This self opinion is developed based on the parent’s opinion of the child. If the life of the mother is centered on the child; parents respect the child; treat as a VIP in the first 5 years of life; be at his beck and call; with all the needs fulfilled; etc., then the child develops a beautiful self image, self worth and self confidence. This self opinion developed within the first 5 years can never be erased. If this is not developed within those few years, the child will condemn itself and develop inferiority complex, lacking self confidence. This negative value is developed not due to the child’s mistake – but they are the values the parents have imparted. A healthy mind is one which has self respect.

Swamiji refers to Chapter 6, Verse 5 where Krishna says:

आत्मैक्यं कुरुष्वैतन्मनुष्यं
आत्मैक्यं कुरुष्वैतन्मनुष्यं
आत्मैक्यं कुरुष्वैतन्मनुष्यं आत्मैक्यं कुरुष्वैतन्मनुष्यं 6.5

“Arjuna, once you condemn yourself, no one can help you”.

If you don’t have self-confidence, no God, Guru, or Shastra can help. Ishvara kripa, Guru kripa, and Shastra kripa are secondary. These graces will be valid only when the most important grace “atma kripa” आत्मैक्यं कुरुष्वैतन्मनुष्यं – is there (self respect/self image/self confidence). This must be formed within the first 5 years of life with the help of a stable family and parents who respect the child. Therefore, family life is very important to develop psychologically healthy children that will become self respecting citizens in a society.

This is “ego nourishment” but nourishing the ego will enable the ego to grow, and as the ego grows it ripens, then the ripened ego can drop (like a ripened fruit falls from a tree,

when it is ready).... leading to moksha.

The second importance of family is to impart cultural values, again done early in a child's life(nonverbal communication). The child learns by observing and imitating the parents. Even a newborn gets influenced by the thought of the mother during pregnancy, the manner in which the mother welcomes the child, the manner in which the family greets the child, etc. All these nonverbal communications have a psychological impact on the child. Every word and action of the parents are being imbibed by the child. Parents have to serve as a model to teach the cultural values.

Matha, Pitha, Guru, Devyam.... Mother is the first model, then the father. If the parents are not available as the models, then they seek for a model elsewhere.

The parents(models) should be consistent and constant in their lives. The parents should have trust, understanding and harmony between themselves to provide a suitable and nurturing environment. A father or mother should not contradict each other in front of the child. This causes confusion to the child since both parents are Godlike and both are correct.

Here Arjuna says, among the parents, the mother is more important – because the mother is intimately attached with the child. And if the head of the families are destroyed, the women may become corrupt. A young girl growing up in a broken home does not develop cultural values. And when she becomes a mother without values, she will not be able to teach her children. Hence a vicious cycle is created where the generations to come have no values. All values will be utterly destroyed.

When the families are destroyed, a girl child gets spoiled, she will become an unhealthy mother.

corrupt women (destruction of entire

society)

addressing Krishna, as descendant of Vrishni.
"vrishni kula samudbhoota"; you are born in a beautiful family; and know the importance of family

there will be utter confusion in regards to varnaashrama dharma.

Sankara means confusion.

Varnashrama dharma – In varna dharma, the veda prescribes certain duties for each class of people. Brahmana have certain cultural duties, Kshatriya have political duties, Vysya have economic duties, Sudra have supporting duties towards the other three. All these duties are important for the growth of a society.

Veda says that everyone has to take one of these duties(profession) based on birth or based on character i.e. choose to be a politician, business man etc.

Imagine a society which values money. This will lead to everyone choosing a profession based on whichever brings them maximum money. Once a society is materialistic, a class that was devoted to cultural growth of a nation will diminish. Learning dharma shastra & the scriptures and following & propagating the dharma shastra will not thrive.

Varna sankara – everyone will take every other profession but no one will come forward to study the scriptures. There will be confusion among the duties and no one will preserve and propagate the religious and spiritual culture. Society will be corrupt leading to destruction of humanity.

All these will happen when families become unstable...due to the war...so lets abolish war...drive chariot away from battlefield.

Bagawat Geeta Class 8

Bagawat Geeta Class 8

Namaste!

Summary of class on December 19th:

Verses 29-34 continues with Arjuna's emotion of sh0ka (sorrow) and VyAsa here wants to show the intensity of the sorrow. Arjuna is describing how he is physically affected (limbs drooping, mouth drying up, body trembling, hairs standing, the Gandiva slipping, skin on fire, mind wandering). He cannot see how killing one's kin is going to be of any benefit. Those he is seeking to kill are the ones with whom he is associating pleasures and enjoyment, so what is the point?

Swamiji says that emotional problems do not happen in one thought but arise from continually repeated thoughts, with each repetition increasing the anger/frustration. It is a thought build-up process. A single or first thought is an experience and does not give rise to anger, jealousy or depression. Thereafter repetition of the thought is in our hands, as to whether or not we want to allow a small ripple to build into a big wave.

Swamiji contrasts Arjuna's attitude with what vedAnta is trying to teach us. Arjuna is a typical human being. He is attached to many things and thinks that all the relationships, etc., impact his life's meaningfulness. According to Vedanta, your life is worthwhile by itself. Nothing adds to it. Don't connect purpose or meaning to anything else. My life is complete because of itself, not because of anything else. A man of right vision sees dharma as the most important thing in life.

Krishna allows Arjuna to exhaust his feelings so he keeps quiet. Although it may appear that Arjuna is being compassionate towards his kin, it is not so. A person's vision of dharma gets clouded through attachment and not in compassion.

In verses 35, a transition is being made to the next stage of depression, from sh0ka to m0ha (delusion, wrong judgements). His m0ha problem is exhibited in verses 36-47. The delusion is one of confusing dharma with adharma. In Ch 2 Krishna explains that, going to war is punnyam and running away from it is pApam. Arjuna thinks the opposite here.

Here Swamiji digresses to talk about pApams. Dharmashastra contains a huge list of pApams that are recited during the thread changing ceremonies. The 5 worst type of pApams (Pancha mahA pAthakAni) are as follows:

1. Burning down somebody's property
2. Poisoning someone
3. Using weapons to kill an unarmed person
4. Stealing others' property
5. Taking the land or the wife of another person

Dury0dana is guilty of all five and therefore if a kshatrya does not give him capital punishment, he is committing a sin.

In verse 37, Arjuna concludes indirectly that we can sacrifice dharma for happiness. In verse 38, Arjuna thinks he has a clear understanding of the situation and uses logic to justify his thoughts. When the mind is confused, the intellect often comes into play by providing logical arguments for the wrong thoughts. Here he is saying that it was not really the Kauravas' fault that greed has suppressed their wisdom and their inability to see the consequences of the war. Arjuna reflects on the potential killing of not only close relations but also close friends, whom he is supposed to protect.

Bagawat Geeta Class 7

Namaste!

Summary of class on December 12th:

Swamiji says that no value can be followed unconditionally because every value has an exception. When everything else fails, himsa is allowed.

Verses 24 and 25: (Sanjaya said) " Oh Dhrtarastra! Commanded thus (to place the chariot in between the armies) by Arjuna, Krishna placed the great chariot between the two armies in front of great warriors like Bhishma and Drona and all other kings and said thus – " Oh Arjuna! See these Kauravas assembled."

Krishna placed the chariot particularly in front of Bhishma and Drona towards whom Arjuna has the most attachment.

Verses 26,27,28: (These three verses show the problem of attachment. They also show the first symptom of samsara for Arjuna) " There Arjuna saw fathers*, grandfathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, and well wishers assembled in the two armies. Seeing all these relatives assembled, Arjuna was overpowered by deep attachment. Grieving, he said the following."

Swamiji says everyone has five fathers:

1. The biological father
2. The one who gives the sacred thread during the Upanayam ceremony
3. The guru. Going to the Gurukulam is considered as a second birth. At our first birth, we are indiscriminate

and instinctive. We are physically human, but mentally not. With Gayathri as the mother and Acharya as the father, we acquire reason and learn to live a life based on Dharma.

4. Annadhadha – one who feeds you when in need
5. The one who rescues you from adversity/crisis

When Arjuna sees all his family, a transformation takes place because he is overpowered by attachment. Arjuna, the soldier, now has become Arjuna, the samsari. Attachment leads to sorrow which leads to conflict.

Swamiji says a Jnani is the master of emotion while a ajnani is a slave to emotion.

Verses 28: This verse shows the sorrow that comes with attachment. This is the second symptom of Samsara. " Arjuna said, " Oh Krishna! I see these relatives of mine who are assembled..... (continuing into verse 29 which Swamiji will explain in the next class)

Arjuna uses the word svajaha meaning" my people" – I belong to them and they belong to me. When a sense of belonging becomes attachment and when attachment clouds our judgement, then the line between Dharma and Adharma blurs. Arjuna did not develop attachment in the battlefield. Attachment was not evident till the possibility of losing the object of attachment (Bhishma, Drona....) occurs.

Regards,

Usha Chandran

Bagawat Geeta Class 6

Namaste!

Summary of Bhagavad Gita class on 12/5/2015:

Verses 14 – 23

Verse 14 – “Thereafter, Krishna and Arjuna, seated in a grand chariot with white horses, blew their divine conches.”

After the Kaurava army signaled their readiness, it is the Pandavas’ turn to signal their readiness. Even though he is not the oldest, Krishna blows his conch first, because he is the most important member of the Pandava army. The focus of the verse is also on the white horses of Arjuna’s chariot. Katha upanishad equates a chariot to the body, the horses to the sense organs and the reins of the chariot to the mind. The white horses of Arjuna’s chariot symbolizes knowledge. The celestial chariot is driven by Madhava, the Lord (dhavaha) of knowledge (Ma).

Verse 15: ” Krishna blew (the conch) Panchajanya, Arjuna (blew) (the conch) devadatta, Bhima, of terrible deeds, (blew) the big conch, paundra.”

Here, Vyasa shows his partiality to the Pandavas. When explaining about their conches he only made a general statement. But with the Pandavas, he names all the conches.

Verse 16: ” King Yudhisthira, the son of Kunti, (blew the conch) anantavijaya. Nakula and Sahadeva (blew the conches) sughosa and manipuspaka.”

Verses 17 & 18: (Sanjaya to Dhrithrastra) ” Oh king! The king of Kasi who is the wielder of a big bow, the great warrior

Sikhandi, Dhrstadyumna, the king of Virata, the unsurpassed Satyaki, king Drupada, the sons of Draupadi, and the mighty Abhimanyu who is the son of Subhadra blew the conches distinctly from all directions”.

Verse 19 : ” Resounding throughout the sky and earth, that tumultuous noise pierced the hearts of the Kauravas.”

With the 19th verse the first phase is over.

Verse 20: (Turning point of the Geeta begins with this verse) “atha” is the word indicating this turning point.

(Sanjaya says)” Oh king! Then, at that moment, when the discharge of the arrows was to be commenced, the monkey-bannered Arjuna saw the Kauravas arrayed, raised the bow, and spoke the following words to Krishna. ”

Swamiji says here that it is worth noting that both the Pandavas and the Kauravas belong to the Kuru family. So both are technically Kauravas. Just as the sons of Pandu are called Pandavas, the official name for Duryodhana’s family is Dhartharashtaraha, meaning sons of Dhrithrashtra. In verse 20, Vyasa uses this official name ” dhartarastran”.

Verses 21 -23: ” Arjuna said- Oh Krishna! Place my chariot between the two armies till I see those who are assembled with a desire to fight. Let me see those with whom I should fight in this event of war. I wish to see those who are assembled here eager to fight, and who want to fulfill the desire of the evil-minded Duryodhana in this war.”

Swamiji says that till this point Arjuna has no sentimental fear of war because he is on the side of dharma.(The war here is not between the families, but between dharma and adharma.)

Once Arjuna gets to the middle of the battlefield, change happens. Sentiments cloud his judgment.

Vedanta is not against sentiments. It is sentiments that make

us human. But when sentiments cloud our intellect, that leads to delusion and then samsara begins.

Regards,

Usha Chandran

Comments on Sloka 10 of Chapter1

**“Aparyaptam tad asmakam balam bhisma abhi raksitam
Paryaptam tvidam etesam balam Bhimabhi raksitam”**

Here Duryodhana is addressing Dronacharya comparing the strengths of Pandavas and Kauravas army.

There seems to be a difference of opinion in the interpretation of this sloka among well known commentators. Some commentators give the meaning “unlimited” for the word “aparyaptam” and “limited” to the word “paryaptam”. These commentators view that Duryodhana became fearful at the strength of the Pandavas army and described their strength in three verses (4,5,6) and briefly mentioned his strength in just one verse (9). They interpret:

1. Duryodhana realized that “dharma” is on the side of Pandavas.
2. Even though Bhishma is the greatest of all the warriors and can defeat Pandavas single handed, Bhishma has soft corner to Pandavas.
3. Bhima on the other hand is so ferocious he will not hesitate to kill even Bhishma.

Some others give the exact opposite meaning; for “aparyaptam” they give the meaning “complete, insufficient or “ASUMPOORNAM” and for “paryaptam” they give the meaning

complete, sufficient or “SAMPOORNAM” .

This is direct meaning to these words and more appropriate for the context when the Bhishma parva and Udyoga parva of MAHABHARATHA was kept in mind in which Duryodhana, clearly convinces his father and Drona charya about the superiority of his army. Duryodhana was a very arrogant about the superiority of his strength and never doubted his victory.. He knew very well that Bhishma, Drona and Karna can win the battle for him. He also knew that he had 11 divisions of army while Pandavas was only 7 divisions.

Dr.Devarajulu Naidu Katta.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 5

Chapter 1- Verses 3 to 11

Duryodhana's dialogue with Dronacharya continues-

Verse 3 : Oh teacher! See this vast army of the Pandavas, arrayed by the son of Drupada, your skillful disciple.

Verse 4: In this army there are many powerful archers who are equal to Bhima and Arjuna in war – Satyaki, the king of Virata country, and Drupada, a great warrior.

Verse 5: Dhrstaketu, Cekitana, the powerful king of Kasi, Purujit Kuntibhoja and Saibya who is the best among men, are all assembled here.

Verse 6: Moreover, the powerful Yudhamanyu, the valiant Uttamaujas, Abhimanyu, the sons of Draupadi , all of them great warriors are all here.

Verse 7:

Here, Duryodhana informs Dronacharya of the warriors in his own army

” Oh best among brahmins! May you know those who are prominent among us, the leaders of my army. I am mentioning them for your information. ”

Here Swamiji notes that Dronacharya is violating brahmana dharma by fighting in the war. A brahmana has six duties to perform.

They are:

1. Yajanam- performing the vaidhika karma (poojas and rituals)
2. Yaajanam- helping others to do their vaidhika karma
3. Patanam- to study scriptures
4. Paatanam- to teach scriptures to others
5. Dhaanam- giving to charity
6. Prathigraha- to receive charity

Dronacharya, as a brahmin, is allowed to learn and teach the art of war, but never take part in war.

Verse 8: Duryodhana continues ” Yourself, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa who is ever victorious in war, Asvattama, Vikarna, the son of Somadatta are present in our army.”

Verse 9: And there are many other heroes ready to give up their lives for my sake. All of them have many weapons and missiles, and are experts in war.

Verse 10: Therefore our army, protected by Bhishma, is insufficient. On the other hand, this Pandava army, protected by Bhima, is more than sufficient to defeat us.

Swamiji : Why is Duryodhana not confident in his own army? The Kaurava army is both quantitatively and qualitatively superior to the Pandava army. The Kauravas have 14 divisions to the Pandavas 7. They also have all the powerful warriors on their side – Bhishma, Drona, Kripa, Karna and so on. Why, then, does Duryodhana feel fear?

Swamiji says that when dharma is lacking and bhakthi is lacking, strength and confidence is also lacking. Here Swamiji recalls the story of how Arjuna and Duryodhana went to see Krishna seeking His help. When Arjuna chose Lord Krishna instead of his army, Duryodhana was secretly pleased because he had no bhakthi towards Lord Krishna. Swamiji says that Lord Krishna represents spiritual strength, while His army represents material strength.

Duryodhana chose the army, representing material strength and ignored Krishna, the spiritual strength. Thus, without dharma and bhakthi on his side, Duryodhana feels fear and lacks confidence.

Verse 11: Duryodhana continues” One person gives security and confidence to us, Bhishma. All of you should protect Bhishma by staying in your position at all points of entry.

Duryodhana’s dialogue ends here.

Verse 12: (Sanjaya says) Trying to bolster Duryodhana’s confidence, Bhishma lets out a lion-like roar and blows his conch to signify the Kaurava’s readiness for war.

Verse 13: Hearing this more conches, kettledrums, trumpets, drums and horns were immediately sounded forth from the Kaurava army.

Regards,

Usha Chandran

SOME THOUGHTS ON SLOKA-1,

CHAPTER-1

Dhritarashtra asks Sanjaya " MAMAKAH PANDAVAH CA EVA DHARMAKSHETRE KIM AKURVATHAH" (What did **MY PEOPLE** and **also the Pandavas** do in the **Holy Land?**)

—
Dhritarashtra was born congenitally blind. He also acquired inner blindness by his selfishness and excessive attachment to Duryodhana. Dhritarashtra, being blind, was not eligible for the throne and hence PANDU became the king. Out of respect for his elder brother, Pandu treated him with due respect. After Pandu's death, Dharmaraja being the elder son became eligible to the throne. Dhritarashtra assisted his son Duryodhana to snatch the kingdom from Pandavas, unlawfully. Still the Pandavas successfully completed the **Vanavasa and Agnathavasa** and asked for their fair share of the kingdom.

When viewed with the above background, Dhritarashtra's inner blindness and cruelty is abundantly clear when he refers his sons as "**MY PEOPLE**" and his own brother's sons as "**also the Pandavas**" implying as if Pandavas are some unrelated strangers. When he made reference to the battle field as "DHARMA KSHETRE",

Dhritarashtra still **hoped** that the dharmic Pandavas somehow decided not to fight the war and voluntarily relinquished the kingdom to his sons.

Dr.Naidu Katta.

Bagawat Geeta, Class 4

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 1:

Swamiji started his talks on the Gita today. He says: Chapter 1 is an introduction to the Gita. It is a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. The main theme of Gita starts at Verse

#11, chapter 2. Even Shankaracharya's commentaries start from this point. The introduction in chapter 1 however is very important. It serves two purposes.

First purpose is to present the basic human problem known as Samsara. This problem is a universal one irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion and sex. It is also a problem that occurs at any time in history. We also face similar problems as Arjuna did and future generations will also face the same. The presentation of Samsara Rogaha is the basis of chapter 1. The other 17 Chapters of Gita are dedicated to specifying remedies to this problem and is also called Moksha Shastraha. Unless we know the disease we cannot appreciate the remedy.

Second Purpose:

Is to introduce the Guru and Shishya whose whole dialogue is the Gita.

Discussing Samsara Varnanam, Swamiji says, the diagnosis of a disease can vary from doctor to doctor. Similarly, different scriptures have different diagnosis of this problem. Our scriptures diagnose that this Samsara disease is in reality three diseases. They are: Ragaha. Shokhaha and Mohaha.

Ragaha: is the emotional and psychological attachment we have. Love is glorified in our scriptures while attachment is not. Vedanta is for Love but not for Attachment.

Elaborating on Love versus Attachment, Swamiji says:

- Attachment is based on selfishness. What do I get out of this relationship? What the other person gets is not in our mind. This selfish dependence is Ragaha. Love is based upon Selflessness. Here, I am not only interested in what I get, but I am also interested in what the other person gets.
- Attachment is always a form of Taking. Love is always a

form of Giving.

- Attachment is always conditional. So long as it helps me, I stay in the relationship. Love is not based on condition. It is unconditional.
- Attachment comes from a weak mind. Love does not come from weakness; rather it comes out of strength.
- In attachment, intellect is clouded and violation of Dharma occurs. In Love, intellect is always clear, thus there cannot be any violation of Dharma.
- Love is freedom. Attachment is bondage.

Shokhaha:

Attachment leads to shokaha. When the attached person leaves there is sorrow. When the object of dependence goes away there is sorrow. Swamiji says, it is a psychological crutch,

The object of attachment (person, object etc.) is always impermanent. At any time I may lose them. How can one prepare for this situation is the question raised by Vedanta? The Psychological depression caused is due to loss of the attached person or thing. Preparation for this has to be done well ahead of time. This preparation should be done when you are still in good health and well situated. Be far sighted, advises Swamiji.

Mohaha:

Mohaha is delusion. When Ragaha and Shokaha are there it clouds the intellect. Clouded intellect takes decisions that are wrong ones. This will usually lead to Adhrama. We may think we are making the right decision, while we are in fact making wrong ones. This then leads to the Ragaha>Shokhaha> Mohaha cycle. This is the human suffering or Samsara. How to get psychological independence is the question of Mokshaha?

Context: The Mahabharata war is between Pandavas (dharmic) and Kauravas (Adharmic). Pandavas wanted to avoid war. They tried Sama, Dana, and Bheda without success. As per our scriptures,

Ahimsa is wrong. Ahimsa is a conditional value. So, as a last resort, they took to war. Scriptures allow Ahimsa under certain conditions. It is like a Doctor performing amputation of a limb when the medicine did not work. Similarly in society when Adharma occurs, a Kshatriya may take to violence if non-violent methods did not work.

When both armies are face to face, Arjuna wants to survey the two armies. The people he sees in front are Bhishma and Drona, to both of whom Arjuna is attached. His thinking becomes clouded due to this attachment. After 13 years in exile and thinking about this he came to the conclusion that he had to fight a dharmic war. Once decided, a Kshatriya does not run from war or renounce and run away from his family. Arjuna sees his original Dharma Yudha now as an Adharma Yudha. Thus, Arjuna has Ragaha that is leading to Shokaha and further leading to Mohaha. Arjuna realizes his dilemma and turns to Krishna for his guidance. Thus Arjuna realizes or discovers the problem.

Shloka # 1:

Kauravas army is larger with many great warriors on their side. Pandavas though weaker have Lord Krishna on their side. Drithrashtra, the blind parent of Kauravas, asks Sanjaya to describe the scene at war. His inward blindness is also a metaphor for attachment. Sanjaya is given a special power of being able to see what is beyond or tele-vision. Vyasa blessed Sanjaya with this power.

Shloka # 2:

Seeing the well organized and arranged (vyuham) army of Pandavas Duryodhana approached his Acharya, Drona, his Guru in warfare and addressed him as follows:

Shloka # 3:

Duryodhana says: O Acharya you may see the huge army of

Pandavas. Drishtadyumna, son of Drupada, heads them. Your clever and cunning disciple has assembled this army and is trying to destroy me. Swamiji says Drishtadyumna was destined to kill Drona. Drona was also aware that Drishtadyumna would come after him. Nevertheless, so long as Drishtadyumna was a qualified student, Drona could not refuse him as a student.

Suggested Practice:

The difference between attachment and love is an important concept. We should all consider approaching all our relationships especially with our close ones more with Love rather than with attachment.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy