

Baghawat Geeta, Class 73, Chapter 5 Verses 13 to 15

Greetings All,

Shloka # 13:

मनसं त्यक्त्वा सर्वं चित्तं ध्यायन्निश्चलः
सुखं प्राप्नुयान्निश्चिन्तयन्सुखं ॥५.१३॥

Mentally renouncing all works, and self-controlled, the embodied being happily sits in the nine-gated city, neither working nor causing others to work.

Continuing his teaching of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in first part of Chapter 5, Sri Krishna pointed out that there is a choice with respect to life style. One can chose a lifestyle of seclusion (Nivrithi marga or Sanyasa) or a lifestyle of activity amidst society (Pravrithi marga or Grihastha ashrama).

These are the only two main ashramas. All other ashramas such as Brahmacharya and Vanaprastha are a part of these two. Thus, Brahmacharya is a part of Grihasthashrama while Vanaprastha is a part of Sanyasashrama. Thus, our choice is between a lifestyle of “Life of possessions” or a “life without possessions”.

Having pointed out that there is a choice with regard to the lifestyle, Sri Krishna pointed out that whatever be one’s lifestyles, there is no choice with regard to sadhanas; everyone has go through two stages of sadhanas; The two sadhanas are:

1. First one is for purification of mind or Chitta Shiddhi. Many methods were described including, Kayika, Vachika and Manasa karmani. Each one of them in turn has many

more choices with in them. Many physical, verbal and mental sadhanas are available for one to perform. In Grihasthashrama, if one has, one can spend money. For a poor man too there are Sadhanas without much expenditure and they too purify the mind. So, according to one's means and physical capabilities one can perform Sadhanas. Through these sadhanas one obtains Gyanayogyatha.

2. Then one enters Gyana Yoga to discover our higher Self. We have two Selves, the ego, the lower self, and the Atma, the higher Self. The body mind and sense complex with the reflected consciousness (RC) is the ego "I". This ego "I" is a Karta and Bhokta. This ego "I" incurs all three karmas that is Prarabhdha, Sanchita and Agami karmas.

At this stage, that is in Gyana Yoga, we are trying to discuss the Superior " I". This is Chaitanyam or Atma Tatvam. Shloka's 13-21 are related to Gyana Yoga. In chapter # 2, previously, Consciousness was discussed. Thus, the characteristics of Consciousness are:

1. Consciousness is **an independent principle**. It is just like the light on the hand, however, the light is independent of the hand. Thus, my higher nature is pure Chaitanyam
2. Consciousness **is Ekam**; bodies are many, minds are many, but the consciousness, which pervades the body mind, is ekah. Then, Sri Krishna pointed out that this consciousness is **sarvagataha or all pervading** like space.
3. Consciousness is **nityaha or eternal**. Even after body goes, it continues. When hand is removed, light is still there but we cannot perceive it.
4. Consciousness is **Nirvikaraha, not subject to modification**. It is like the light. Light does not move, while the hand moves. It just seems to be moving. The

reflecting medium, the body, has got 6-fold modifications: existence in the womb of the mother, birth; growth, transformation, decay and death. However, the chaitanyam pervading the body is nirvikaraha.

If consciousness won't change it means it can't perform action. Action involves change. Even mental activity sees action in thought. It is like Akasha; the all-pervading space also cannot act. Does space ever move? The answer is No. Therefore, consciousness is akarta. Therefore, consciousness has no punyam or papam. It is also, therefore, an abokhta. If not a Karta then it is also not a bhokta.

The Wiseman has owned up to his higher Self as his own by constantly claiming the higher Self. The lower ego has become insignificant. As a Karta, I am obsessed with my action and its results. **Wiseman, however, looks at Ahamkara from a mountaintop called Atma. All problems, even greatest ones, looked at from Atma's standpoint, all appear very small and insignificant.** If I am looking at the body from ahamkara's standpoint, naturally I am worried about old age and death. However, when I shift my "I" from the body to Atma, I look at this body objectively and realize it is one among the billions of bodies that have appeared and disappeared in this creation. Atma sees many bodies. Bodies come and go. So, will this one too. I learn to look at Ahamkara, objectively. Just as the dream is insignificant, when we wake up, so also are all our problems. Gyani has claimed Atma to himself. So, what you are depends on what you identify with. **Identification with lower self, makes one a Samsari. Identification with higher Self makes one a Gyani.** Gyani says, I am pervading this body and I am blessing this body. Even if body disappears, so what?

Gyani has shifted identification from body to Atma. He renounces abhimana of body. He does it through wisdom. Wisdom is " I am the higher Self, not the lower". As body, I am a slave. As consciousness, I am the controller. As dream, I am a creature of the dream. As Waker, I am controller of the dream.

He leads a happy life. If you ask him where are you? He will not say I am the body rather he will say, I am in the physical body that has nine doors.

Thus, the body's outer skin is the wall; there are seven holes in the face (two eyes, two nostrils, two ears, one mouth) and two gates below for excretion.

The mouth is a two-way gate. It can speak, ideas go out. It can eat, thus food goes in. The body has roads, arteries, capillaries, etc. All pranas are workers in the body. Atma is the king of this body city. Once Atma's blessings are not there the body has to go. Therefore, Atma is Raja. Therefore, Gyani is master of body.

The word Dehi in this shloka means Gyani.

Light illumines action, however, it is not involved in the action itself. It is called Sakshi Bhava. In light, a Doctor can perform surgery. In the same light, a thief can also steal. Both punyam and papam are performed in the same light. However, these actions do not involve the light. The Gyani too, like the light, just witnesses his actions. He is not involved in them. Direct action is called Karta. Indirect action is called Karayitha (instigator). Even an instigator can be tainted by an action. Does Atma instigate? If so, every criminal will blame the Atma for the crime. A knife is never punished, the user of the knife is. If Atma is an instigator it will have punyam and papapam. Therefore, Atma does not instigate. It is simply present as a witness, just like the light. So illumining something without involvement is called sakshi bhava. **Thus, Gyani remains as a sakshi.** Good and bad belong to the lower I. Higher I does not have good or bad qualifications.

Shloka # 14:

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The Lord creates neither agency nor objects for the world; nor contact with the fruits of works; rather, the nature of things operates.

Discussing this shloka, Swamiji said, chanting of shlokas has rules. Thus, in this shloka:

Lokasya Srijathi should be read without a gap. A short vowel is followed by a consonant, hence this method of reading.

In Svabhavastu Pravartate, there is a gap as after the vowel U there is a double consonant.

Sri Krishna now says, **Atma does not produce anything** at all. Body and mind have natural doership. Ahamkara also has doership. The Atma does not create the doership. Atma also does not produce. Prabhu in shloka means master.

Atma does not produce Karta, Karma, karma phalam and association between karta and karamaphalam. If so, who is responsible for all these actions? Sri Krishna says, it is the innate nature of body and mind to be active. Electricity blesses all gadgets. It does not ask the fan to rotate. Fan rotates due to its inbuilt nature. Atma does not determine functions. Mind senses and body do their own activities while **Atma is just a witness. Light is not responsible for saintliness of saint or criminality of criminal.**

Shloka # 15:

विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक् विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक् विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक्
विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक् विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक् विभुः सर्वं कर्मभाक् 5.15

The mighty Being accepts nobody's sin or merit. Knowledge is shrouded in ignorance; therefore are living beings deluded.

In previous shloka we learned that Atma is neither the doer nor instigator. Here Sri Krishna now says, he is also the abhokta. Atma does not take papam nor does it acquire any punyam. In the shloka the word Vibhuhu means all

pervading. Just as space is not made wet by rain or burned by fire the consciousness, like space, is not tainted by papam nor is it improved by punyam. So, Atma is not touched by anything. Citing example of criminal who committed a crime. In court he, however, quoted this shloka and said I should not be punished. Here, the devil was quoting the scripture. The Judge, who was a learned man, agreed with him that he was the Atma. He, however, said, I am giving imprisonment only to the body. Can you withdraw from the body, he asked? If you are able to withdraw from the body when a wrong action is done you should be able to withdraw from the body when the body suffers the result of wrong action.

When you are doing karma, you say you are not the body but when the body suffers you say that you are the body. This then is a problem. Either identify with the body throughout or dis-identify from the body throughout; partial identification is dangerous.

Identification with body or misidentification with body is the issue. At the body level, Karma functions. At the Atma level, Punyam and Papam do not affect it. What is the cause of suffering? Sri Krishna says, it is Deha Abhimana. It occurs due to ignorance of higher Self. This is the reason all Jivas are suffering. For an Agyani, Gyanam is the only solution.

Take Away:

1. Gyani looks at the world and all actions in a shakshi bhava or as a witness. In this state, he is not involved with the actions anymore.
2. To achieve this sakshi bhava Gyani shifts the identification from body to Atma. He renounces abhimana of body. He does it through wisdom. Wisdom is " I am the higher Self, not the lower".
3. It is the identification with higher self that makes him a Gyani.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta Class 72, Chapter 5, Verses 10 – 13

Greetings All,

Shloka # 10:

brahmanam eva samyamam karmam
brahmanam eva samyamam karmam 5.10

**Reposing all works in Brahman, he operates without attachment;
he is not stained by sin as a lotus is not by water**

Continuing his teaching of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, we saw in the beginning of chapter 5 that Sri Krishna talked about the two lifestyles of Pravrithimarga (Grihasthashrama) and Nivrithimarga (Sanyasahrama) and that one has freedom to choose any one of the paths. Sri Krishna himself prefers Grihasthashrama as it is less risky and one can change over to Sanayashrama later, if one wishes. In Sanyashrama one cannot revert back to Grihasthashrama.

Now, Sri Krishna takes up the topic of Sadhanas. Sadhanas are applicable to both ashramas. First, one has to obtain Gyanayogyatha and then one has to go to Gyanam. Gyana yogyatha can be obtained only by performing Karmas. Three

types of Karmas are available to a person to follow. They are:

Kayika (by body),

Vachika (verbal) and

Manasa(mental) Karmani.

Physical body or mind can perform Puja. Shankaracharya has written several manasa Puja shlokas. Mental visualization is manasika puja. Chanting is Vachika Karma. Karma alone purifies a person and gives him Chitta Shudhi. After that one comes to Vedanta Vichara and then comes to Gyanam. So, follow karma yoga and purify the mind; then follow scriptures and acquire knowledge and then obtain Gyanam and be liberated.

Mechanical performance of Karma is not enough. The attitude while performing the karma is very important for purification.

Karma performed with proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.

Karma Yoga purifies. What makes a Karma, Karma Yoga? The following make Karma, a Karma yoga:

1. The Karma should be dedicated to God as a Samarpanam. This will bring a change in personality. It is a Sankalpa that converts Karma into worship. What ever I do, I will do with purity, wholeheartedly, and do my very best for God.
2. When remembrance of God is there in the karma, it becomes a Puja.
3. Nishkama karma: means our attitude towards results of our karmas should be one of dedication to God or Samarpanam. Sandhyavandanam, going to temple, Japas, Pancha Maha Yagna, are all exclusive Karmas for purification. They are dedicated to God and meant for Chitta Shudhi. The results of these karmas will not disturb me.
4. Sakama Karma: Examples of this include when one is working for a salary or building a house etc. The

activity here too should be dedicated to the Lord and one accepts the results as a prasadam. That is why the monthly salary check or a new sari is placed in front of God. Therefore, the karma is performed as an Ishwararpanam and the results of the karma are taken as Devaprasadam.

In this manner in both Nishkama and Sakama Karmas, the anxieties over actions go away. My life goes on smoothly as there is no violent reaction. I accept everything as God's gift to me. I accept everything as my karmaphalam, as what I deserve and not as what I desire. Everything is accepted as prasadam.

Sri Krishna says give up anxiety over future (Sangam Tyaktva). This is Bandha Tyaga. The sign of a devotee is that he is calm at all times.

What is the benefit of all this?

Such a Karma Yogi will not be affected by papam even if there are some defects in it. Karma Yogi has no papa bhayam. His life is like a lotus leaf in water that is not tainted by the water. The karma yogi too, amidst all his responsibilities, is not tainted by society.

Shloka # 11:

ॐ कर्मणो यो नान्तरात्पुण्यं प्राप्नुयान्मोक्षं च ॥
ॐ कर्मणो यो नान्तरात्पुण्यं प्राप्नुयान्मोक्षं च ॥ 5.11 ॥

With body, mind, intellect and mere senses, Yogins perform work without attachment, for the purification of the Self.

Here Sri Krishna says Karma yoga can be performed at any level such as Kayika, Vachika or Manasika according to one's convenience. Even patram, pushpam, phalam and toyam are all acceptable. Our Vedic religion alone offers so many options to us. Bhakti is also important. Thus, everybody can perform

Karma yoga.

Kayika karmas are physical actions. Vachika karmas are verbal actions such as nama-japa and parayanam.

One of the benefits of kayika karma, is beating laziness. One of the worst enemies of the human being is laziness and kayika karma helps us overcome this laziness. Manasika karmas include meditation, upasana, manasa japa and puja. Budhi karma includes understanding Gita and the scriptures with help of Indriyas.

Kevalaihi in the shloka means we tend to claim success as our own while failure we tend to disown. This can lead to arrogance. Even in success we must remember that it is due to the organs given to us by God. Be humble even in success, exhorts god. Do all activities without stress and in calmness. All these sadhanas are meant for Atma or Chitta Shudhi. In this shloka Atma means mind.

Because of the many meanings of scriptures there is a special way to learn scriptures. It is called the Mimasa method that is used to extract the meaning of the scripture.

Karma Yoga is only to purify the mind it cannot give us Gyanam.

Shloka # 12:

कर्मयोगी कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा तदात्मनो यतिरुच्यते
कर्मयोगी कर्मफलं तदात्मनो यतिरुच्यते 5.12

Giving up the fruits of works, the Yogin attains disciplined peace; the non-Yogin, attached to fruits by the force of cravings is bound.

Both Karma yoga and Gyana yoga will give us peace of mind. The mental peace resulting from Karma yoga is relative while the one obtained from Gyana Yoga is permanent. It is like a first aid versus a permanent treatment. The first aid is important,

but it is limited. It indicates the need for more aid.

In the shloka Yukthaha means Karma yogi. Karma Yogi obtains peace of mind. Money can never gives us peace

of mind. Material objects can give us physical comfort but not mental comfort. Dropping concerns for karma phalam or the anxiety about future will certainly help in this area. Planning for future is useful as it makes me more efficient. However, worry about future will make me inefficient.

It is the same with the past. Regrets about past become a burden. On the other hand, if I learn lessons from the past, it makes me more efficient in the present.

Therefore, the karma Yogi is one who uses his past and present intelligently.

Ayukthaha means one who is not a karma yogi. He does not know how to use his past and future. Such a person tends to be pessimistic or fatalistic. He is always anxious about the future. He does not realize that everything in life is a risk. True security lies only in surrendering to God. Our real insurance is God and he alone. The Kami is a shackled Samsari. Therefore, Arjuna, become a Karma Yogi.

Shloka # 13:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १३ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १३ ॥ 5.13 ॥

Mentally renouncing all works, and self-controlled, the embodied being happily sits in the nine-gated city, neither working nor causing others to work.

With shlokas 7 through 12 Sri Krishna has completed the various stages of Sadhanas. The Shloka's 13 through 21 are all about Gyana Yoga. Swamiji says most of the people are not aware about Gyana Yoga. Many think one does not have to study scriptures. Sri Krishna now says without study of scriptures

one cannot get knowledge. It is a choiceless choice. Thus, Gyana Yoga is the central theme of chapter # 5.

Gyana yoga is a systematic study of Vedantic scriptures for a length of time under a competent Guru. We should note that Dharma shastras too do not deal with knowledge.

Vedanta alone asks questions about who am I? What is our goal in life? What is God? Thus, Vedanta deals with the five topics of Jiva, Jagat, Ishwara, Bandha and Mukti. Once **one goes through Gyana Yoga, you discover that I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the consciousness. It is the "I" or consciousness that is functioning through the body. "I" am transacting through the body-mind thought complex, but I am not the body mind complex.** When the body dies my transactions stop. In sleep too our body stops transacting. We know sleep is not my end, but it is only end of transactions.

Therefore, "I" am the consciousness who is behind the body. The body may end, but "I" do not die at all. Not only I-am-the pure-consciousness, I am akarta and abhokta; I do not perform any action at all.

Like the light on the hand, the light cannot move, as it is all pervading. Similarly the Gyani discovers the fact that I am the action-less Atma. Therefore, all the actions are transferred to the body mind complex; **it is a shift in the identification; and therefore instead of claiming the actions as mine,** I hand over the actions to the body-mind-complex; the body-mind-complex will have to act in the world and it will have to reap the result also. It is the body mind complex that acts, not the "I".

Thus, the Gyani renounces all actions. How does he renounce the actions? Shankaracharya quotes this shloka often. It is one of the very important shlokas of the Gita. So, how does he renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. He does not physically renounce the action.

Actions will continue at the body and mental level. He, however, does not claim the actions as his actions, because he is detached from the body mind complex and therefore he says I do not act rather in my presence the body-mind-complex acts. Previously I said I act, but the new perspective is that, in my presence, the body-mind-complex acts. It is also a fact that the body-mind-complex cannot avoid action.

Thus, the Gyani renounces through knowledge. Physical immortality does not exist. "I am not the mortal body" is the true knowledge. Once I know the immortal Atma and I know the body is mortal then my biggest fear is gone. With this fear of death gone, the mind becomes light.

This knowledge removes the weight in my mind. He remains a man of control without involving in any action directly or indirectly because he does not perform any action. In his presence the body mind complex acts.

Take Away:

1. Only Karma performed with a proper attitude is known as Karma Yoga.
2. Once one goes through Gyana Yoga, you discover that I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the consciousness. It is the consciousness that is transacting through the body-mind complex.
3. How does one renounce the action? He renounces through knowledge and detachment. Through a shift in identification he becomes detached from the body mind complex and he does not claim the actions as his actions.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta Class 71, Chapter 5, Verses 7 to 10

Shloka # 7:

ॐ योगस्थो ज्ञानसंयुक्तो योगयोगो योगिनः
ॐ योगस्थो ज्ञानसंयुक्तो योगयोगो योगिनः 5.7

Established in Yoga, his mind purified, his self and senses controlled, his Self becomes the Self of all living beings, he is not tainted though he works.

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in previous six shlokas Sri Krishna clarified Arjunas doubts about Grihasthashrama and Sanyasashrama, respectively. He says there is a choice between the two and that both ashramas are good. Sri Krishna himself prefers Grihasthashrama as he feels Sanayashrama poses some risks. He says it is a one-way street. Even Bhagavatham criticizes a Sanyasi who renounces his sanyasa later, as a vomit-eater. In Grihasthashrama this risk is lower. In this ashrama, one can take Sanyasam in grihasthashrama itself or go the separate route of Sanyasashrama. This opportunity does not exist in Sanayasashrama; hence, Sri Krishna's preference for Grihastashrama.

After this clarification, now Sri Krishna talks about Sadhanas. He says one has to go through the rituals of purification. Both ashramas prescribe purification rituals

called ashrama dharmas.

Following one's own ashrama dharma can purify everybody. After chitta shuddhi one then goes to Gyana Yoga.

This is the content of shloka # 7. Here, Sri Krishna is talking about Grihasthashrama, as he prefers this ashrama. Yoga Yuktha here means Karma Yogi. Chapter # 3 talks of the factors that affect a Karma Yogi. The factors are:

- He is one who gives priority to inner growth although he also knows value of material possessions.
- He considers spiritual growth more important.
- He thinks, what I am is more important than what I have.
- His security depends on what I am and not what I have.
- His happiness too depends on what I am and not what I have.
- He dedicates his life to God.
- All his actions are an offering to God and all his experiences he takes it as prasadam.

He is a Karma Yogi. This sadhana changes the personality of the individual. Vedanta measures by personality changes and not changes in possessions. The transformation is to become pure minded. What is this purity about? It is freedom from all unhealthy ways of thinking or from Kama, Krodha, Mada, and Moha. It is removal of Asuri sampathi and allowing Daiviha sampathi to come in. He develops positive virtues and gives up negative ones.

In the words ,in the shloka,Vishud-Atma (pure minded) and Vijith atma , the word atma has two meanings. One means mind and the other the body. Vishudh atma means one who has purified his mind. Vijithatma means one who has mastered the sense organs. It is like damming a river. While damming the river saves water, if you do not channel it properly the water will flood. Therefore, it is important to store and direct the physical, mental, emotional and intellectual energies in a

proper manner and this is called mastery over sense organs.

Therefore, one who has purified his mind and mastered his sense organs, he is now qualified for knowledge or he is Gyana Yogya. Purity of mind and mastery over organs is essential before Gyanam. Vedapoorva is Gyana Yogyatha and then comes Vedanta or Karma Kanda or Gyana Kanda.

Sarvabhutatma means the active person is converted to a quiet person or one transforms from an extrovert to an introvert. He says following are the stages of Gyana Yoga:

- "I" am consciousness, different from the body. It is like the light is different from my hand. The light continues even after removal of the hand. It is independent of the body. Shloka 12-25 in chapter 2 describe them as well.
- "I" the consciousness behind this body is the same behind every body. Just as the same light is in everything a book, a mike, me etc. **It is the one indivisible, one formless light that is illuminating all forms. Thus, the one formless Consciousness is pervading every formed body.**

So, the first stage is I-am-the-consciousness behind-my-body.

The second stage of knowledge is I-am-the-consciousness behind-every-body.

The third stage of Gyanam, Swamiji said, he will describe at a later time.

Gyana Yogi is one who knows I am the Atma behind my body as well as all bodies (Sarvabhutatma). This is repeated in chapter 6 again. Because of this knowledge what benefit accrues to one? He obtains detachment from Dehabhimanam. I normally tend to see everything from point of my body. Thus, one thinks, I am son of so and so; I am so many years old; etc. Our entire life is based upon Dehabhimana. Now, after

Gyani or a quiet Gyani. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi was a quiet Gyani, while Shankaracharya moved around the whole of India several times and did so much work. Yet, both were detached.

The real "I" does not do anything at all. It is an Akarta and as such an Abhokta. It does not perform any action. It is exactly like when the hand moves, the light does not move at all; the light appears to move; but it does not. Even while understanding he is an Akarta, he still allows body to function according to his designation in life. He functions according to needs of society. His motivation in life is love and compassion towards the ignorant society. This love is a natural part of Gyanam. Ignorance suppresses Love and compassion. When abhimana goes, natural love and compassion automatically express themselves. He helps the needy, the one requiring knowledge and thus allows the body mind complex to function according to the requirement without Dehabhimana. He does not have selfishness. In this state he is identified totally with creation. In this state, I am with God. All his actions are Dharmic.

The five Gyanendriyas of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling are allowed to function. The five Karmendriyas of breathing, talking, excreting, taking, opening and closing the eyes, breathing in and out and even sleeping (svapan, svasan, pralapan, visarjan, grhnan, unmisan nimisan) continue to function. The gyani functions just like a normal person. The only difference is that he has Gyanam. This, nevertheless, brings about a radical change in his attitude. This also changes his responses to situations. Citing the story of lottery winner, the Lottery Company wanted his doctor to convey his winning to him, as they were concerned he may not be able to bear the shock. The doctor contacted him and asked him what he would do if he won five lac rupees in a lottery? The man replied, O great Doctor, you are the reason I am still alive and I really planned on leaving you half my lottery prize. The Doctor was so shocked by his comment that he died.

For a Gyani

there is nothing called shock, even if it arrives, it does not take much time, for changing from “what !”, to so what? That is Gita; Gita is going “from what” to “so what”?

My body is made up of matter. Interaction of body is inevitable. One may consider staying away from the world for peace of mind. Sri Krishna asks how long can you escape the world? Your Prarabhdha Karma will make you act. Gyani acts knowing sense organs and objects will interact creating sensations. So, Gyani remembers this through all such interactions in an alert manner. He is a Yukta. “ I have a higher Self” in front of which the lower self is insignificant.

Shloka # 10:

ब्रह्मणि कर्मणि संन्यस्य संन्यासि भवति
संन्यासि भवति संन्यासि भवति संन्यासि भवति 5.10

Reposing all works in Brahman, he operates without attachment; he is not stained by sin as a lotus is not by water

What happens to a Gyani was discussed in previous shlokas. He has discovered a higher “I” in front of the lower “I”. Citing an example, during freedom struggle many Indians were sent to Andamans. What made them put up with this severe punishment? They too had two I’s. The physical I suffered but the Indian I was predominant and therefore suffering was insignificant. You discover something far superior. Citing another example, Swamiji says, when we add water in salt and keep diluting it until salt is not felt at all. Gyanam does not give freedom from biological pain. Gyanam, however, frees you from the psychological pain. The “I” becomes insignificant. So, discovering the higher “I” is very important. Sri Krishna says, until you discover the higher “I” till then you should develop develop a love for God. Thus: From World Dependent>God Dependent>Self Dependent.

Here Sri Krishna comes back from Gyana yoga to karma yoga again. In Gyana yoga one is dependent on higher "I", while in Karma Yoga one is dependent on God.

Until you discover your higher Self, stay in Saguna Brahman or Ishta Devata. I discover Bhakti and surrender to the Lord. I dedicate all actions to that lord. Kama karma and Nish kama karma , both are dedicated to God. In kama karma, when you get results, accept them as prasadam.

Take Away:

1. Gyani is one who is able to objectify his own body as a part of creation. He looks at it just like another body. We are normally objective with respect to other bodies but not our own.
2. Our problems in life are based on two abhimanans. They are:
 1. Identification with body (Dehabhimana)
 2. Identification with properties of the body.
3. The one formless Consciousness is pervading every formed body.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 70:

The question is asked, how can one follow spirituality in Grihasthashrama where there are so many distractions? Sri Krishna says, in itself there is nothing wrong with Grihasthashrama. **The primary problem for a Grihasta is Raga and Dvesha.** We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. We need to manage our Raga Dvesha. Such a person is a Nithya Sanyasi.

The advantage of Sanyasahrama is that the Sanyasi has no attachments. Therefore, he usually has a light mind. Even a Grihasta can enjoy a light mind if he does not have Raga and Dvesha.

Citing king Janaka as a model of Grihasthashrama, once the king was with his Guru amidst other Sanyasis. The Sanyasis looked down upon the King, as he was a Grihasta. The Guru wanted to teach the Sanyasis a lesson. He created an illusory fire in the ashram and immediately all Sanyasi's ran to protect their possessions. When they came back they found the king still sitting alone listening to the Guru's teaching. Swamiji says, wearing a saffron robe does not guarantee Sanyasa. Therefore, even a Grihasta can be a Sanyasi internally.

Swamiji clarified that Sri Krishna is not saying that one should not have Raga Dvesha. Human beings will have likes and dislikes. Even Gods have their likes and dislikes. See how Sri Krishna loves his flute and Saraswathi Devi loves her Veena and Sri Ganesha loves his carrier, the Mouse. Preferences in life will be there. Our personality is actually defined by our preferences or likes and dislikes. Sri Krishna, however says, do not become a slave to Raga and Dvesha. If you can fulfill them fine, if not convert it into a non-binding desire. What is a non-binding desire? Citing through an example, it is not unusual for a parent to dream of a child becoming an IAS officer. They try everything to help the child in this

process. However, in the end, the child could become a Sanyasi. Sri Krishna says, have dreams; but be ready to face whatever happens; this is called management of ragah-dvesha. If you have this capability you are a Sanyasi.

O Arjuna, one who has managed the Dvandas (pairs of opposites or Raga Dvesha), he will definitely attain Moksha even in Grihasthashrama. Even such a person will have to follow Karma yoga and then come to Gyana Yoga.

Shloka # 4:

शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि
शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि शुद्धचित्तोऽपि 5.4

The thoughtless, not men of discrimination, affirm that Samkhya and Yoga are different. Properly resorting to either of them, one wins the fruit of both.

Sri Krishna concludes by saying that both ashramas are equally efficacious. He calls Grihasthashrama as Pravriti marga and Sanyasashrama as Nivriti marga. Sri Krishna has combined the four ashramas into two. Thus, Grihasthashrama includes Bramhacharya and Sanyasashrama includes Vanaprastha. Both ashramas are good and neither is superior. Only an ignorant person will say that one of them is superior or that they are not equal. A wise person will certainly not say such a thing.

There is in Grihasthashrama a guru shishya paramapara as there is one in Sanyashrama as well. And in fact, among all the Upanishads, the most important portion is called **tatvamasi prakaranam**, where the teaching of tatvamasi comes. This teaching usually took place between a father and son. Thus, the scriptures talk about the Grihasthashrama Gyani parampara, as well as Sanyasashrama Gyani parampara. That these two paramparas existed indicate that you can get Gyanam in any of the ashramas.

In both ashramas Gyanam is possible. Sri Krishna advises that

one should take the ashrama most suitable to one's inclinations and Prarabhda Karmas.

Many factors influence the type of ashrama one chooses. But once a choice is made one should follow the requirements of that ashrama implicitly. It is very important that finally the inner transformation occurs. Gyanam is also the goal of a Grihastha Sanyasi.

Shloka # 5:

संख्यया योग्या च साधुना मुनिना च
संख्यया योग्या च साधुना मुनिना च
संख्यया योग्या च साधुना मुनिना च 5.5

The status won by the Samkhyas is attained by the Yogins also. Only he perceives who perceives that Samkhya and Yoga are one.

Here again Sri Krishna reinforces the same ideas.

Samkhya Sanyasi's do attain moksha following Karma Yoga and then Gyana yoga. Purificatory sadhanas are many including the Sanyasi's Danda. A sanyasi does not have sacred thread he uses a danda instead. A danda puja is also performed daily. Both Sanyasi and Grihastha attain moksha through purification.

While both ashramas are equally efficient each has its plus and minus points exactly like having your own house versus a rented house. The one who sees this fact, that person alone, sees that other people have wrong perceptions.

Sri Krishna says all this so that Arjuna does not run away from the battlefield. Arjuna, on the other hand, somehow or the other wants to run away. There is a tension between the two. If Sri Krishna says sanyasa ashrama is superior then Arjuna will run away; therefore he says that the one who sees both as equal, he alone has got the right vision.

Shloka # 6:

संख्यया योग्या च साधुना मुनिना च
संख्यया योग्या च साधुना मुनिना च

Indeed, renunciation, mighty armed! Is hard to win without Karma Yoga. With Yoga, the silent sage attains Brahman without much delay.

Sri Krishna now adds some new information. He has already said that both ashramas are equal and efficient. This is like asking which subject is better, physics or chemistry? All sciences are equally important. Now, if I have to choose one of them it is because of my mental make up and inclination. One of them may be more conducive. Some places are humid and others very dry. Some may prefer one or the other. In this context, a prepared mind is better for Sanyasa. An unprepared mind may feel very lonely in Sanyasa. There will be nobody to ask him how he feels.

Citing an example, an Indian couple was residing in a small town USA. The lady was a housewife and was often left alone. Due to loneliness she gradually became clinically depressed. Her house was a not a silent ashrama rather it was the silence of an Shmashana (cremation ground). After some time they came back to India. Here, now, she feels much better although it is very noisy.

So, to enjoy Sanyasahrama one needs a level of mind that is different. So, only a contemplative person and one who likes Maunam, a Muni, will find it compatible. Such a person, by practicing Yoga, will attain moksha before long. So, Sri Krishna says, for majority of people, Grihasthashrama is the best choice. Sanyasahrama should be taken up only with advice of a Guru and consent of the shishya.

It is when this is not followed that one reads of the many problems with Sanyasi's today.

Shloka # 7:

Established in Yoga, his mind purified, his self and senses controlled, his Self becomes the Self of all living beings, he is not tainted though he works.

Upto shloka # 7, it was a comparative study of the two ashramas. While both are considered good, a life of activity is considered better. Now, Sri Krishna talks of Sadhanas that both Grihastha and Sanaysi have to practice. What are those sadhanas? This shloka is all about sadhanas and the actions one has to take in his ashrama. Sri Krishna talks of Grihasthashrama first, as he prefers it.

Stages:

1. Karma Yoga Yukta: Become a karma Yogi as described in chapter # 3. Such a person is one who balances materialistic pursuit with spiritual pursuit. He does not spend all his time going after material aspects of life.

Every individual is a mixture of matter (anatma) and spirit (atma). One should find time to pursue Pancha Maha Yagna for inner growth. There is nothing wrong in acquiring money. However, one should also pursue Dharma and Moksha and not only Artha and Kama. One may have to climb the corporate ladder initially, but at some point he must change to spirituality. In his last stages attention should be given totally to spirituality. Pray to God that just as a mango ripens and once ripe, falls, while initially I am stuck with worldly things, later I should be able to detach and become spiritual. This is called Yoga Yuktatvam. What I am is more important than what I have. If one can understand this itself one has become a Karma Yogi.

Vishudhatma in the shloka is one who depends less on external factors. Dependence is Samsara. Independence is moksha. Thus, less dependence psychologically is Vairagyam. Thus, detachment

is purity. Raga Rahit Atma is same as Vishudhatma, which is same as Vairagyam.

Take Away:

We have expectations about everything, our children, wife, house, friend etc. One has an ideal in mind and when others do not meet that ideal, one is disturbed. This is Raga Dvasha. We have to overcome this.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 69, Chapter 5

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda started Chapter 5 today. He said in chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively, Sri Krishna spoke about two topics. He spoke about Sadhana and Lifestyle. Recapping those teachings Swamiji said:

1. **Sadhana:** Regarding Sadhana he made it clear that everyone has to go through Karma Yoga Sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. There is no choice. Karma Yoga is the means towards Gyana Yoga and Gyana Yoga is the means towards liberation.

Karma yoga is a means and Gyana Yoga too is a means while moksha is the end. You can have a choice between means and a choice between ends but not a choice between a mean and an end. One can choose between pants or shirts. Here, there is choice. Choice is only between similar. Thus, one can't choose between a pant and a shirt. Similarly, one cannot choose between Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga. Once you choose an end, it means the means is a given.

Citing an example, getting into a bus is meaningful only when you have chosen not only the bus but also the destination. You cannot choose the bus without choosing the destination. We are not getting into the bus for a joy ride. Similarly, if you have chosen a destination, you have to choose the means as well.

Citing another example, suppose I go to a doctor for stomach pain and the doctor prescribes a tablet. I cannot get away from not taking the tablet. If I chose the end of removing the pain, I have to choose the means as well. Therefore, choosing the means and end is complementary; one choice will validate the other choice and the other way around as well. Thus, Karma Yoga is the way to come to Gyana yoga. Gyana yoga is the way to Moksha.

Citing another example, it is just like a person occupies both the father status and son status. With regard to his son, he is the father and with regard to his father, he is the son. From Karma yoga's perspective Gyana Yoga is an end. From Moksha's perspective Gyana Yoga is the means.

After explaining quite a bit by Sri Krishna, Arjuna is still not clear. His confusion is with respect to sadhana. This is an area of confusion to many people.

There are people who think karma yoga and gyana yoga are alternative means of liberation. Many still think and talk about different paths to liberation. Thus, if you are an

active person, you attain moksha through karma and if you are an intellectual person, you attain moksha through Gyana yoga.

Even Shankaracharya struggled to clarify this confusion. He too says karma yoga cannot lead you to liberation, it will take you to Gyana yoga and Gyana yoga will lead to liberation; this is one part of the teaching;

Then there is second part of teaching with regard to the lifestyle. A person can lead two types of lifestyles, one is life of activity in society and the other is life of seclusion or life of work and life of withdrawal.

or Life in society and life in seclusion.

2.Life style:

Sri Krishna described two types of lifestyle. One is a person who is active in society and other is one who leads a life of seclusion.

Active in society is known as Grihasthashrama. While one leading a life of seclusion is known as Sanyasahrama. In olden times, after Gurukula, both lifestyles were open to a person. A lifestyle is also called a Nishta. Sri Krishna points out that every person has a choice in lifestyle. One can be a Grihastha or a monk. Whatever lifestyle or ashrama one adopts in both of them you have to have follow Karma yoga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga.

Grihasthashrama Dharma is Karma Yoga for householders. Sanyasahrama is Karma Yoga for monks. Both have their rites, pujas and rituals prescribed.

Grihastha will have a sacred thread while a Sanyasi has a danda. Grihastha has got rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. Sanyasi too has rituals, prayers, pujas and parayanams. The type of parayanams may vary.

For a grihastha Vishnu Sahasranama and similar mantras are

emphasized. For the sanyasi,

Upanishad, Bhashyams, etc. are emphasized.

For a grihastha, saguna ishvara namas are given, like Namashivaya, Narayanaya etc.; for a Sanyasi, Upanishad mahavakya mantras are given for japa, or Omkara japa, and other similar mantras are also given. For both, puja is a requirement. All these are necessary to develop a mental conditioning required for reaching Gyana yoga. A sanyasi should qualify himself to enter Gyana yoga. A grihastha also has to qualify himself to come to Gyana yoga.

Sri Krishna asks all to follow their Svadharma.

Once ready, both should come to Gyana Yoga. Thus, in sadhana, there is no choice. In lifestyle, however, there is choice. Each lifestyle has plusses and minuses. For Gihastashrama the plus points are he is able to perform Pancha Maha Yagna, perform noble services for society, he has security through his children, family and wealth. The minuses are that he has equal responsibilities. He has to raise his children, provide education, marry off his daughters etc. He has to face the fears and anxieties related to raising a family.

In Sanyasa ashrama, however, there is no responsibility, no wife, no husband, no children and you need not bother about anything. If you get hungry, ask Bhavathi Bhiksham Dehi; somebody will give Bhiksha. So, while there is no responsibility there is also no security.

So, every ashrama has got it's plus and minus points. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, take to any ashrama and pursue both the sadhanas and get liberation.

After listening to all this Arjuna wanted further clarification. He wants to know about the Nishta, when there is a choice. **Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our**

decision.

Arjuna's mind at the moment is voting for Sanyasa. He does not want to kill. In crisis, he wants to escape with Sri Krishna's blessings. His question is which is better, Grihastha or Sanyasa? Sri Krishna is going to talk about Sanyasa Yoga.

Shloka # 1: Arjuna said:

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ।
गृहस्थस्य वा सन्यस्य वा कियं कर्म सुकरम् ।
तुभ्यं प्रवक्ष्यामि श्रेयसाय नमोऽस्तुते ॥5.1॥

The renunciation of works, Krishna, and again, their performance you praise. Tell me for certain which of the two is better.

In spite of Sri Krishna's clear teaching, Arjuna asks: Sri Krishna, you glorify both ashramas. You have glorified life of activity (grihasthashrama). You have also glorified Sanyasa Ashrama, life of seclusion. The two are contradictory. So, Sri Krishna, tell me, which one is better of the two? Both are opposites. I cannot follow both, life of seclusion and life of activity, at the same time.

In fact, the grihastha is supposed to be the pillar of the society. He is the one who nourishes all the other three ashramas because all the three ashramas live on Bhiksha. Thus, a brahmachari has to live on Bhiksha; a vanaprasthi has to live on Bhiksha and a sanyasi also has to live on Bhiksha alone. So, if the three ashramas have to receive Bhiksha, somebody has to give it. So, he is the one who gives Bhiksha.

Some other monastic religions glorify Sanyasa. Ashrama is a place of spiritual sadhana. Ashrama can happen in family life too. Such a person is unaffected even in his family life. Janaka Maharaja is often cited as an example of a Grihastha Gyani.

Thus, says Swamiji, it is not a choice between Sadhanas rather

it is a choice between lifestyles.

Shloka # 2:

Sri Krishna said:

द्वन्द्वं कर्माद्योगं च

सर्वत्रोत्तमं कर्माद्योगं च

सर्वत्रोत्तमं कर्माद्योगं च 5.2

Both renunciation and Karma Yoga promote the supreme good; but of the two, Karma Yoga is superior to the renunciation of works.

Sri Krishna says, both ashramas are equally good for both sadhanas. In Vedanta the term Dvanda is used. It means everything in creation has a good and a bad aspect to it.

Both ashramas are equally good for following karma yoga sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. Karma yoga can be efficiently followed in grihastha ashrama; but for Gyana yoga the obstacles for Grihastha are many while you require an undistracted life. The many duties of grihasthashrama are all seen as obstacles. Therefore, in grihastha ashrama, karma yoga can be ideally followed;

In sanyasa ashrama, karma yoga cannot be ideally followed because he does not have the resources to do a lot of karmas; there is no money with them; he cannot do any good karma; he has to manage with limited activities, like japa, puja, susrusha, etc. Therefore, there are certain advantages in following some sadhanas and some disadvantages in following other sadhanas. However, in both, you can follow the sadhana and attain liberation; therefore in both ashramas one can follow the sadhana and attain liberation.

Shastra also talks of the ashrama that fits a type of person. Sanyasa requires a particular mental make up that is not an easy one. Sanyasa ashrama is dangerous for an unprepared

person. Sri Krishna, says, for majority of people life of activity is safer and ideal. In Vedas there are rules when one goes from Brahmacharya to Grihastha. From Brahmacharya one can also go to Sanyasashrama with Guru's advice and Shishya's acceptance.

The greatest risk of sanyasashrama is that you can't go back. It is an irreversible process.

So, Sri Krishna says, Grihastha Ashrama is a better choice for majority. He says Gita is for general public, while Upanishad is for evolved one's. While Upanishad prefers Sanyasahrama, Gita considers Grihasthashrama as the best. We should keep in mind that in Gita, both the Teacher and Student were grihastas.

Shloka # 3:

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥
ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ 5.3 ॥

Know him to be a perpetual renouncer who neither shuns nor seeks, O mighty-armed! One who is above such contraries is really liberated from bondage.

Now that Sri Krishna has recommended Grihastha Ashrama, is there any way one can get advantage of both Ashramas? This is a thought that can come in a person's mind. Sri Krishna, addressing this question, says, there is a method. He says one needs to handle Raga and Dvesha in Grihastashrama. Householder's life is influenced by many factors. It is said nine planets influence a householder. A son-in-law is considered the tenth planet. He is a planet over which you have no control. Whatever he does affects your daughter but you cannot do anything about it.

Thus, there are many relationship that are similar, in which you have no control. When you get married to a girl and you place a knot on one neck simultaneously you

are putting knots on many other necks as well. You are immediately related to the girl's family. All these knots are factors that can influence you but you cannot control them. Therefore, you have to learn to manage your ragah-dveshah. Whether your likes and dislikes are fulfilled or not, you have to learn to navigate through life without being affected. This requires tremendous strength; And therefore Sri Krishna says a grihastha is a sanyasi, if he has learnt to handle likes and dislikes; For one who has managed his ragah-dveshah the house itself is an ashrama That is the trick. Sri Krishna , however, does not say how we are to manage Raga and dvesha.

Take Away:

Decision-making is always difficult. This is so, because we don't want to face the consequences of our decision.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 68

Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda summarized Chapter 4. This chapter is broadly classified into three areas:

1. Ishvara Avatara.
2. Gyana Karma Sanyasa, the central theme of the chapter.
3. Gyana Sadhana Phalani or means of knowledge and its benefits.

Ishvara Avatara: This is discussed in shlokas #1 through #15. Here Sri Krishna shows the difference between Avatara and Jiva. Superficially, while both appear to be same and both go through same life stages (birth, family etc) there are three main differences. They are:

1. Cause of Avatara (Karana),
2. Swaroopam, and
3. Purpose (Upadesha Lakshayam).

Cause: At the karana level, Jiva's janma is caused by ignorance; it is because of ignorance Jiva has got the ego; and it is because of the ego, he acquires punya papam, and it is because of punya papam, he is forced to take this body; therefore for the jiva, janma is a fall because he is helpless. So agyanam is the karanam.

For God, it is omniscience and compassion. Here, he descends to uplift human beings. One has fallen while other has descended. Hence for Ishvara, the word Avatara is used or Avatarati. Therefore, for Jiva Agyanam is the cause of his birth while for God it is his Karuna.

Swaroopam: Jiva comes about because of ignorance. It does not know its higher nature. So it is known as Bandha Swaroopam. For Ishwara it is Leela. It is all a game. God does everything with a smile, even killing of a Rakshasa. So, he is known as Mukta Swaroopam. In case of Jiva his body is made of the five elements. Maya produces the five elements and they in turn produce the Jiva Sharira.

In case of Ishwara, Maya straightaway becomes a Sharira. There is no time gap. There is no waiting for nine months. Narasimha avatara is an example of this. So, Maya Shariram becomes God,

while Jiva becomes a Bhautika Shariram.

Purpose: In case of Jiva it comes into being to exhaust its punya and papam's. They can be exhausted only through Sukha and Dukha. This requires a body. Even in dream we exhaust punya and papam through the dream body. My Punya and Papam determine the type of body I get. Even animals go through same process. The only difference is that they do not acquire new Karmas.

Ishvara 's avatara, however, is not for punya papa ksheyaha. The Lord is punya-papa atitaha because he does not have Agyanam. Lord is responsible for arrival and maintenance of creation. He is the srishti karta as well as stithi karta. Normally he does not get involved in human affairs. He has given us Dharma Shastra's to follow. We are supposed to follow it. However, when we do not follow it, he is forced to take Avatar. One way he maintains Dharma is through directly removing the source of problems. Destruction of Rakshas is an example. Second way is to educate humanity to take more responsibility. Here, Sri Rama and Sri Krishna Avatara's come to mind. Rama taught by living. Ramayanam (Rama-Ayanam) means Rama's Dharma marga.

In Sri Krishna's case it is his teaching, not his life, that is the main focus. This is also known as Dharma Rakshanam. He tells Arjuna, through you, I have decided to revive the Vedic teaching. Therefore, revival of dharma, both by teaching and destroying the adharmic people, is the purpose of avathara.

Thus, the cause is different; the nature is different and the purpose is also different.

Sri Krishna said as the Lord I taught the Veda in the beginning of the creation and again as Rama Avathara. I am now again teaching the same wisdom, through Krishna Shariram as well.

And having talked about avathara Sri Krishna concluded that

discussion by making a great statement that “whoever knows the Lord completely” that person will get freedom. Here the emphasis is on “Knows the Lord completely”, because the Lord has got two natures. One is the higher and the other is the lower nature. The higher nature of the Lord is never subject to birth and death. “I am never born” he says.

It should be noted that Avatara is not discussed in any other chapter of Gita.

Gyana Karma Sanyasa: This is the central theme of chapter 4 and is discussed in shlokas 16-24. Here Sri Krishna points out that there are two types of Karma Sanyasas or renunciations.

1. One is becoming a monk giving up society and Karmas. He pursues a higher goal. It is an external renunciation. It is also considered as the fourth stage of life. It is a ritualistic stage.
2. By discovering detachment like the Lotus where the water does not wet the leaf. And how can one accomplish this? There is only one method of accomplishing this. You have to switch or change your understanding about yourselves. Self-knowledge has to be there and self-elevation has to be there as well. The body cannot avoid karma association. The mind too cannot avoid karma association. Both body and mind are integrally related to the world; therefore interactions are inevitable.

Therefore, you have to discover a different eye, which is higher than the body mind complex, which is called Atma Tatvam. Through Atma Tatvam, I will recognize the asangha and akasha tulya atma. Comparison to Akasha is made here, as Akasha is not polluted by anything. Similarly, I have

to perform self-enquiry and clearly understand I am not the body and I am not the mind.

The body-mind-complex is part of this creation, so, let its interactions continue. I, meanwhile, should be like the actor

who identifies with the role he is playing on the stage and becomes a different person once he gets back to green room. He forgets his stage role identity. He recognizes that I am different from all these roles.

This requires Srvanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyanam. It is called internal renunciation or Gyana Karma Sanyasaha (renunciation of action through knowledge). You are performing action without any attachments. There is no ownership of the action. A man sells his house but remains in it. He, thus, becomes a trustee. He thinks the house belongs to God.

This objectivity removes impact of Life situation. I have flexibility to recover and live. Although he is fully involved in action he appears as if he is not at all involved. He appears detached. It is a difficult process to practice.

While describing the Gyani, Sri Krishna talks of Grihastha and Sanyasi Gyani's. Brahmachari is a householder or Grihastha Gyani. Therefore, liberation is not dependent on Ashrama but dependent on Wisdom.

One who takes Sanyasa should pursue Gyanam. Chinmayanandaji gave his teachings first then he asked persons to take Sanyasa. So, Gyanam is very important, not Ashrama.

All shlokas in this section are very important.

Gyana Sadhana Phalani: Shloka 26-42.

These shlokas describe the actions to be taken for obtaining knowledge. Twelve supporting Sadhanas are mentioned towards obtaining knowledge. Two additional Sadhanas are also described. So, the fourteen sadhanas are:

1. Daiva Yagna: Puja to God
2. Vishaya Bhoga Yagna: Every action of ours should be an offering to God, including food.
3. Gama Yagna: Mastery of our senses.

4. Kshama Yagna: Mastery of mind. You should control the mind and not the other way around.
5. Dravya Yagna: Practicing charity.
6. Tapo Yagna: Moderation in everything.
7. Yoga Yagna: Ashatanga Yoga.
8. Svadhyaya: Learning and chanting scriptures.
9. Gyan Yagna:
 1. Spiritual Self knowledge and
 2. Other disciplines that help us with knowledge.
10. Pranayama Yagna: Performed with devotion as a spiritual practice.
11. Ahara Niyama Yagna: Discipline in eating. This helps control our mind as well.
12. Guru Yagna: It is Guru Seva to one who can communicate the teachings of the shastras.
13. Sradha: Faith in scriptures and Guru. Asking questions to seek clarification. Keep in mind Guru and Shastra do not have anything to lose.
14. Tatparaha: Commitment. Do not criticize scriptures. Develop conviction and follow through.

While all 14 are under Gyana Sadhanas, Gyanam is the most important one of them all. Only Gyanam can remove ignorance. Scripture is like a mirror that can show your true Self. It is a Shastra darpanam. All other Sadhanas are optional. You can choose one or several of them to practice. Gyana Yagnam is not optional.

Sri Krishna also talked about the four Gyana Phalams.

They are:

1. Moha Nasha: Knowledge gives us power to face the future. I can face life, whatever comes.
2. Papa Nasha: All papams incurred upto the time of knowledge are all eliminated. All karmas are eliminated and Prarabhda Karmas are defanged.
3. Karma Nasha: Sarva karma nasha. This includes papa and

punya karmas.

4. Jiva Ishwara Aikyam: He recognizes the essential One. Just as in the Ocean and the wave, the water is the essence so also he recognizes that God and I are one. Aham Brahma Asmi.

Sri Krishna then told Arjuna that he should follow Karma yoga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga and thus become free.

This concludes Chapter 4.

Take Away:

The root cause of human problems is Ahamkara or ego or the “ I am the doer” feeling. Here Gita offers us some methods to obtain the detachment from Ahamkara.

1. You have to switch or change your understanding about yourselves.
2. Therefore, you have to discover a different eye called Atma Tatvam through which to recognize the Atma.
3. Clearly understand that I am not this body and I am not this mind. This conviction has to be there.
4. Be like an actor on the stage. Perform your part immersed in it, all the while remembering you are not that part.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta, Class 67

Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 36:

Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin. 1.36

Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, from shloka # 36 onwards Sri Krishna is talking about Gyana phalam. In shloka # 36 he talked about the following benefits by obtaining Gyanam: 1) Sarva moha nasha, 2) Sarvatra Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam and 3) Sarva Papa Nasha.

Shloka # 37:

As a kindled fire reduces all fuels to ashes, so, Arjuna ! does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes. 4.37

As a kindled fire reduces all fuels to ashes, so, Arjuna ! does the fire of knowledge reduce all works to ashes.

4. Sarva Karma Nasha:

Now in this shloka Sri Krishna talks about a fourth benefit of Gyanam called Sarva Karma Nasha. All three karmas, Sanchita, Prarabhda and Agami Karmas are all destroyed with knowledge. Just as a glove insulates one from an electric shock so also Gyanam insulates one from the effects of Karma. While our karmic events don't change, our response to them now changes.

The karma cannot affect a Gyani anymore. He is insulated from its effects. It is as though stopped.

Sri Krishna also compares knowledge to a huge conflagration.

Everything is burnt in the fire of Gyana including karmas.

The fire for such a conflagration, however, has to be well kindled. A weak fire can be extinguished by a large piece of wood thrown into the fire. Half knowledge, compared here to a weak fire, will not help. Knowledge needs to be obtained from a Parampara Acharya. Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam are all required. Knowledge obtained in this manner, from a qualified teacher, will reduce everything to ashes.

What is the difference between Papa Nasha and Karma Nasha? Shloka # 36 talked about Papa Nasha while Shoka # 37 is talking about Karma Nasha.

Papa nasha only refers to papa karmas. Here Karmas mean both papa and punya karmas. Both fall under Samsara. Punya leads to Svarga. But eventually one has to return from Svargam as well. Swamiji compares it to going to America and coming back to Chennai with its heat, humidity and mosquitoes. Thus, Punya is a sorrow that comes later and is a Bandha (attachment). So, Gyani goes beyond both papam and punyam.

Shloka # 38:

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□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□4.38□□

Nothing exists here as purifying as knowledge. Perfected in yoga, in course of time, one wins it in one's own Self.

With Shloka # 37 Gyana Phalam is over. Four Gyana phalams were explained. They were:

- 1) Sarva moha nasha,
- 2) Sarvatra Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam,
- 3) Sarva Papa Nasha and
- 4) Sarva Karma Nasha.

will notice that all your doubts are answered at some point during the study. Every Acharya also accepts questions.

Siddhi Grantha is a text that raises a lot of questions and clarifies doubts. This attitude of faith is called Sradha. Such a person is called Sradhavan. Such a person gets knowledge. It should be noted that Vedanta also accepts questions from current situations as well.

Another sadhana mentioned is **Tatparam** or sincere commitment to the Teacher. Explaining this, Swamiji said in the early stages of his Gita lectures he had Q & A sessions at the end of the class. However, he found, most people did not come prepared. They would ask questions that were not relevant to the teaching in the class. One should revisit the teaching and this is known as manaha. Only from this process can legitimate doubts arise. This is showing commitment to the teacher.

The next sadhana discussed by Sri Krishna is Sense control and focusing capacity or **Samyatindriyaha**. So, all above-mentioned sadhanas are required. They are:

- Samsidhaha, a qualified person.
- Sradha, faith in validity of scriptures.
- Tatparam, sincere commitment to the teacher.
- Samyatindriyaha, control of senses and a capacity for focus.

All four are required for Gyanam. Such a person gets peace that surpasses all understanding. Sri Krishna promises this benefit in this very life.

He also says with Gyanam we also need to address or overcome some of our deeply entrenched Vasanas as well. This may take some time.

Our actions and responses are governed by two factors, one is our knowledge; and another is our vasana; knowledge will take care of part of the problem, but we have to handle our

vasanas, or habits as well.

Habit changing requires deliberate effort. It is not that easy to change well entrenched habits like emotional problems, inferiority complex, lack of self-image jealousy, anger, irritation etc. They are all well entrenched and one needs to handle one of them at a time. Only by controlling our Vasanas can we attain true knowledge.

Shloka # 40:

अज्ञाना अश्रद्धा शंकायाः परित्यज्य
महात्मनाः परलोकसुखं प्राप्नुयन्ति ॥४.४०॥

The ignorant, the unfaithful, the doubting self perishes. Neither this world nor the next nor happiness accrues to the doubter.

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna talked about positive traits. Here, now, he talks about negative traits. He describes them as follows:

1. Ignorance: with respect to the world. He says every human being has to be informed about the world to lead a normal life. Worldly knowledge is required.
2. Ashradha: Lack of faith in scriptures.
3. Samshayaha: Doubt.

Of the three Samshayaha or the doubting Thomas is the most problematic. Suppose a person is not worldly he may not get worldly ananada, however, due to his shraddha he will obtain Parloka Sukham. One who does not believe in scriptures but believes in worldly pleasures, he may not get Paraloka sukham but he will get Iha Loka sukham. However, a Samshaya Atma even with worldly knowledge will not obtain Iha loka Sukham nor Para Loka Sukham.

So Samshaya is the worst enemy. Trust in family member, co-workers, even own driver etc., is required. Trust involves

risk. Trust is very important in life. It is required for Vedanta as well.

Shloka # 41:

Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga,
has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge. 4.41

Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga, has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge.

Here Sri Krishna is summing up the sadhanas and the phalams. A person has to go through three stages of sadhana:

3. **First Stage:** Yogaha or yoga-samnyasta-karmanam. This means Gyanam and what is the Gyanam? Remembering at all times that I am the Atma, which is an Akarta. A person gets detached from all actions. Since actions belong to the body-mind-complex, he allows the body-mind-complex to function in the world; but he does not have attachment or identification and therefore he has renounced the karma identification.
4. **Second Stage:** This stage called Gyana-sanchina-samshayam is where he negates all his doubts by gaining conviction through mananam. Gyanam means conviction; I should be convinced of this knowledge and I should study until I am convinced.
5. **Third stage:** is Atmavantam. This is thenidhidhy asanam stage. In this stage, a person is alert and remembers the teaching at all times. Through the teaching, Gyanam must be available in my day-to-day life. So, Atmavan is one who leads an alert life and one who keeps himself in this state of knowledge during all transactions. Due to his alertness, Karma cannot bind the one who has done the shravana, manana and nidhidhyasanam.

Shloka # 42:

Arjuna! works bind not him who is vigilant, who through yoga,
has renounced works and who has slain doubts with knowledge.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ४.४२ ॥

Therefore, O Bharata Prince! With the sword of knowledge slay the doubt in the heart born of nescience; resort to Yoga and stand up.

Here Sri Krishna advises Arjuna that he should get rid of all his doubts. For purification of mind, follow Karma yoga, then for enlightenment follow Gyana Yoga. By the sword of understanding all doubts about Karma Yoga and Gyana Yoga will be destroyed. In any event, all doubts are products of ignorance. With knowledge, destroy ignorance. This you alone can do. Guru cannot do it for you. I can only support you.

You are not yet fit for sanyasa yet. Therefore, be a grihastha. Do your duty, even though it is a bitter and unpleasant one, of killing your own kith and kin. You cannot avoid it. Therefore, O Arjuna, get up, take your bow, arrow and do your duty.

With this Krishna completes this present discourse.

Take Away:

As per shloka # 41, try to reach a state of alertness of mind at all times. Most of the time our mind is not alert. This alert mind is also a detached mind.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta Class 66, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 34:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ३४ ॥

Know it by means of obeisance, exhaustive questionings, service to the (teacher). Knowers who have realized the truth impart to you that knowledge.

Continuing his teachings of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in shlokas 26 to 33, Sri Krishna talked about the glory of knowledge. Now in shloka # 34 he wants to complete the topic with a description of how to acquire this knowledge. He says our normal instruments of perceptions are all extrovert and meant to reveal the exterior world. Knowledge of Self is not possible with these extroverted instruments.

Citing an example, he says one cannot see one's own eyes. To see one's own eyes one needs a mirror. So also to see one's Atma a special mirror is required. A regular mirror can only reflect the Sthula-Sharira or the gross body. It cannot reflect the Atma. For the Atma one needs the Shastra-darpanam. We also need to know how to use this darpanam. This darpanam must also be clean and free of dust or the image reflected will be dull.

This requires another assistant called the Guru. He teaches us how to use the mirror. He allays all our misunderstandings and helps remove dust like obstacles and clears the mirror.

One requires a Guru. Obtaining knowledge without Guru is an exception. There are many types of Gurus. One type is the one

who initiates by giving mantras. Another guru offers inspiration. All Gurus are useful and required. However, the Guru Sri Krishna talks about is the Gyana Guru. Sri Krishna did not give mantra Upadesha to Arjuna. He functioned as a teaching Guru. He systematically taught Vedanta. He did not say he was God. He did not ask for blind acceptance. He wanted Arjuna to listen to his teaching. Learning involves active listening. Teacher reconciles every statement. Chapter after chapter Arjuna asks questions. He does not accept Sri Krishna's teaching in blind faith. He challenges the contradictions in the teaching.

Citing example of the equation $e=mc^2$, Swamiji says, it is not meant for japa. Each item in it namely the E, the M, and the C all have to be understood in detail. This requires many years of learning. So also it is with Vedanta's equation " You are the ultimate reality". This is not a mantra Japam. One has to know it. Until you are convinced, the teaching is not complete. That is the reason that Sri Krishna went through each chapter until the end of chapter 18. Then Arjuna said, Oh Sri Krishna, my confusion is gone; I have now clearly understood your teaching. This is the Guru referred to here by Sri Krishna.

Describing such a Guru further, Sri Krishna says, such a Gyani, man of knowledge, must also have very good communication skills. In a shloka by poet Kalidasa from his treatise "Malvikgnamitra", the poet emphasizes that simply being a scholar is not sufficient. Imparting the knowledge to other seekers is more important and a scholar who does this is the scholar of highest order. Such a person is also called Stotriya Brahma Nishta Guru or a Gyani or a Tatva Darshi. Just as a doctor who smokes does not have moral authority to advise a smoker, a Guru must have the moral authority. A Tatva Darshi has the true knowledge and as such he can give knowledge. The method of communication used by such Guru's followed Sampradaya. Therefore, a Sampradaya Guru alone is considered

fit to give knowledge. Asampradaya Guru is not accepted as a teaching Guru.

The Shishya also has to be deserving of knowledge. Milk in the wrong vessel will split. The shishya has to be a patram. The Patram's requirements are:

1. Intense desire for knowledge or Jignasa.
2. Humility or accepting one's ignorance. It is also called Vinayaha.

An egocentric person cannot get knowledge. The shishya should express his humility by prostrating before the Guru. He should ask questions. He should perform service or Seva to the Guru. This service will remove his impurities.

Swamiji says it was common for a new shishya to spend some time performing only seva to the Guru. This gave both of them an opportunity to know each other, get acclimatized and build rapport. This was a requirement before starting the teaching. This was also a time of service. During this period both Guru and Shishya are judging each other. This period could even last up to a year. Dayananda Saraswathi in his ashram would ask students to submit their notes. He wanted to see if they understood his teaching or not. It is in this manner a shishya became a patram.

Shloka # 35:

ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं
ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं ज्ञानं 1.35

By grasping that knowledge, O Pandava prince! You will no longer be deluded as you are now; and through that, you will behold all beings in the Self and then in Me.

With Shloka # 34 the glorification and how to get Gyanam is over. Shlokas # 35- # 37 deal with Gyana phalam. Sri Krishna presents Gyana phalam as follows:

2. **Moha Nasha:** Arjuna surrendered to Sri Krishna due to his internal conflict in the battlefield. Arjuna was trained in Dharma Shastras. He was a man of knowledge. Yet, he is not able to resolve his internal conflict. He becomes indecisive. This conflict is caused by his attachment. He does not want to face the consequences of his action. He was not ready to accept the death of Bhishma and Drona. He also does not want to stay in the forest. This is Arjuna's dilemma. Our inability to face future because of our emotional attachments is the cause of conflict. Because of this we postpone our decisions. (Go to America or not? Marry or not? Etc.) . Some people go to an astrologer. Unfortunately two astrologers can never agree. This makes the decision even more difficult. The reality is that a decision has to be made. So, internal conflict is a big weakness. With Self-knowledge, I am ready to face any future. I know the outcome can go either way. Still I jump into it anyway. I am ready to face the consequences. Self - knowledge gives one the strength to face consequences. You will not get into internal conflicts anymore. Arjuna, decision-making is always difficult. Self Knowledge helps you and keeps you sane.

3. **Jivatma Paramatma Aikyam:** You will have Jivatma paramatma Aikya darshanam. How? Sri Krishna says, after this knowledge you will know the entire creation rests in God. He is like space, all- pervading. You will also know that the whole world is in "You". Therefore "You" are God. Just like the wave, it was told; you and the ocean are one and the same. Both are essentially water. Therefore, Water is the essence.

Ishwara is Chaitanya. You are Chaitanya. Everything is Chaitanyam.

Shloka # 36:

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Even if, among all sinners, you are the very worst, by this raft of knowledge you will go beyond sin.

Two Gyana phalams were mentioned in last shloka. Here Sri Krishna communicates the third benefit.

- 3. Sarva Papa Nashaha:** Self-knowledge destroys all your papams. Nothing else destroys papams. Destroying papams acquired through many janmas is very difficult through prayaschittams. Not only are there too many old Papams, we are also constantly acquiring new ones. Citing an example, Swamiji says, Shastra's say by leaving a young wife a man gets papam for seven Janmas. Self-knowledge, however, destroys all past papams as well as future ones.

Even the worst sinner will cross over the ocean of papam. The Gyanam boat will help you cross over the ocean-of-sins.

Take Away: Our emotional attachments are the cause of internal conflicts. This makes us unable to face the future. This was also Arjuna's dilemma.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bagawat Geeta Class 63, Chapter 4

Greetings All,

Shloka # 24:

ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो
ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मणो हविर्ब्रह्मणो 4.24

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-rpanam means wooden spoon for offering.

Shloka # 25:

ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो ब्रह्मणे वासुदेवाय ॥ 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 नमो ब्रह्मणे वासुदेवाय ॥ mamopatta samasta duritakshayadvara Sri Parameshvara prityartham, 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 कर्मजन्तुमुच्यते ।
कर्माणि भूयान्मात्रं कुरुष्व श्रेष्ठतमः ॥ 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.

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 ॐ

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 ॐ

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 ॥ 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