

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 Adhrama 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 Shokhaha 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

Bagawat Geeta, Class 3

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued with his discussion of the invocation prayer called Gitagyana Shloka. Madhusudhana Saraswathi wrote this Shloka. While this shloka was not originally a part of Gita, it is now accepted as one. The Gitagyana Shloka has nine verses. In these Shlokas we are offering namaskara to: Bharathi, Gita/ Saraswathi, Vyasa and Lord Krishna.

Expanding on the Shlokas related to Lord Krishna, Swamiji says:

Shloka # 3:

_____ _
_____ _ - _____ _

This shola is a namaskara to Sri Krishna. Parijata is a mythical tree in heaven. If one stands under this tree and wishes for something, the tree grants that wish. It is also known as wish yielding tree. Here, Sri Krishna, is compared to the Parijatha tree. Any desire related to Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. he grants, to one who surrenders to him.

Sri Krishna, here is in the role of a charioteer to Arjuna. He does not consider his work as one without dignity. Preaching dignity of labor, Swamiji says Bhagwan did not feel inferior as a charioteer. Do your work with a good attitude and enthusiasm exhorts Swamiji.

Sri Krishna was the greatest Gyani, reflected in his Chin mudra, the mudra of gyanam. Chin mudra indicates Jivatma and Paramatma Aikyam. It is a threatening finger. This jeevatma is associated with the three fingers. They represent the three Gunas (Rajas, Tamas and Satva) and the three Sharirams (Karana, Sukshma and Sthula). All of them are associated with the perishable body. The thumb represents Paramatama. Only with the thumb can all other fingers function. So also Paramatma is the aadhara, or basis, for the whole creation. JIvatma should get freed from matter and join Paramatma.

The circle or Chakra of Sri Krishna does not have a begining or an end. When Jivatma merges with Paramatma it becomes Poorna Atma. This wisdom of immortality is presented in the Chin mudra. To this wonderful Lord I present my Namskara. Krishna, explained Swamiji, means one who attracts the devotee.

Sholka # 5:

_____ _
_____ _

This sholka is again a Sri Krishna Namaskara describing his contribution to family, society and the world. Krishna as a son of Vasudeva was a member of the family. As one who destroyed asuras Kamsa and Chanura he was a protector of society. He taught Gita not only to Arjuna but also to posterity. In this role he was a Jagatguru to the world.

Shloka # 6:

शुभं कुरु ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥
शुभं कुरु ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥

शुभं कुरु ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥
शुभं कुरु ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥

This sholka is again a Sri Krishna Namaskara. In this Sholka Kaivartakaha means boatman. Even in a tempestuous situation a skilled boatman can cross the river. Here Mahabharatha is compared to a treacherous river with many dangers. Pandavas need to cross this river. Human beings also face such treacherous situations in life.

Aartaha means one who is in distress. Pandavas were caught in the Aartaha and in this situation Sri Krishna was their savior.

Describing the dangers, Bhishma and Drona were like banks of the river determining its course. The river itself is compared to Jaydritha. Prince of Gandhara, Shakuni, is compared to the dangerous blue water lily; Shalya a relative of pandavas was on opposite side like a crocodile; Kripa Acharya, a great archer and teacher was there as an under current. Then, there was Karna like a turbulent wave and Ashwathama and others who were man-eating fish. Duryodhana was like a whirlpool. Pandavas crossed the river due to a skillful boatman named Krishna. Sri Krishna will also help you, if you surrender to him.

Shloka 8:

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

This shloka is again a namaskara to Madhava or Lakhmi Pati. The greatest wealth (Lakshmi) is wisdom. Sri Krishna had the benefit of this support. Swamiji says, he (Krishna) can make a dumb person eloquent. He can make a lame person climb the mountains by his grace. Swamiji says the studies of 700 verses of Gita are the mountain that we can successfully scale if we surrender to Sri Krishna.

Shloka # 9:

This shloka again is a namskara to Sri Krishna. Krishna is one who is worshipped by Brahma, Varuna, Indira and Marutha. The chanters of the Sama and all Vedas invoke Sri Krishna. The six Angas of Vedas, secondary scriptures, all chant the Lord's name in Paatha, Krama and Ghana Paatha. **Paatha is to recite the mantras in a sentence straight. In Krama Paatha, the first word of the mantra is added to the second, the second to the third, the third to the fourth and so on, until the whole sentence of the mantras is completed. In Ghana Paatha one repeats the mantras in various ways back and forth and in different patterns.**

Swamiji says great Sanyasis, with a one pointed mind, see the lord in their own mind. Devotees see the lord outside. Even though he is described as a person, the Lord is not a person. The personal God has limitations of space and time. The real God is limitless and many people are not aware of him. Thus God has a limited form for devotees and a limitless one as well. To this all pervading God, I bow in namskara.

Ending the Gita Dhyanam, Swamiji prays, May God bless us in our study of this great scripture.

GITA MAHATMYAM. (THE GREATNESS OF GITA).

This glory of the GITA is narrated in VARAHA PURANA Bhudevi(Maha Lakshmi) approached Lord Vishnu and enquired – How , one who is bound with his Prarabdha maintain constant devotion upon You?

The Lord replied that who meditates on Gita will attain that status.

Lord further asserted that where ever the book GITA is kept, and where ever GITA is studied, that place is considered as sacred as Prayaga&Kasi.

The Lord is present where Gita is studied, chanted or heard.

Gita is My supreme aboard, supreme knowledge, and the essence of My indefinable state.

Gita is the essence all the Vedas and Upanishads.

That who recites the entire 18 chapters of Gita with firm devotion attains the knowledge necessary to attain freedom (MOKSHA).

If one recites 9 chapters of Gita, he/she will attain the merit of “GO DHANA) gifting of a Cow.

He who recites a third of Gita will attain the punyam equal to a bath in Ganges.

He who recites one sixth will get the fruit of SOMA sacrifice.

If one recites one chapter a day with devotion, he will go to KAILASA.

If one recites one fourth of a chapter or one sloka daily will attain human birth for the duration of MANVANTARA (71 MAHA YUGAS) 308 million YEARS.

He who recites 10,7,5,4,3,2,1 or one half of one sloka will attain CHANDRA LOKA for ten thousand years.

He who leaves this body reading Gita attains salvation.

One while performing the duties of daily life , meditates on the meaning of Gita will attain JEEVAN MUKTHI in this life and VIDEHA MUKTHI when the body falls.

Even a worst criminal if he loves to hear and understand the

meaning of Gita will enjoy the bliss of VISHNU.
Those who do not recite this GITA MAHATYAM while studying GITA
will not attain this punyam.

Bagawat Geeta 2: Dhyana Sloka

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

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

Expanding on the Gitagyana Shlokas, Swamiji discussed each shloka.

Shloka # 7:

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

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

In Shloka 7, the prayer is that, may my study of Mahabharata

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

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

Shloka # 1:

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

This Shloka is our namaskara to Gita. The author addressing Saraswathi asks the Mother to nourish him at the right time with the right food. Mother Gita nourishes us with the

knowledge of Karma Yoga, Upasana Yoga and Gyana Yoga in a teaching given to Arjuna, taught by Lord Narayana himself. It is a blessing to society even today. Vyasa, an Avatara of Vishnu, compiled it. He is most experienced among Rishi's. He has also has given us the Puranas. In the middle of Mahabharata is Shanthi Parva composed by Vyasa. It shows the knowledge of Advaita. Gita consists of 18 chapters and 700 verses.

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

Verse #4:

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

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

Verse # 2:

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

This Shloka is our namaskara to Vyasa. Vyasa means divider and expander. Originally Vedas were one. Vyasa gave his four

disciples the task of creating the four separate Vedas from the original one. He also expanded on Vedas through the Puranas. Vyasa's original name was also Krishna. Both were dark in complexion. He is also known as Krishna Dvaipayana (island born Krishna). He was an Acharya of great knowledge. His eyes were like Lotus petals. You have lit the lamp of wisdom with the oil of Mahabharatam stories, says the devotee. So, to you, I offer my namaskaram.

With my good wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Introduction

One page summary, in table format, of the first Bagawat Geeta class by Swami Paramarthananda.

Notes-BhagavadGita-Intro

Bhagawat Gita 1: Introduction

Greetings All,

This is my summary of the first class (October 1, 2915) of Bagawat Gita .

Swamiji introduced the Bhagawat Gita today. He says all human beings pursue goals in life. Some are long term and some are short term in nature. Goals also vary from individual to individual, from time to time, and from age to age. There are infinite numbers of goals that differ by age, by time, and

they also change with times. If analyzed, we will note that there are some goals common to all human beings. Even animals have goals but they are instinctive. Thus, these are three common goals:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We need to remove the three layers by appropriate Sadhanas or following spiritual disciplines. Each discipline is called Yogaha. Yoga means the seeker unites with his destination. Three yoga's are recommended. They are:

Karma Yoga is for first layer of Malam.

Upasana Yoga is for the second layer of Vikshepa and

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

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

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

Gyana Yoga is Enquiry into one's real nature. Do I need peace

from outside? Am I ever secure? This self-enquiry and analysis is also called Atma Vichara.

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

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

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

Aranyaka Bhaga deals with Upasana Kadam or Vikshepa.

Upanishat deals with Gyana Yoga and is called Gyana Kadam.

Mantra Bhaga or Suktam deals with prayers to Deities. Swamiji says,

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

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

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

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

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

Dhyana Shlokas – Bagwat Gita

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

GitaDhyaanShlokas