

Baghawat Geeta, Class 13

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Swamiji starts off by reminding us that Vyasa now presents Arjuna as a seeker of moksha. The fundamental human problem characterized by Raga (Likes), Dvesha (Dislikes) and Moha (delusion) is also called Samsara. Due to attachment, when we lose a person or an object, it causes us Shoka. In this state of Shoka our mind loses its discriminating faculty and is called Moha. This is the situation faced by Arjuna in battlefield. While we try making adjustments to the external world to solve such an internal problem, it only acts as a palliative or a first aid rather than as a remedy. In such a situation the aggrieved person should discuss his helplessness in solving the problem, and this state of helplessness is called Karpanya bhava or Dainya bhava. While Arjuna has discovered his problem he has not yet arrived at the helpless stage, the second stage of problem solving.

Shloka #5:

Arjuna says: If I fight and kill my two Gurus, I will only remember how they struggled and died in battle. Every moment I will remember how I killed Bhishma and Drona. My other option is not to fight and retire to the forest, where I will have to live on alms.

Swamiji says Arjuna has to decide which course of action to take. He chooses Adharma. He feels he will be better off living in forest, on alms. For a Kshatriya and Grihastha, Bhiksha is not allowed. Giving up one's Sva-Dharma is also a sin. Here Arjuna is giving up his Kshatriya Dharma, by not fighting. Furthermore, by planning to retire to the forest and begging for alms, he is taking up somebody else's dharma, which is yet another papam. Swamiji says, Sri Krishna is

still quiet, as Arjuna has not yet asked him for help.

Shloka # 6:

Arjuna says: I am in a big conflict because my own cousins are arraigned against me. By killing these people, we will not like to live in this world, as they are both kith and kin. We are not even sure if they will defeat us or we will defeat them. I am not objective enough to analyze the situation. So, I need your help. We do not know what to do? Victory over them or their victory over us, which to accept? In this, if I fight, it is dharma, a plus, however, Guru Vadham, is a minus point. Also, having to live in the forest and on alms is another minus point.

Shloka # 7:

Swamiji says human being is born ignorant. Ignorance is not a sin. We are "Self" ignorant as well. Perpetuation of ignorance is, however, a sin.

Arjuna says: My mind and intellect are incapacitated. It is not able to function. My intellect cannot discriminate. My intellect is afflicted by my misery. My confusion is with respect to dharma and adharma. Himsa is adharma. Killing one's own people is adharma. Killing one's Guru is certainly adharma. On the other side, Kauravas are the embodiment of Adharma and we need to fight them. What is my dharma, Sri Krishna? Tell me what is good for me. I am your disciple. I come with an open mind. I am surrendering at your feet.

Swamiji says a wise person does not give advice unless the other person requests for it. So, here also, Sri Krishna was waiting for Arjuna to ask for his help. The word Prapanna means surrender. Falling at the feet, Sharanagathi, is one way of surrendering. In this process the other person becomes the Guru. If I have to become a teacher, I need at least one person to ask me to teach him or her. So, here Arjuna has become a disciple and Krishna the Guru. After surrendering

also there are expectations. Mantra Upadesha cannot remove ignorance. In such instances, a teaching that distinguishes between the right versus wrong is required.

Swamiji say advice does not help. Advice is a short-term direction and person keeps coming back for advice every time he faces a problem. Teaching, however, is for the long term and teaches how to make decisions. Advice makes one dependent while teaching makes one independent. Swamiji gave example of giving a person a fish versus teaching him how to fish.

Shloka # 8:

Arjuna says: My grief is so intense that it dries up all my organs. My thinking faculty does not function. Can I do something to escape from this sorrow? I do not see any method to remove this sorrow other than your teaching. I may choose to fight, I may win, I may become a king and get an unrivalled kingdom, but I cannot remove my grief. (Swamiji says, money may buy food but it does not remove hunger.) Even If I became Indira, it will not solve my problem. Worldly accomplishments cannot solve my problem. So, he asks Sri Krishna to help. Swamiji says, at this stage, Arjuna has to go for a spiritual goal and hence he needs a guru.

Shloka # 9:

Sanjaya now says: In this manner Arjuna surrendered to Sri Krishna saying, I am not going to fight nor am I going to run away from battle. I want to hear from you (Sri Krishna) and then decide.

Swamiji gave some definitions:

- Paramtapa: Destroyer of enemies.
- Gudakesha: means master of Tamoguna or Satva Guna Pradhana. Human mind swings from Rajasic (very active) to Tamasic (dullness), while the Satvic mind is in the

middle as a non-extrovert, but wakeful mind.

- Govinda: Protector of the world, is the Shastric meaning. Another meaning is, Go means scriptures, and Vinda means one who has grasped the scriptures. To this Govinda Arjuna surrenders. Ha: Means everything has become quiet.

Shloka # 10:

Sanjaya continues:

Oh Dhrithirashtra, Lord Krishna accepted the offer of Arjuna and taught him the Gita Shastra sitting between the two armies. The Gita Shastra begins from Shloka 11 of Chapter 2 and continues till Shloka 66 in chapter 18.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 12

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

Before getting into details of Chapter 2, Swamiji refreshed our memory on the key concepts presented in chapter 1. He says the disease called Samsara plagues mankind. It is an internal and psychological disease. Raga (Likes), Dvesha (Dislikes) and Moha (delusion) characterize this Samsara disease. Often, not understanding the true problem we look to external factors as the root cause (s). Thus, a poor man thinks his poverty is the cause of his problem.

In another example, an unmarried person thinking of marriage

to solve his problems sees that his friends with wives all still seem to have problems.

Giving yet another example of a man who while riding a bus heard a noise and thought it was a tire problem. When he asked others in the bus they said they did not hear a noise. He was not convinced. He asked the driver to stop the bus and check the tires. They found the tires were fine. Later the man went to an Ear Doctor and learned that he had a hearing problem that caused him to hear noises.

Similarly, all our problems are noises of Samsara (Kama, Krodha and Moha) and they are all internal as well. Performing an external adjustment will not work, says Swamiji.

Only a mature person, who has experienced the world, comes to know that the problem is within him. He, however, does not know how to solve it. This is known as Dainya Avastha or the helpless stage. Once he becomes aware of his helplessness he then goes to Sharanagathi or going to an external power to solve the problem. At this stage, Shranagathi, one has to accept and be humble enough to surrender to someone. After Sharnagathi comes the stage of giving the solution and pursuit of spiritual knowledge. This is the Bhagavat Gita stage. So, the four stages of ones evolution are:

1. Discovery of the true problem of Samsara,
2. Reaching a state of helplessness in solving the problem,
3. Seeking the help and advice of some one, Sharanagathi and
4. The Solution to the Samsara problem

Of these four stages, while Arjuna has discovered his problem he has not yet arrived at the helpless stage. He, however, has doubts about his decision. Swamiji says a doubt is better than a wrong decision. At least here there is the possibility of help and a solution. In Chapter #1 Arjuna made a wrong decision. Now he progresses to the doubt stage.

Swamiji says it like progressing from: Tamas>Rajas> Satva.

Shloka # 1:

Arjuna has thrown down his bow and arrow. He has not yet asked Lord Krishna for help. Arjuna's attachment led to his blurred eyes that further obstructed his vision. This was the poignant condition of Arjuna, the Samsari, that Sri Krishna saw.

Kripa in this Shloka means attachment and not compassion. Also, Avishtam means overpowered. A man of compassion is also called a Swami while a man of attachment is called Kami.

Recognizing Arjuna's condition Sri Krishna decides to break the ice. He criticizes Arjuna with strong words so that he could motivate him to get up and fight.

Sri Krishna says, " From where did such a low thought (Kashamalam) come into you. You are known for courage. You have fought many battles before. You have defeated Shiva. How come you are crying in this battlefield at such a critical time of battle? Such dejection can never come to an Arya (noble person). If you are a noble person, do your duty. If you do not do your duty it will give you papam in the next life. In this life, as well, you will live with ill-fame."

Some Clarification:

Arya: Discussing the meaning of the word Arya used in this shloka, Swamiji says, it does not mean people who migrated to Iran to India, nor does it mean fair complexioned people. The Shastric meaning of Arya

includes:

- It is the character that makes a person an Arya, not his birth.
- One who does what has to be done, pleasant or unpleasant. Duty is duty.
- One who is without likes or dislikes.
- One who will not do anything that should not be done.
- One who leads a life of discipline.

Shloka # 3:

Sri Krishna continues: “ Hey Arjuna, Kleivyam (unmanliness) does not suit you. You are known for your courage. How can you be frightened? Get away from this weak-heartedness that makes you a disgrace and get up.”

Param tapa means scorcher of enemies.

Here Sri Krishna does not teach Arjuna the Gita Gyanam yet. The reason is, Arjuna has not yet surrendered himself to Sri Krishna and as such is not yet ready to listen or receive his teaching. Hence, says Swamiji, it is foolish to give him advice. Sri Krishna knows Arjuna has not yet exhausted his emotions.

Here Swamiji counsels that one should only advise a person who wants it, values it and asks for it. Without asking no advise should be given.

Shloka # 3:

Now Arjuna says: “Oh Madhsudhana, how can I fight Bhishma and Drona who really deserve worship? They are my Gurus.”

Shloka # 4:

If Arjuna decides not to fight he will have to go to the forest and live on bhiksha. This is considered a papam. As per Shastras, a Grihasta cannot live on Bhiksha. Only a Brahmachari or Vanaprastha can live on Bhiksha. A Grihasta has to give Bhiksha and not ask for it. Per Arjuna, killing Bhishma is also a papam. Thus, Arjuna has to choose between two papams. Both are bad choices. Here, normally, we humans, try to avoid making a decision. Arjuna, however, chooses to live on bhiksha.

Arjuna says: “ If I fight and kill my two Gurus, I may get the kingdom, but Sri Krishna, will I be able to enjoy the pleasures of victory? I will only remember how they struggled

and died in battle. Neither in this world or next will I enjoy life after seeing that. Therefore, I am not in favor of this war.

Suggested take away from this class:

Swamiji counsels that one should only advise a person who wants it, values it and asks for it. Without asking no advise should be given.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 11

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

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

Summary of Chapter 1

To live a healthy life – consider these 2 factors:

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

In addition to having a sterilized environment for surgery, the patient also needs to resistance. All vitals conditions are checked in order to proceed with the surgery. A physically healthy life depends on objective and subjective factors. The

environment alone is not responsible for giving you the disease. You also have low immunity to catch it.

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

For a healthy life the environment and sufficient resistance are needed. For a healthy mental life (a secure, relaxed, happy life), you need to consider the environment and having sufficient mental strength to face the situation.

There are three benefits of having a strong mind. The number of psychological problems:

- frequency is less (thus family is saved)
- intensity of anger, frustration is less.
- duration of these are also less

The frequency, intensity and duration of these mental diseases are less in a healthy mind. The after effect is also less. So, a psychologically healthy, happy life requires taking care of

1. adjusting the external conditions
2. improving one's own resistance

We usually only look into the external conditions. Vedanta talks about the subjective factor – your own inner strength. This freedom from mental diseases caused by external factors, is called mokshaH.

Swamiji recites from Chapter 2, Verse 56:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ २.५६ ॥

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Lord Krishna says a jnani, a free person, also faces adversities but his resistance is very healthy and thus he is not shattered to handle this problem.

The subject matter of Gita is to strengthen the inner resistance (not change the external world) to obtain freedom from psychological disturbance. This is called mokshaH. Gita is also called "Moksha shaastram". Gita is meant for people who recognize that they have to improve their resistance (being aware of their psychological weakness, their susceptibility to raga, dvesha, kama, krodha, etc and being aware of its affects on other people too).

Chapter 1 of Gita gives an introduction with Arjuna discovering that he has an inner weakness. And before he can change the world, he needs to strengthen himself. Arjuna discovers his weakness, and becomes a spiritual seeker, surrendering to Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna then gives him self knowledge. .

The first chapter can be divided into five parts:

1. Part 1: Vyasa presents the context, in which Arjuna feels the disease of samsara; Verses 1-20

The context is the MB battlefield. In Kurukshetra, the Pandavas and Kauravas have gathered to settle their issue. Arjuna is very clear about the battle, he does not have any conflict or guilt because this war was the last resort after unsuccessful non-violent methods. Lord Krishna also goes as a messenger and tries to settle peacefully. But Duryodana tries to kill Lord Krishna even though he is just a messenger. Therefore, Arjuna, has come to the battlefield without any regrets. Duryodana enumerates the Pandavas' army and his won

overflowing into the physical body also.

Arjuna's confusion is a result of his attachment to the physical body and his inability to see the true nature of the self. This is discussed in the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 1.30.

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1. Part 5: MohaH(consequence of RagaH and ShokaH); conflict, confusion, indecisionVerse 36-47

Delusion, not able to determine what to do; MohaH or avivekaH. Arjuna can't decide whether to fight or not and draws a series of wrong conclusions.

Confusion 1: Arjuna sees Dharma Yuddham as adharma now. The greatest irony is in Verse 36 line 2 where Arjuna says: "By killing these criminals, we will incur sin". This confusion is similar to a judge saying he cannot render punishment to a criminal, as it is a sin. Imprisoning a criminal is a duty of the court. Arjuna as a Kshatriya has to protect dharma, even if it resorts to war.

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

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

Sin of Commission – committing an amoral act

Sin of Omission – failure to do some ritualist act

If Arjuna runs away, this action is paapam for him but he sees this as the best decision. "dharma adharma avivekaH" – utter delusion where he cannot distinguish between dharmaic and adharmaic actions. Arjuna's delusion is

complete and it has overflowed into his intellect. The intellect will not be able to fight the weakened mind and so the intellect will justify the weakness.

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

संसारं कर्मणां तद्धर्मो धर्मो वाच्यते ।
संसारं कर्मणां तद्धर्मो धर्मो वाच्यते ॥1.40॥

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

Due to his confusion, Arjuna quotes these true facts incorrectly to support his stand. RagaH, ShokaH and MohaH (attachment, sorrow, delusion) are called samsaaraH. A samsaari is one who suffers from these three problems. If a person handles these three samsaaraH, he is a liberated person मुक्ताH (muktaH). Throughout Gita, Lord Krishna emphasize, married or unmarried, being internally free is what matters.

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

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

being; or कर्पाण्यम् “kaarpanyam” pitiful circumstances.

We will be studying this in Chapter 2:

शरणागतिः कर्पाण्यम् ॥ २.७ ॥
शरणागतिः कर्पाण्यम् ॥ २.७ ॥
शरणागतिः कर्पाण्यम् ॥ २.७ ॥

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

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

शोकः कर्पाण्यम् ॥ १.४७ ॥
शोकः कर्पाण्यम् ॥ १.४७ ॥

Introduction of Chapter 2

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

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

knowledge. Krishna will explain “self-knowledge” briefly . But in order to gain Jnana YogaH, one needs to be eligible to receive Jnanam(already be a yogyata praptiH).

Adi Shankara said Brahma Jnana is aushadam. The medicine is Jnana yogaH(disease removal). A Jnana yogyata(worthiness to get Jnanam) is required; medicine will be given only for a yogyata praptiH(one who has acquired the eligibility).

Portion 3: Krishna talks about Karma YogaH: Actions taken to become a Jnana Yogyata praptiH Krishna explains how to become a “Yogyata praptiH” (one who has acquired the eligibility to learn). Karma YogaH are the actions to be taken without being attached to the results of one’s deeds. The benefit of Karma YogaH is Jnana yogaH yogyata.

Portion 4: Jeevan MuktiH: Inner Freedom, Salvation: Explore the life of a psychologically healthy person, who has developed inner resistance, and who has solved raga, shoka, moha.

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

Bagawat Geeta, Class 10

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

as well.

Vedic teachings have 3 aspects of Dharma:

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

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

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

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

The psychological and sociological benefits of Rituals:

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

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

No particular religion is needed to follow the attitudes and values – any religion is okay. The religion becomes important only when you value a particular way of performing the ritual. But once rituals are given lesser importance, the next consequence is that the separation of religions and the segregation of community will go away and this is varna sankaraha. There is another worse consequence of varna sankaraha.... disappearance of the family institution. A family institution was required for

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

Once the rituals are not respected, a family institution remains for artha and kama; but with changes in a society, artha and kama will become available without families. The government provides the security and if one has money, all artha and kama can be bought. Values and attitudes don't need

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

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

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

Chapter 1 Sloka 43

1.43

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

vedic dharma; Rituals are gone. dharmas from a long time ago, destruction takes one generation

Chapter 1 Sloka 44

whose family religious practices are destroyed

of the men 0 Janardana in hell for unknown period dwelling is thus we have heard. Without rituals, the religion can continue with values and attitudes. But for these a family is not required and so after 2 to 3 generations, when it is realized that with money one can obtain artha and kama, the question arises if a family is needed at all. The negative side to not having a family is that you lose the people that you can call your own, those that you can trust and those that give you unconditional love. The psychological anchor or psychological security will be lost. This leads to sociological disaster when people without the family anchor exist in a society(crimes increase, etc).

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

Chapter 1 Sloka 45

alas great sin prepared to do by the greed of pleasure of kingdom to kill kinsmen

1.45

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

Om – अवति इति ॐ avati iti om; Avati is the protector; protected us from all obstacles

Tat – one who is beyond sense perception; परा and अक्षयः Para (beyond) and Aksha (eye); अक्षयः परा इति तत् beyond the cognizance of the senses

Sat – eternal (past, present, future); From Tatva Bodha: अक्षयः इति तत् The eternal protector who is beyond our sense perception.

ॐ तत् सत् – oh Lord, by your grace, we have completed the 1st chapter called

अर्जुनस्य शोकः – the grief of Arjuna. The main theme is vishada – raga, shoka and moha.

संवादः – presented as a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna

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

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

सर्वोपनिषदो गवो दग्धा गोपालानन्दानाः पार्थवत्साः

sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopalanandana: parthovatsa:

sudheerbhoktha dugdham gitamrutam mahat

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

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

1. Religion (योगशास्त्र yoga shastra): Veda poorva bhaga(first part of Veda); karma kanda – which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites. This is a way of life which prepares you to be competent for philosophy; gives fitness for knowledge; makes you a jnana योग्या jnana योग्या (eligibility). First part of life get fit, then gain knowledge
2. Philosophy (ब्रह्मविद्या brahma vidya): Veda antha bhaga(latter part of Veda); jnana kanda – which relates to knowledge of the one Spirit Philosophical part – gives jnanam (knowledge)

Bagawat Geeta, Class 9

Chapter 1 Sloka 38

अज्ञानं क्लेशो भवति तदात्मानं क्लेशोऽपि भवति ॥ १.३८ ॥

अज्ञानं though अज्ञानं these अज्ञानं not अज्ञानं see अज्ञानं with intelligence overpowered by greed अज्ञानं in the destruction of families अज्ञानं evil अज्ञानं in hostility to

friends and sin

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

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

Moha is **Arjuna** **Arjuna** "dharma adharma avivekaha" aviveka – absence of judgement or discrimination, not being able to judge between dharma and adharma. When there is a confusion, dharma appears as adharma and vice versa.

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

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

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

from the prevalence of impiety ० Krishna
become corrupt the women of the
family in women (being) corrupt ०
Varshneya arises caste mixture.

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

A stable family is needed for a cultural or a healthy personality trait to be formed in a child. This needs to be done at a very early stage in life. A baby or young child does not have the capacity to discriminate/judge what is important or valuable. A child learns to value things based upon the set of values of the parents (god like to the child). While child is developing values for various things, the respect it develops towards itself (self value) is also learned. The self image development is also very important. A newborn does not have an idea about itself – “am I a wonderful child or useless child; respectable or a rejected child”. This self opinion is developed based on the parent’s opinion of the child. If the life of the mother is centered on the child; parents respect the child; treat as a VIP in the first 5 years of life; be at his beck and call; with all the needs fulfilled; etc., then the child develops a beautiful self image, self worth and self confidence. This self opinion developed within the first 5 years can never be erased. If this is not developed within those few years, the child will condemn itself and develop inferiority complex, lacking self confidence. This negative value is developed not due to the child’s mistake – but they are the values the parents have imparted. A healthy mind is one which has self respect.

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

Arjuna, once you condemn yourself, no one can help you”
6.5

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

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

This is "ego nourishment" but nourishing the ego will enable the ego to grow, and as the ego grows it ripens, then the ripened ego can drop (like a ripened fruit falls from a tree, when it is ready).... leading to moksha.

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

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

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

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

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

corrupt women (destruction of entire society)

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

there will be utter confusion in regards to varnaashrama dharma.

Sankara means confusion.

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

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

Imagine a society which values money. This will lead to everyone choosing a profession based on whichever brings them

maximum money. Once a society is materialistic, a class that was devoted to cultural growth of a nation will diminish. Learning dharma shastra & the scriptures and following & propagating the dharma shastra will not thrive.

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

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

Bagawat Geeta Class 8

Bagawat Geeta Class 8

Namaste!

Summary of class on December 19th:

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

Swamiji says that emotional problems do not happen in one thought but arise from continually repeated thoughts, with each repetition increasing the anger/frustration. It is a thought build-up process. A single or first thought is an

experience and does not give rise to anger, jealousy or depression. Thereafter repetition of the thought is in our hands, as to whether or not we want to allow a small ripple to build into a big wave.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bagawat Geeta Class 7

Namaste!

Summary of class on December 12th:

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

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

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

Verses 26,27,28: (These three verses show the problem of

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

Swamiji says everyone has five fathers:

1. The biological father
2. The one who gives the sacred thread during the Upanayam ceremony
3. The guru. Going to the Gurukulam is considered as a second birth. At our first birth, we are indiscriminate and instinctive. We are physically human, but mentally not. With Gayathri as the mother and Acharya as the father, we acquire reason and learn to live a life based on Dharma.
4. Annadhadha – one who feeds you when in need
5. The one who rescues you from adversity/crisis

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

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

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

Arjuna uses the word svajaha meaning" my people" – I belong to them and they belong to me. When a sense of belonging becomes attachment and when attachment clouds our judgement, then the line between Dharma and Adharma blurs. Arjuna did not develop

attachment in the battlefield. Attachment was not evident till the possibility of losing the object of attachment (Bhishma, Drona...) occurs.

Regards,

Usha Chandran

Bagawat Geeta Class 6

Namaste!

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

Verses 14 – 23

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

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

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

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

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

Verses 17 & 18: (Sanjaya to Dhrithrastra) " Oh king! The king of Kasi who is the wielder of a big bow, the great warrior Sikhandi, Dhrstadyumna, the king of Virata, the unsurpassed Satyaki, king Drupada, the sons of Draupadi, and the mighty Abhimanyu who is the son of Subhadra blew the conches distinctly from all directions".

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

With the 19th verse the first phase is over.

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

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

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

Verses 21 -23: " Arjuna said- Oh Krishna! Place my chariot

between the two armies till I see those who are assembled with a desire to fight. Let me see those with whom I should fight in this event of war. I wish to see those who are assembled here eager to fight, and who want to fulfill the desire of the evil-minded Duryodhana in this war.”

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

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

Vedanta is not against sentiments. It is sentiments that make us human. But when sentiments cloud our intellect, that leads to delusion and then samsara begins.

Regards,

Usha Chandran

Bagawat Geeta, Class 5

Chapter 1- Verses 3 to 11

Duryodhana’s dialogue with Dronacharya continues-

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

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

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

all assembled here.

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

Verse 7:

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

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

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

They are:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Duryodhana’s dialogue ends here.

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

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

Regards,

SOME THOUGHTS ON SLOKA-1, CHAPTER-1

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

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

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

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

Dr.Naidu Katta.