

Upanishadic Thoughts With References from Bhawad Geeta



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Baghawat Geeta, Class : Chapter 9, Verses 12 to 15

Shloka # 12:

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Futile are their desires, futile their works, and futile their cognitions! They are mindless; (for) they have resorted to the delusive nature of monsters and demons.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, Sri Krishna has been describing Ishwara Swarupam from shloka # 4 to Shloka # 10 focusing on the higher nature of God. Chapter # 7 talked about lower nature as well as higher nature of God.

In shloka # 11, ignorance of higher nature of god is shown as cause of Samsara. How can this be? The PP (para prakriti, higher nature) is beyond time and space. So only by holding on to PP, immortality is possible. Any AP (Apara prakriti, lower nature) is within time and space and Maya as such subject to change. So long as one is AP he will be a Samsari. Even in Karma Kanda he may go to a higher Loka but those Lokas are also a part of AP.

And therefore only when a person knows the real nature of God and holds on to the real nature, he can be free from samsara. But this fact majority of people do not know and therefore they hold on to finite thing and loose it and suffer and the unfortunate thing is that they do not learn and they hold on

to another finite thing, and again suffer.

So this ignorance is cause of Samsara.

And then from the 12th shloka onwards, up to the 19th shloka, Sri Krishna talks about different types of people. There are some people who have diagnosed this problem of ignorance and once we know ignorance is the cause of samsara, we know the solution is para prakrti; and once that is also clear then Gyanam is the solution. For Gyanam I require the necessary qualification and therefore sadhana chatushaya sampathi will become my immediate goal and for sadhana chatushtaya sampathi, I have to follow karma yoga and upasana. Thus I know what my course of life is; because clarity is there; I have to follow karma yoga; I have to follow upasana; I have to acquire necessary qualifications; I have to follow Gyana yoga; I have to attain Gyanam; and through Gyanam I have to remove ignorance and obtain mukthi.

Some people are very clear and they take the right path. Many others don't know and they take the wrong path. They do not know what exactly they want. They

go after a goal for some time and acquire it; and they find that they do not get what they wanted. And then they replace the goal with another one; again

acquire it and again no satisfaction is obtained. So these people are confused people, Sri Krishna talked about the confused people, unlucky and unfortunate ones, in shloka #12. And why they are confused, because their thinking is not clear. In Kathopanishad, we saw that the body is compared to a chariot; sense organs are compared to the horses, mind is compared to the reins; and intellect is compared to the driver; a journey will be in the right direction, if the driver is informed properly.

Arjuna had Sri Krishna to guide him. Scriptures also guide one in a proper manner. Unfortunately, most do not come to

scriptures. Our life, generally, takes three courses. They are:

1. Janati: One who knows about his goal.
2. Ichati: One who desires to reach his goal.
3. Yatate: One who strives towards a goal.

If Gyanam is improper, desire will also be improper, resulting in improper effort as well. These people don't have viveka shakti. We are all aviveki's and scripture comes here to guide us.

Moghajanah, they all have the wrong understanding and expectations; and what are the wrong expectations; everything impermanent is mistaken as permanent; they think power is permanent; position is permanent; people around will be permanent; above all, money they think is permanent. So this they do not know; therefore they have wrong expectation; of security from insecure; permanence from the impermanence.

So, they have vain desires. If desire is futile, their action will also be futile and they don't get what they expect.

In Chapter # 3 it says, when they have wrong desires, any amount of accomplishments will not satisfy them and rather it will lead them to greed.

Therefore Sri Krishna says, their actions will be kama pradhana actions; or krodhah pradhana actions; either their actions are born out of attachment; or their actions are born out of hatred; so rakshasim and asurim; the difference is: one is ragah, pradhana; another is dveshah pradhana.

Thus, they take to illegal methods of acquisition. With their greedy behavior they get into cutthroat competition and thus Dvesha enters them and their Kama then becomes Krodha.

What about pancha maha yagna; nothing like that exists in his life; everything will go away and therefore nitya naimithika

karma also will drop; why because there is no time; I would like to use that time to earn more money. And therefore, rakshas asurim prakrti dominates.

They take to mohini, which will delude the people; which means they get into a vicious cycle. Because of non-discrimination; their kamyā nishiddha karmas increase; and with it the power of discrimination gets further stifled or overpowered. Their bhuddhi will get further spoiled and eventually they lose even their conscience and thus criminals are born. Their intellect now justifies compromised values.

When we compromise with the values initially, there is a prick; Somehow you managed that, second time lying will not be pricking that much; third lie, still lesser; fourth lie, no prick at all; fifth lie, I begin to justify; sixth lie, I say it is required in kaliyuga. If one lives to this stage the person becomes incorrigible and can hope for a better luck only at next birth.

When fire is burning in forest, the wind becomes its friend. However, when the same fire was small the wind was its foe. If you can't defeat them, join them. Initially when our mind goes in wrong direction we can stop it. But later, it becomes difficult. Then the intellect cannot stop the compromise with values. And then the intellect will begin to join and justify the violation; and such people are called rakshasic people and asuric people.

Shloka # 13:

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

But magnanimous persons, resorting to a nature that is divine, O Arjuna! adore Me single-mindedly knowing ME to be the imperishable source of beings.

In previous shloka Sri Krishna talked about misguided people

bogged in Samsara. There are some fortunate people who, due to their past Karmas, are born in good families.

O Partha! People born in good families take to satvik nature practicing Pancha Maha Yagna's and leading a dharmic life. To them, due to the grace of God, they develop nithya anithya vastu viveka. They lead a religiously alert life.

Every experience teaches me a valid lesson that I should seek security only from God and not from Samsara. Seek peace only from God. This nithya anithya viveka they develop.

They have daivic prakriti. Mind purifying karmas are more in their lives. They see Me as the ultimate shelter. They see Me as the ultimate causeless cause of all beings. They see God as beginning- less, without end or infinite. They see everything other than God as finite. **Intelligent people learn from other's suffering. Unintelligent learn from, their own suffering.**

Their journey begins without any distractions. In our tradition even married life is meant to be an Ashrama for Chitta Shudhi; it leads to dharma and moksha. Artha and Kama are only incidental goals.

Shloka # 14:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥ १४ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १० ॥ १४ ॥

Incessantly glorifying Me, striving with steadfast vows; prostrating; eternally united, they worship Me with devotion.

How do they pursue God?

They are people of firm resolve; " I want to attain moksha"; they are tivra mumukshas. They refresh their resolves through Vratams. They talk of their goal as much as possible through Satsanga. The other people are also likeminded people and they will also remind you. So, they choose their friends carefully.

They start preparing themselves (Yatante). Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathi is difficult to obtain while Gyanam is easy to obtain, if you are prepared. So, one has to start preparation right now. Practice of Karma Yoga and Upasanas are all part of their preparations.

They know that mere effort is not enough; that there will be endless obstacles (pratibandhaha). To succeed Ishwara anugraha is crucial and so, they surrender to God.

If you remember, I had told you in my introduction to the seventh chapter, one thing that is highlighted in the first six chapters of the Gita is individual effort; then in the next six chapters, that is from the 7th chapter to the 12th chapter, the importance of Ishvara kripa is highlighted; Therefore prayathna is important; anugrah is important; only when both go in hand in hand, can we succeed.

Yatante indicates free will. Namasyanta indicates role of grace. So is freewill important or grace important? Both are equally important. If you discard freewill, you are fatalistic person; If you discard anugraha; you are an arrogant person; anugraham if you say no, arrogance; freewill if you say no to it means it is fatalism; we should neither be fatalistic; nor arrogance; we should know our effort is important; Ishvara's grace is also important; Thus a balanced approach is required.

To be ever steadfast, is their personality. Just as a sports man has trainer, dietician, psychologist etc to support him similarly their total focus is on moksha.

Thus at all levels: annamaya; pranamaya; manomaya; vigyanamaya, even anandamaya, all levels, there is only one focus that of moksham alone; this they pursue and seek.

Shloka # 15:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १५ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १५ ॥

And others, worshipping Me with the sacrifice of knowledge, wait on Me looking up to Me as one with themselves or as different, in manifold ways-Me with face turned everywhere.

Now God is my goal. Even understanding of this goal evolves over time. There are thus three levels of understanding of God:

1. In beginning stages: **God is creator of world**, the nimitha karanam, like a weaver, carpenter etc. The God is even seen as many headed or omniscient. Thus, four heads of Brahma indicate the four Vedas. It is a personal God like Vishnu. Once you progress then,
2. Next level: Initially if God is seen as a person, he is limited spatially, meaning not present everywhere. **Here God becomes the world.** God is appearing as this universe. This universe is a form of God, Vishwarupa Ishwara. Here we are saying that Bhumi is the feet of the Lord; the sky is the body of the Lord; heaven is the head of the Lord.
3. If god is everything, is Kuvam also God? Such doubts can arise. If god had only positive attributes he is limited. God does not become creation, rather it appears as creation. **Real God is free from all appearances.** He is Param Bhavana. **He does not have any form at all.**

Thus from Eka Rupa Ishwara>to>Aneka Rupa Ishwara>to> Arupa Ishwara. Everyone has to go through all these three stages.

Some worship me as non-dual Ishwara by taking to Gyana Yoga. Through Vedanta Viveka they see Arupa Ishwara. Some others worship Aneka Rupa Ishwara. Furthermore, some others worship a God with a distinct form such as Rama or Krishna.

Swami Chinmayananda started his ashram in Bombay with a Shiva Deity. Hare Krishna people criticized him saying that he used Krishna's name but went with Shiva.

Take away:

God is free from all appearances. He does not have any form at all.

Intelligent people learn from other's suffering. Unintelligent learn from, their own suffering.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 120: Chapter 9, Verses 8 to 12

Shloka # 8:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ९.८ ॥

Resorting, again and again, I loose forth this entire multitude of bound beings, swayed by and dependent on that nature.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, from shloka # 4 Sri Krishna is dealing with Ishwara Rupam. This topic is discussed until Shloka # 10. This topic was also discussed in Chapter 7 as Para Prakriti or Brahman and Apra Prakriti as Maya. Brahmaswarupam topic is considered the very essence of the Upanishads. Describing the features of God, we have already discussed following:

1. **Avyaktaha:** Lord is one who is not available to the sense organs. He is free from the five-fold properties of shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha and if we experience the Lord, with any of these properties; then it may be the Lord, but it is not the higher nature of Lord. We have experienced the lower nature; in fact, any experienced Lord is of the lower nature.
2. **Sarvagataha:** Lord has no form; as such he is all pervading.
3. **Jagad Adhishtanam:** Lord is the substratum of all material Universe. He is the consciousness principle that is the substratum of the material world. It is the essence of matter. Normally we think there cannot be consciousness without matter. But here Sri Krishna says it is the other way round; consciousness can exist independent of matter, matter cannot exist independent of consciousness; that means consciousness is satyam and matter is mithya; therefore the Lord is the mithya jagat adhishtana svarupam; this is the third feature we saw.
4. **Asangatvam:** Then the fourth feature that we saw is asangatvam; even though the Lord is the substratum sustaining the whole creation; the Lord is not tainted by the various impurities of the creation; the Lord is unsullied. Lord is like the crystal, which is never tainted by any impurity. Shudha sphatika sangasam is the first name of the Lord given in the Sri Rudra dhyana shloka. Therefore the Lord is assangaha, unsullied and unsulliable. This is the fourth feature known as asangatvam.
5. **Jagat Srishti Sthiti Laya Karanam:** God is the source of creation, its rest and resolution. This is the fifth feature.

And then the Lord gave some details about the creation. How does the creation come and how does it resolve? A He says, the creation is not freshly produced by Me; because of the Law of conservation of matter and energy; nothing can be newly

created by anyone; even by God. Therefore God says: I do not produce fresh matter; the material universe was already there in Me in my higher nature; in potential form; and that potential form alone is called the maya shakthi or the lower prakrti of the Lord. So the higher nature includes the lower nature of matter in potential form.

And matter in potential form is called prakrti or maya; therefore the world existed in the form of maya in Me; and this maya alone evolves into this creation; and dances about for some time; and again this prapancha gets resolved into maya form; So maya becomes prapancha, prapancha becomes maya; maya is unmanifest matter; prapancham is manifest matter. This unmanifest matter becomes manifest matter; which is called srishti and manifest matter again comes back to unmanifest matter, which is called layam.

What about God; He is neither unmanifest matter, nor manifest matter; Lord is the consciousness which supports the whole phenomenon of the material evolution and devolution.

When did the creation begin? This is a cyclic process as such there is no beginning or an end. Up to this we discussed in last class at Shloka # 8.

In shloka # 8, the word punah punah is used twice to denote eternity. The creation process does not happen in time. Time is itself in the process. Space and time are all within Maya.

Shloka # 9:

॥ इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां अष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥ १ ॥

These actions , Arjuna! bind Me not; I am as it were indifferent (to them all), being unattached to them.

Here Sri Krishna talks of the final and sixth feature of Ishwara by answering a possible doubt. When God says, I am

creator of Universe; it seems to be an action. With action God becomes a Karta as well as a Bhokta. Now, because of the creation of universe many people are suffering. He creates us and then seems to enjoy our suffering, is the sentiment of some people. If so, does he pay a price for it?

Answering this doubt Sri Krishna says, I am akarta and abhokta; I am neither the creator; nor the destroyer and therefore you cannot attribute any action or result to me.

Sri Krishna says, O Arjuna, all these actions (srishti, sthiti, laya karmani) do not bind me at all. How is this possible? I am indifferent, or uninvolved or a detached person. Sri Krishna is giving us a clue here. As discussed in chapter # 5, Abhimana Tyaga is the secret to being free from Kartutvam and bhoktatvam. Whoever performs abhimana tyaga is free from karma phalam as well.

Shloka # 10:

ममकारुण्येण प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः
प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः प्रकृत्यैः 9.10

Due to Me, the Supervisor, Nature gives birth to the world of mobile and immobile (beings). For this reason, Arjuna! it revolves in manifold ways.

Remaining detached is called Sakshi Bhava. I do not perform anything willfully; rather it is Maya that functions in front of Sakshi. Citing an example, it is like the light illumines the hall, however, light does not influence any action in the hall, good or bad; also, good or bad actions don't taint the light. While light is required it is not affected by the karta phalam.

This is called sakshi bhavah. Therefore he says, in My presence. And when Krishna says in My presence, it does not refer to Krishna shariram; Krishna shariram is the visible lower nature. So when Sri Krishna says, in My presence, he is

referring to that all pervading consciousness, which is formless, which is untainted, that consciousness is here, as Me and in my presence, prakrti functions; this is the basic matter called Maya; and which was called अपरा प्रकृति in the Chapter 7.

Thus all gadgets function in presence of electricity. Electricity only blesses the gadgets. Gadgets function according to their own nature; thus the bulb illumines and a fan rotates. So, nature of gadget determines type of function.

Electricity does not will or wish a particular action.

Similarly when there is a satvic brain or satvic mind, it will do its function blessed by consciousness, a rajasic mind will do its function, blessed by consciousness, a tamasic criminal mind will perform the criminal action; the criminality is determined by the nature of the mind; the blame cannot, however, go to the consciousness principle or God.

This is to be remembered because, people always ask; **if God is in everyone; how come there are criminal thoughts in the people; God does not determine the nature of thought; God enlivens the instrument depending upon the nature of the instruments, the thoughts are generated accordingly;** therefore he says, prakrti; the basic matter evolves, produces and projects into jagat. So this whole universe, consisting of the mobile and the immobile one, the moving and the stationary one, are manifested. In short the entire Creation of things and beings comes about.

And therefore O Arjuna, because of my sheer presence

Alone, the whole drama is going on; that is why when the light goes off; the drama stops. Thus, again, even though the light does not play the role of a teacher; the light does not play the role of a student and light is not directly involved in the transaction; the presence of the light is required.

Vidhyaranya Swami commenting on Panchadashi says God is like a light. He does not perform any transaction, but his presence is required. The entire universe revolves in my "presence".

Shloka # 11:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ११ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ११ ॥

Fools deride Me, who have assumed a human body; for, they are unaware of My transcendent status as the great Lord of beings.

With previous shloka, Ishwararupam is complete. Sri Krishna says, Ishwara is neither a Karta nor Bhokta, as such; we can't blame all our problems on God. God is a non-interfering presence. Then, why do we suffer?

We suffer because we were a karta and now a bhokta. People give up God when he does not help them in their suffering. Citing a story: One lady came and told me she threw away all the religious books as she had lost faith in God; a god who could not get her daughter married.

God has to get her daughter married! This is the type of misconceptions people have.

Prayer can produce punyam, however, if our papam is overwhelming then papam will overtake everything else.

Having talked about his higher nature, Sri Krishna now talks about Samsara Karanam. Our problems are due to our expectation of permanence from impermanent things; we expect security from insecure things; we expect ananda from things that are apurva.

If we want peace, ananda and security we need to go our higher nature of God. Nobody understands my higher nature, and they all hold on to my lower and perishable nature.

He says Mudah; meaning confused people; ignorant people who are not able to differentiate nityam and anityam. None can

give security. They don't know my formless swarupam or my Chaitanya Swarupam. Why don't they know? **We are born with ignorance and as we grow we keep removing our ignorance.**

Having ignorance is not a problem but perpetuating it, is. How to remove ignorance? It can be removed by gaining knowledge through Vedanta Vichara of Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. Many people think this study is a waste of time. Since they don't know my higher nature they take lower nature as true and they take Rama, Krishna forms as real. These forms are finite and limited. They were born and they also died. Ignorant people take to my human form as real form and in this they are degrading Me.

Thus, when we perform puja to an idol, we invite God to our idol; then you give a seat to Lord. All these are Apachara per Shankaracharya. Formless god has no limbs for him to sit. What Shankaracharya criticizes is; begin with personal God or formed God but we

should not end with that; Saguna is the best beginning; but it cannot be the culmination; culmination should be in the nirguna. Thus one goes from sakaram to nirakaram; sagunam to nirgunam; apara to para and achetanam to chetanam.

And as long as they do not know the higher nature they will not seek security and purnatvam from the higher nature; which is the only source of security. Nirguna brahma is the only source of security; why, is that so?

The reasoning is that anything other than nirgunam Brahma is saguna maya; and anything that is within saguna maya is matter. And they don't know this and thus disrespect Me. They don't seek security or Purntavam from PP. Rather than leaning on Nirguna Swarupam they lean on Saguna, which is always changing. This is Samsara Karanam.

Shloka # 12:

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ಉಪಾಸಕರು ಉಪಾಸಕರು ಉಪಾಸಕರು ಉಪಾಸಕರು ಉಪಾಸಕರು 9.12

Futile are their desires, futile their works, and futile their cognitions! They are mindless; (for) they have resorted to the delusive nature of monsters and demons.

Having talked about Samsara Karanam in shloka # 11, now in shlokas # 12 and 13, Sri Krishna talks about various types of people who approach this problem.

Some are intelligent people who don't lean on the perishable; rather they lean on the Lord. Most people have not diagnosed correctly and don't learn from experience. When one perishable object goes, they go after another perishable one. It is like moving from smoking to chewing tobacco. Most people don't learn.

How does it happen? Any form of human pursuit has three stages. They are:

1. **Gyana Shakti:** Knowing activity; first stage is knowing activity; before any activity I should have the knowledge about the result of that activity.
2. **Icha Shakti:** Desire based knowledge. Without knowing we can't desire. Can you desire something, which you do not know? So, whatever you desire is a known object. Therefore, Gyanam gives way to desire and desire leads to action.
3. **Kriya Shakti:** is action based on our desire, when we act.

So from Gyana shakti to iccha shakti to kriya shakti; throughout the life, this is our process. Thus all our pursuits begin at the cognitive level, at the understanding level. If I do not have proper understanding of things in the world, the possible course of life will also be not be clear and accordingly Gyana shakti, Ichha shakti and kriya shakti will be abused and we get into problems. And therefore Sri

Krishna says many people are misinformed or uninformed because they do not study the scriptures. That is why scriptural study becomes a fundamental necessity to get a direction in our life.

Take away:

1. We are born with ignorance and as we grow we keep removing our ignorance.
2. If God is in everyone; how come there are criminal thoughts in the people? God does not determine the nature of thought; God enlivens the instrument depending upon the nature of the instruments, the thoughts are generated accordingly;

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 119: Chapter 9, Verses 4 to 8

Shloka # 4:

ॐ इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां नवोऽध्याये षष्ठोऽश्लोकः ॥
ॐ इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां नवोऽध्याये षष्ठोऽश्लोकः ॥ 9.4 ॥

The entire world has been pervaded by Me in my unmanifest form. All beings dwell in Me, but I dwell not in them.

Continuing his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, in the first three shlokas of Chapter 9, Sri Krishna has introduced Ishwara Gyanam. This comes in the middle section of the Gita. Chapters 1 through 6 dealt with Jiva swarupam while Chapters 7-12 deal with Ishwara swarupam. While talking about the nature of Ishwara, his higher nature, PP, and lower nature, AP, PP is beyond conditioning of space and time. It is not subject to space and time as such not subject to divisions.

So that which is the absolute principle, which is the relative empirical world, and therefore that which is not subject to time and space and consequently not subject to division and change. So this division-less, changeless, timeless, space-less Being is the absolute form of God.

In Upanishad Para Prakriti is called Brahman while Apara Prakriti is called Maya. The knowledge of PP is known as Gyanam while knowledge of AP is known as Vigyanam. Having introduced both now Sri Krishna is dealing with PP or Brahman.

From Shloka # 4 through # 10 the topic is Brahma Swarupam. These shlokas are considered to reveal the essence of the Upanishads.

First feature of Brahman:

In last class we noted that PP, the higher nature, is formless and not available to any sense organs, as such it is not revealed by any sense organs as well. It does not have properties that can be perceived by sense organs of shabda (hearing), rupa (sight), gandha (smell), rasa (taste), and sparsha (touch) respectively.

The PP is described as Avyaktam meaning beyond all sense organs or formless.

Second feature of Brahman:

The second feature of Brahman is it is Sarvagatam. It is all

pervading, with no spatial limitation; a natural consequence of Avyaktam, meaning having no form and as such it has no boundaries. Form is determined by boundaries. Since God is formless, he is boundless or all pervading. He is here and now. You need not travel to merge with the Lord, if at all there is a merger it is only through the wisdom that the Lord is never away from me. **So in Vedanta, merger is the wisdom that the Lord is never away. Dropping the notion of division is merger.**

Third feature of Brahman:

Whole world is resting in Me. I am Vishwa Adharam. Thus, in the following shloka we see this description of Lord as: Shantakaram bhujagashayanam padmanabham sureshsam vishvadharam gaganasadrsham. This is a description of God lying on a snake. The snake is his bed. Snake is the adhara or support for the Lord; However, in the second line it says, Vishvadharam; meaning snake does not support the Lord; the truth is that the Lord is not supporting the snake alone; the Lord is supporting the whole creation.

Thus, I am not supported by this world. I am the supporter, not the supported. Jagat adhishtanam is the third feature or support of all.

Shloka # 5:

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Neither do beings exist in Me-behold My sovereign Yoga! My Self brings beings into existence and sustains them, yet does not dwell in them.

Fourth feature of Brahman:

Brahma satyam; jagan mithya

Sri Krishna says this world or the beings do not rest in Me.

They are not in Me at all. Here Sri Krishna is contradicting his previous shloka. Gita has several seemingly contradictions. Sri Krishna said previously, all beings are in Me; now he says, all beings are not in Me.

Shankaracharya resolves this contradiction. He says, suppose you say X exists and then you say X does not exist. Both are coming from the Lord. Shankaracharya says there is only one way this can be resolved. He says, X should be considered as seemingly existing (meaning it appears as if it is there); however, upon closer examination one sees that the seeming existence is not real existence.

Thus, from one angle it seems to exist; from another angle, it is really non-existent.

Several examples of this exist. One example is our own dreams. Did your dream exist? Yes, you have experienced it and it was very tangible during the dream. A Nightmare can, after all, even frighten you.

So, from dreamers point of view the dream exists. From Waker's point of view the dream is not real. Whatever you dreamt did not exist other than as a thought in mind.

And therefore the question is, is there a dream or not? From dreamer's angle, it is there; from waker's angle, it is not there; from a lower order of reality, it is there; from a higher order of reality, it is not there; and this unique phenomenon in Vedanta is called mithya; mithya means experientially available, but factually non-existent. Anything experientially available, apparently available; capable of invoking responses from you; but upon waking (from a higher angle) it is not there; such a thing is called seemingly existent. In Vedanta, it is defined as sad-asadbhyam-anirvachaniyam.

You cannot say it is there; you cannot say it is not there also; you cannot say it is not there because it frightens you;

you cannot say it because when you wake up, it is not seen. Otherwise the lottery you won in dream; that money should be available to you upon waking; in reality, it does not benefit your bank balance; but in dream state it did give you enough happiness.

That which is in lower order of reality is called Mithya; or **from body's stand point the world exists. From Brahman's stand point World does not exist.**

So, therefore, Sri Krishna says may you appreciate my higher yoga. And what is my higher yoga? It is my higher nature. In Vedanta, the higher order of reality is called paramarthika satyam; the worldly (lower) order of reality is called vyavaharika satyam; thus, from Vedanta's perspective: empirical reality is non-existent from the standpoint of the absolute reality; empirical reality is existent only from the standpoint of the ordinary worldly perception. **And therefore this is My higher nature; may you recognize Brahma satyam; jagan mithya. This is the Vedantic essence that Sri Krishna gives us here.** Not only that; this is the third feature; I am formless; I am all pervading; I am the substratum of the mithya universe.

Then what is the fourth feature: Krishna says: I am the srishti, sthiti, laya karanam of this entire universe; thus the waker is the srishti, sthiti, laya karanam of the dream world; the dream world comes out of me; and the irony is I create the dream world and I myself get frightened by the dream. Then I wake up and entire dream world is resolved back in me, the Waker.

Similarly, the Universe is a dream in Brahman that rises and resolves in Brahman.

Therefore my atma; the higher nature; the PP, is bhutabhavanah; bhavana is srishti karanam. So I am the srishti kartha. Just as the waker is the supporter of the

dream world, I am also the Sthiti karta. Thus, once you wake up, the dream world cannot be sustained. Therefore you project; you support; similarly Brahman projects, Brahman supports:

I am the supporter of the creation; but I am not

supported by the creation; I do not depend on the world; that means the world cannot exist without me but I can exist without the world. That is the definition of the Satyam. Satyam can exist without mithya; mithya cannot exist without Satyam. Dream cannot exist without Waker but Waker can exist without dream.

You exist without dream; but dream cannot exist without you. Lord can exist without the world; World cannot exist without the Lord. This is called sathya-mithya sambhanda in the Upanishadic literature.

Shloka # 6:

व्योमं व्याप्य सर्वत्र स्थित्वा नान्यत्र गच्छति
व्योमं व्याप्य सर्वत्र स्थित्वा नान्यत्र गच्छति 9.6

Just as the vast (expanse of) air, eternally subsists in space while moving everywhere, even so know that all beings exist in Me.

Fifth Feature of Brahman:

Here Sri Krishna introduces the fifth feature of Brahman as **Asangatvam or unsullied nature of Brahman**. It is an important shloka that says, I support the whole universe and the universe is resting in me.

Then whatever impurities of universe will also affect God? Sri Krishna says, this does not happen. I am not tainted by anything.

Space also is formless; the real Ishvara is also formless;

space is all-pervading; the higher nature of Lord is also all pervading; space accommodates everything; everything is in space. Similarly the Lord accommodates everything. Fourthly, even though space accommodates everything, space is not burned by fire, wet by water; you cannot cut space, you cannot burn space, even though fire is in space. So this nature of space is called asangatvam. Similarly, the Lord accommodates everything including all akramams that are going in the world; but Lord is not tainted by kramam and akramam.

Sri Krishna says, God is beyond good and bad; because good and bad belongs to the relative empirical world, in which pairs of opposites are there; if Lord comes within the pairs of opposites, Lord will again be within the empirical world of time and space. And therefore here, Sri Krishna says, I am neither beautiful nor ugly; neither good nor bad; neither punyam nor papam; who am I; I am beyond dvandatvam. God is not in a pair of opposites; it is beyond dvandva.

Space accomodates Vayu. What type of Vayu? Vayu that is sometimes fragrant and sometimes not so fragrant. Akasha accommodate both, but Vayu does not affect Akasha. Vayu is located in space. Vayu moves everywhere; all this does not affect Space. So, also, there are good and bad people, but they don't impact Me.

Shloka # 7:

ॐ सर्वं भूयान्मां प्रकृतौ विनश्यत्
ॐ सर्वं भूयान्मां प्रकृतौ विनश्यत्१.७०

All beings, Arjuna! at the end of a cycle repair to My nature; again, at the beginning of the (next) cycle, I loose them forth.

In the sixth shloka Sri Krishna pointed out that he is Srishti Sthiti Laya Karanam. This is now explained further in shlokas # 7 and # 8.

How does Lord create? Before I created the Universe, universe was already in Me in an un-manifest form. Nothing in universe can be newly created. The world already existed in Me in a seed form. Thus, a huge tree exists within a seed and a baby exists in the womb of the mother. So when she looks up at a grown up child and the mother says, this is my son; you wonder; how can such a big person be in the stomach of the mother; even though he is so big now; previously he was a tiny fetus, who was existing in an un-manifest form.

They say the information contained in DNA is equal to 300 books of information. If hair has to turn gray at 43, it was coded in the gene. It is same with disease. This is called Avyakta rupam.

Similarly, Sri Krishna says, all the details of this universe is already coded in me in ayaktha rupam; that unmanifest universe is called prakrti or maya or the world in seed form or matter in potential form. You may also call it energy; and it is this un-manifest universe that evolves into manifestation. The world comes to manifestation and again it goes back to unmanifestation; like the expansion and contraction of the heart; the creation also expands and contracts; unfolds and folds.

This is also true of the dream world. Everybody gets dreams; it is universal. All dreams one has are impressions from our observations or experiences, including one's from previous janma. Therefore, your dream already exists in a potential form in you, the Waker. Similarly the dream-like-world is in Brahman, in an Unmanifest form, which is called maya or prakrti.

All the beings come back to me alone; in what form; prakrti form; unmanifest form; otherwise called maya form. That prakrti is also dependent on Me, just as the manifest world is dependent on Me.

Similarly, the unmanifest prakrti is also dependent on Me. Just as the manifest dream is dependent on the waker; similarly the unmanifest dream vasanas; the imprints or samskaras are also dependent on the Waker. So the imprint becomes dream; dream again becomes the vasana; I am the substratum for both.

Similarly, Sri Krishna says, the world resolves into prakrti; which is dependent on Me.

And when does this happen? It happens at the end of a kalpa; a Brahmaji's day, which is 2000 chatur yugas; So therefore at the end of a kalpa, they all

resolve into Me. At the beginning of the next Kalpa; when Brahmaji gets up again the creation comes;

There is no end to creation, only a temporary rest.

Shloka # 8:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.८ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.८ ॥

Resorting, again and again, I loose forth this entire multitude of bound beings, swayed by and dependent on that nature.

This is also an explanation of Jagat karanatvam. In a cyclic process, I repeatedly create this world. Per Vedanta, creation is not a linear process; i.e., a process with an end. Rather it is a cyclic process, endlessly manifesting and un-manifesting. It does not have a beginning or an end. So, when did creation begin is an illogical question.

For Brahman, for creation, Prakriti, the potential universe, has to be there. So multitudes of beings are created. They are helpless beings. So even committing suicide is not a solution. One can't stop the process. One can only get out of it through Moksha.

Take away:

1. In Upanishad Para Prakriti is called Brahman while Apara Prakriti is called Maya. The knowledge of PP is known as Gyanam while knowledge of AP is known as Vigyanam.
2. In Vedanta, merger is the wisdom that the Lord is never away. Dropping the notion of division is merger.
3. From dreamers point of view the dream exists. From Waker's point of view the dream is not real. Strangely, you are both the dreamer and Waker.
4. The lower order of reality is called Mithya; thus from body's standpoint the world exists. From Brahman's stand point World does not exist.
5. Brahma satyam, jagan mithya. This is the essence of Vedanta.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 118: Chapter 9, Verses 1 – 4

Greetings All,

Starting his talk on chapter 9, Swamiji said, we have completed chapter 8, a unique chapter dealing with Krama Mukti, a topic discussed by the Upanishads as well. Sri

Krishna is trying to cover all aspects of the Upanishads including Krama Mukti.

And in this krama mukti topic, a person is asked to follow saguna Ishvara upasana throughout the life and a person need not come to Vedanta at all; because Vedanta deals with nirguna Ishvara Gyanam which some people may find either difficult or may not be able to follow and therefore without coming to

Vedanta, a person follows saguna upasana, and even dies thinking of only moksha or Ishvara as the goal, and such a person will not have punarjanma at all; which means no punarjanma in this loka; he will go to Brahma loka and attain Gyanam and moksha from there.

Sri Krishna is not interested in promoting Krama Mukti as it is meant only for inferior people. I too do not consider all of you inferior in any way. So Sri Krishna wants everybody to obtain Jivan mukti in this very lifetime because we would like to live a happy life here. After death whether we will be reborn or not, it is not even verifiable; whereas here the benefit is something verifiable and therefore Sri Krishna wants to emphasize only jivan mukti.

In this chapter, we are not going to be confined to Saguna Upasana since we are interested in Jivan Mukti. We wish to spend more time on Nirguna Ishwara Gyanam, which means Vedanta sravana manana nidhidhyasanam; which will give jivatma-paramatma aikya Gyanam in this life itself; and we will be able to enjoy jivan mukti.

Thus in Chapters 9,10, 11 and 12 respectively, Sri Krishna is going to prescribe Upasanas as the means of Vedanta Vichara. Ch 9 concentrates on Nirguna Ishwara Gyanam as a means of liberation. Saguna Upasana is only a stepping-stone towards it. In this regard this chapter is similar to Ch 7.

Shloka # 1:

9.1

9.1

9.1

Now I shall reveal to you, who carp not, this most recondite knowledge and its realization by mastering which you will be liberated from evil.

Sri Krishna introduces the subject in the first three shlokas. Subject is Ishwara Gyanam. Ishwara consists of inferior and superior natures i.e., Apra Prakriti and Para Prakriti. AP is Saguna Swarupam, the personal God. Even Vishwa Rupam is AP as it has name and form. Whatever is subject to change is inferior.

On the other hand the higher nature of the Lord is beyond time and space, which is the absolute nature, which is called chaitanya svarupam, which is also called para prakrti (PP); If you remember the seventh chapter the higher nature that is attribute-less; change-less; division-less; consciousness; is the higher nature of God.

The lower self is full of modifications, divisions, and is material in nature. In this chapter Arjuna, I am going to give you information on both Gyanam (lower nature) and Vigyanam (higher nature). Gyana Vigyana Yogam was the title of Chapter 7 as well.

When you have got saguna Ishvara Gyanam; certainly you will see the differences between Ishvara and you; therefore saguna Ishvara Gyanam comes under bheda Gyanam or dvaita Gyanam. God is different; I am different; God is perfection; I am imperfection; God is great; I am miserable; this is always saguna; whereas when a person comes to the higher nature of God; since there are no attributes at all; there will be nothing to differentiate between God and me; Therefore when I come to vigyanam; it will be abheda Gyanam; or advaita Gyanam; and O Arjuna! I will give you both bheda and abheda Gyanam; I

will give you both dvaita and advaita Gyanam; both saguna and nirguna Gyanam this is what I am going to impart to you.

What is the glory of this teaching? It is a rare knowledge that you cannot get anywhere else.

Citing an anecdote Swamiji said, I used to teach in Govindappanayakar Street; a very crowded street. Here there was a huge temple but not many frequented the temple. Even the few that came only wanted to talk about Saguna Ishwara.

The word secret, in shloka, is used to capture everybody's interest as well. It is not mere study. You will obtain practical benefits.

Therefore Sri Krishna promises that gaining this knowledge, you will be released from the ashubham samsara. You will be released from a samsara; which consists of all kinds of psychological problems such as raga-dvesha; kama krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya, etc. All kinds of agony and pain that you have, will all go away and you will have a free life called Jivan mukti; this is the benefit of this knowledge.

Why did I choose to teach you? I chose you because you have a rare quality of a non-critical mind. The word Asuya means critical indicating a negative attitude and even intellectual arrogance. It is also called Vidya Garvam. This is a weakness. Arjuna is intellectually humble and has an open mindedness. Arjuna! You have that attitude and hence you are Ansuya, one who is not looking for faults. Dayanada Swamiji used to say, Asuya means looking for faults, or one with a proofreader mentality.

Shloka # 2:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १.२ ॥

It is the sovereign science, the sovereign mystery, the best

of purifiers. Its apprehension is immediate; it is righteous, imperishable and exceedingly easy to achieve.

Sri Krishna continues with glory of this Ishwara Gyana Mahima. This Royal Knowledge is greatest among all disciplines of knowledge. Why is it called Raja Vidya? The higher Nirguna Swarupam is the highest knowledge. So therefore this knowledge deals with reality; all the other disciplines of knowledge, deal with the unreal or mithya; Therefore this is glorious.

And secondly, this is the only liberating knowledge; which will give you fulfillment at all levels. We generally have a sense of limitation at different levels:

A physical sense of limitation as such not satisfied with my physical personality.

Then there is dissatisfaction with my psychological personality; I am not loved by all people; I am not loved by my son; my daughter does not talk to me; these are psychological deprivations that cause other problems. So, psychologically dissatisfied.

There is greater dissatisfaction for the intellectual; an intellectual person wants to understand the creation in its totality but there are many questions unanswered, even though he has studied a lot; and therefore intellectual dissatisfaction is another sense of limitation.

So, for a rational person, there is a sense of limitation at intellectual level.

Vedanta is a wisdom that destroys the limitations at all the levels. It solves the emotional problems as well as intellectual problems. That is why in the 7th chapter, Sri Krishna said you do not have anything further to know for intellectual satisfaction; it gives total intellectual satisfaction also; and therefore it is greatest knowledge; it is rajavidya and at the same time it is the greatest secret as

it is not easily available.

The next glory of this knowledge is that it is greatest purifier. It removes all impurities such as punya, papa karmas, psychological impurities and Agyanam. All impurities are destroyed. It is the greatest purifier. We will also not acquire impurities in future after obtaining this knowledge.

This knowledge is available here and now. The experience can be obtained here and now. This knowledge is in keeping with Vedic teachings.

We consider Vedas as basic source of knowledge. Anything not in keeping with Vedas cannot survive. Buddhism is an example. Buddha rejected the Vedas as nastika. Nastika means non-believer of Vedas. For, this reason Buddhism was not accepted in India.

During time of Sri Krishna Vedas were very important; hence his emphasis on Vedic tradition. Sri Krishna does not claim to be the originator, rather, he says, it is the Vedic teaching. Even though Buddha is accepted as an Avatara, his teaching is not.

And gaining this knowledge and jivanmukti is far easier; you can get nirguna Ishvara Gyanam and Jivan mukti more comfortably than krama mukti; because for krama mukthi there are rules to be followed; not only you have to do upasana throughout, with consistency, more importantly at the time of death, you have to sit in proper position; you have to withdraw all the pranas and sense organs and bring it to the heart and then you have to force it through the sushumna nadi, and carefully release it through bramrandram and then you go to Brahma loka and attend Vedanta classes there. Therefore, krama mukthi is tough. Compared to kramamukthi jivanmukthi is easier and you can get the benefit here and now. And therefore Sri Krishna says compared to krama mukti, jivan mukti is far easier.

Finally, this knowledge is imperishable. One gets benefit of Moksha. Remember even going to higher Lokas is a perishable benefit. Such a wonderful Gyanam I am going to impart to You, O Arjuna.

Shloka # 3:

मनुष्यैश्चैतन्मया प्रकृतं धर्मविधिमुच्यते
अज्ञानं कुरुते मया प्रकृतं धर्मविधिमुच्यते॥9.3॥

Men who have little faith in this spiritual law, O hero! Return to the way of repeated deaths, failing to reach Me.

Sri Krishna says in spite of all glorifications of this wisdom unfortunately many people don't resort to this Ishwara Gyanam. It is even provided freely. But still, many people don't vote for it. People don't trust it as it is free and touts the highest benefits. Many people don't have shradha in this teaching.

Dharma here means Vedantic teaching. What happens to them, the one's who don't opt for this teaching? All such people lose an opportunity to attain Me, the infinite Ananda. The loss of infinite ananda is an infinite loss for them. They will definitely continue in Samsara in the cycle of birth and death. In Samsara, Mrithyu is the biggest problem or fear. It is a permanent source of insecurity. Such a person stays in this insecurity.

Shloka # 4:

मया सर्वत्र भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि
मया सर्वत्र भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि भूतानि॥9.4॥

The entire world has been pervaded by Me in my unmanifest form. All beings dwell in Me, but I dwell not in them.

With the previous shloka, introduction is over. Subject of Ishwara Gyanam and its glory were introduced. Shradha and Anasuya were also introduced.

Citing story of Athri, Anasuya is Atri's wife.

And why has Athri got Anasuya? Atrihi means the one who has transcended the three. The three are: stula, sukshma and karana sharira trayam; another way of seeing it is as one who has transcended satva, rajas and tamo gunas. Such a person will never have the problem of asuya and whoever is atri, his wife, will be anasuya; this is the symbolic significance Atri and Anasuya.

Now Sri Krishna enters subject matter, the central theme of chapter # 9 and this continues from shloka # 4 till Shloka # 10. This central theme is said to contain the essence of all Upanishads. Here the higher nature of God, Para Prakriti (PP), is discussed.

God, in his higher nature, is formless. Vyaktam means perceptible to Indriyas. Avyaktam means it is not perceptible to senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing.

Lord in his higher nature is not available to any sense organs. Lord is free from all attributes. So, God with a form, is a lower nature of God. Thus Krishnamurthy, Ramamurthy are all forms of god. If you experience God as an object, it is a lower form of God. Vedanta says they are still not the real one. How do you experience the higher God? It is free from all attributes. Once you understand God is formless, the question comes where will he be located; you cannot have location; when will that Lord come; that Lord can never come; that Lord can never go as well.

All this is possible with Saguna Ishwara. The Ultimate one is one who never comes and goes. Once you discover this God, he is always there.

And the next glory or feature of that God is that he is Nirgunam or avyaktam. He is also all pervading.

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 117: Chapter 8 Summary

Swamiji provided a summary of the chapter today. He said this chapter is in the middle section of the Gita. The middle section is from Chapter 7 through chapter 12. Here one of the sadhanas highlighted is Upasana. Upasana is discussed all the way up to chapter 12. It is an important sadhana. It is Saguna Brahma Upasana. It is defined as Saguna Brahma Vishaya Manasa Vyaparah. It is a mental activity. Puja is not Upasana. Puja is a physical activity as such it is a part of Karma Yoga. Japa and Parayana are also part of Karma Yoga. Upasana, however, is a Manasa Vyapara. Upasana is not a mental activity such as say worry. It is a Saguna Brahma Vishaya; or mental activity associated with a God with attributes. This upasana is one of the important topics of Madhyama Shatakam. Two types of upasanas were discussed.

1. Sakama Upasana performed for Material benefits in this world or other worlds. Going to a higher Loka is also a material benefit. It includes miracles. Miracles are not considered spiritual.
2. Nishkama Upasana is where one practices meditation without hankering for material benefits. This nishkama upasana is the topic of the middle section. It is meant for inner and spiritual growth. Nishkama upasana is of two types.

First one one is **sakama upasana**, in which a person practices this for material benefits; either material benefits belonging to this world or the material benefits belonging to the other world. And remember going to higher lokas, also will come under material benefits only because, higher lokas means superior material pleasures. This includes miraculous powers; powers to do miracles; they also will come under material benefits; remember; miracles have nothing to do with spirituality. All this a person can accomplish by practicing sakama upasana.

And there is another form of upasana, which is **nishkama upasana**, in which a person practices the same meditation, saguna Brahma vishaya manasa vyaparaha; but without hankering for material benefit. So without seeking material benefits, a person can practice nishkama upasana. And this nishkama upasana is the primary topic of the middle section. Sri Krishna is not keeping in mind sakama upasana at all in the Gita, he deals with the topic of nishkama upasana primarily. That is an upasana, which is meant for the inner growth of a person; which is meant for the spiritual progress of a person. A person who values spiritual growth more than material accomplishments practises Nishkama upasana; and this Nishkama upasana is divided into two types.

Nishkama Upasana First Type:

In one, a person practices nishkama upasana for a length of time, which will give sufficient spiritual maturity or inner growth or spiritual qualification. The qualifications which are required for Gyana yoga abhyasah; and if a person has acquired those qualifications, known as sadhana cathushtaya sampathi, technically Then he withdraws from nishkama upasana and turns his attention towards Gyana yogaha or Vedanta vichara. Gyana Yoga does not come under upasana.

In what way is Gyana yoga different from upasana? Upasana concentrates on saguna Ishvara; whereas Gyana yoga

concentrates upon nirguna Ishvara, the attribute less Brahman; and this nirguna Ishvara is persuaded not by meditation; but through Vedanta sravana manana nidhidhyasana; Gyana yoga means learning from an acharya. Gyana yoga involves Vedanta sravana consistently for a length of time under the guidance of a competent acharya. And this will give the knowledge of nirgunam Brahma or nirguna Ishvara and then by practising mananam, this knowledge is consolidated, made free from all the doubts in the intellect; and by nidhidhyasanam; this nirguna Ishvara Gyanam is assimilated; all these are done in this life itself.

So thus practice nishkama upasana; acquire qualifications, withdraw from nishkama upasana; apply yourselves in vedanta vichara or shravana manana nidhidhyasana and attain nirguna brahma Gyana nishta; and by acquiring Gyana Nishta; a person gets liberation; here and now, which is called sadyomukthihi; or jivan mukthih;

And having attained jivan mukthi and enjoyed the benefit of jivan mukthi, throughout the life, at the end of prarabdha, this Gyani dies and after the death, the Gyani does not have any travel at all; there is no shukla gati; there is no krishna gati; there is no gati at all; Gyani is one with the Lord; here and now. This is one route of nishkama upasana; it is also known as sadyomukthi route or jivan mukthi route.

And this is the nishkama upasana topic, which Krishna wants to highlight in the Gita; because he wants all of us to get liberation; here and now; not postponing; for Posthumous benefit. Sri Krishna dwells upon that; and therefore nishkama upasana as a means of jivan mukthi is the primary sadhana, Sri Krishna deals with in the 7th chapter, in the 9th chapter, in the 10th, in the 11th and in the 12th also. Whereas in the 8th chapter alone, in the odd man out chapter, the unique and peculiar chapter, Sri Krishna deals with nishkama upasana of another type.

Nishkama Upasana, Second type:

Here a person practices nishkama Ishvara upasana or meditation; he does not want any material benefit other than moksha; and the difference is he continues nishkama upasana throughout the life. Whereas the other person practices nishkama upasana and changes the direction and comes Gyana yoga; whereas in the second type, a person does not come to nirguna Ishvara Gyanam at all; he does not come to Vedanta sravanam manana etc.; Why, whatever be the reason; either he feels he has not qualified enough to think of nirgunam or he does not get an acharya for nirguna Ishvara vichara or for some other problem; a person continues nishkama upasana throughout the life; and because of that his mind is imbued with Ishvara chinta in the form Rama, Krishna or Devi and naturally at the time of death also, his mind thinks of only God; because what you value most in life is the one remembered at the time of death.

So, technically he is an Agyani but nevertheless a nishkama Upasaka. So, remembering God at time of death, is the topic of chapter 8. He does not get liberation here. He travels through shukla gathi to Brahma Loka. There he changes track to Nirguna Ishwara Upasana. Brahmaji himself teaches him. He gets liberation there. This route is called Krama Mukti and it is the topic of chapter 8. Sri Krishna is not suggesting this path to us. He prefers following the jivan mukti route. Therefore chapter 8 can also be called Krama Mukti Chapter. With this background we have to study this chapter.

Shlokas 1-4: Sri Krishna answers questions of Arjuna. Arjuna asked seven questions in Chapter 7. The questions were:

1. What is Brahman?
2. What is Adhyatmam?
3. What is Karma? While dictionary meaning of word is action, what does it mean here?
4. What is adhibhutam?

5. What is adhidaivam?

6. Who or what is Adhiyagna?

6.b. How does Adhiyagna reside in the body; a side question.

7.a. What is significance of remembering god at time of death?

7.b. How can one remember god at time of death?

The seven questions are described in chapter 7, shlokas 7.29 and 7.30.

First six questions were answered in brief answers in shlokas 1 and 2.

Adhyatmam and Brahman are one and same that is the consciousness principle. Two names come from different angles of observation; just like a person is a father, brother, husband etc depending on the relationship. Person is same, however, he is called by different titles.

Thus one consciousness from an individual level is adhyatmam. Same consciousness from macro level is called Brahman.

Adhibhutam is the material universe made of the five elements or the pancha bhutas.

Then adhi daivam; is the hiranyagarbha tatvam or the total mind, governing the material universe. Just as the individual body is governed by the individual mind, and it is your mind that is driving this body; Similarly the total adibhutham is governed by the total mind; which is called hiranyagarba tatvam; which is called adhidaivam.

Adhiyagnam is Ishwara Tatvam that is above Hiranyagarbha Tatvam. He is the Karma Phala Data and the one who presides over laws of Karma. He is seated in my own body noting every action of mine.

Karma is responsible for creation and thus also responsible

for punyam and papam. One's sukham and dukham exhaust our punyams and papams. It requires a body to exhaust punyam and papam. Since there are innumerable jivas with their respective and many punyams and papams, is the reason God has created this law of Karma.

Shloka 5-14:

Six topics were addressed in shlokas 1 and 2. Seventh question was then addressed from shloka # 5 to Shloka # 14. This dealt with the significance of remembering god at time of death. Whatever is remembered at time of death shows the personality of the individual. As we grow older our will power gets weaker and weaker. We are dominated by our vasanas and less by our will. Even addiction, the first time you will be strong and you can say no; but once you don't say no, a vasana forms in form of samskara and you will become weaker. This goes on and on and you will become weaker and weaker with addiction. In AAA they say surrender to God.

As we grow older our habits become stronger than our will power. Our final thoughts are determined by our lifestyle. The last thought is an indication of my lifestyle. Significantly it also determines my next janma as well. Since our will is weak and Vasanas strong; we need to develop good vasanas starting now. **So, therefore what you read; what you utter, what you see, and the people that you move with; should all be noble and good, so that they will generate shubha vasanas.**

Only then our subconscious mind will be saturated with mangala samaskaras. This way, even in a comatose mind, there will be Shubha Vasana. This will lead to Ishwara prapthihi.

Let everything you do including your satsang help you. Choose even the company you keep carefully. Initially this will be an effort but gradually it will become a habit.

You can use any symbol or Devata (alambanam). One can even use Omkara. The symbol is used to remember god through out life.

In such a person, at time of death, his mind withdraws and he thinks of God and then dies. Nishkama Upasaka remembers god effortlessly. This we saw till shloka # 14.

Shlokas # 15-22:

Human beings have two types of goals. First goal is God himself; and the second goal is the world that is other than god. God symbolizes immortality, security, peace and happiness. Hence we say Achytayanamaha that means one who does not slip from immortality. If I chose any other goal than god keep in mind that it is risky. The object of your goal may leave me or I may leave it, at any time.

All the 14 lokas and the higher positions will also come under time and space and therefore there is nothing wrong in using them; nothing wrong in handling them; but don't depend on them. For security and peace depend upon Ishwara. These two goals known as Shreyas and Preyas were discussed in shlokas # 15 through 22.

Shlokas 23-27:

Two types of paths leading to two types of goals were discussed.

Krishna Gathi: leads to finite goals; it will provide you with enjoyment but you will have to return from some higher loka than Brahma loka.

Shukla Gathi: takes one to Brahma Loka, where he gets Gyanam which in turn leads one to Krama mukti.

One who goes through Krishna gathi is a Karmi or a ritualist. These rituals can include Pancha Maha Yagna, social service and all such activities.

One who travels the Shukla gathi meanwhile is a Nishkama upasaka and he attains god in the form of Krama mukti.

In all this we are only discussing a Karmi or Upasaka. We have not included Gyani in this discussion. So, we are talking about an Agyani Karmi or an Agyani Upasaka. Gyani has been excluded from chapter 8.

Shloka # 28: concludes the chapter. Between karma and upasana, Sri Krishna says, upasana is better as it gives Krama mukti after death. A Karmi, however will not get any mukti. So, Arjuna! choose Upasana, says Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna then glorifies the Nishkama Upasaka Yogi. This chapter is called Akshara Brahma Yoga.

Take away:

What you read; what you utter, what you see, and the people that you move with; should all be noble and good, so that they will generate shubha vasanas.

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 116: Chapter 8, Verses 23 to 28

Shloka # 22:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८.२२ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८.२२ ॥

The supreme Spirit, O Arjuna! may be won by means of unswerving devotion-the Spirit in whom all beings dwell and by whom all this is pervaded.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, Sri Krishna made a comparative and contrasting study of two possible destinations for a human being. Although one can have many goals including the four purusharthas, Sri Krishna compressed all those goals into two types. One is an infinite goal while the other is a finite goal. Every goal is finite or infinite. Even dharma, artha, kama moksha are finite. Because dharma means punya and any amount of punya you acquire, it is born out of finite actions. Wealth accumulated is finite; Kama that includes all forms of entertainment is also finite. The 14 Lokas including Brahma loka, even Brahmaji himself, are all finite. They may have a long duration of existence, but nevertheless they are finite. Even the sun will explode one day showing its finite existence.

Finite goals can also be called anatama while infinite goal can be termed as atma or god himself. God is sashvatham everything else is ashashvatham. Intelligent person must see god alone. So choose god alone as your goal. This is what Krishna's advice or teaching is. And to drive home this point, he just discussed this elaborately from shloka's #15 through # 22.

And when we say God is the destination, initially we present God as a person, situated in some loka, like Vaikuntha or Kailasa. However, Sri Krishna wants to remove that idea because, if God is a person located in a place, even God will come under finite goal, bound by time and space. Anything not bound by space and time has to be formless. So, God is the formless consciousness principle. God is neither matter nor energy. If god is energy it cannot be transformed. However, both mechanical energy and electrical energy are all inter transformable; meaning it is part of time. So, God is neither matter nor energy; God is the witness consciousness that

witnesses change. It itself is changeless. It is infinite. It should be your destination.

Shloka # 23:

शुक्लमग्नायतन्निष्कामोऽयं पुरुषः ।
अत्रैव भ्रूयते तस्यैव शरणमथ ।॥८.२३॥

Best of Bharata Princes! I shall declare the time departing in which, the Yogins do not return and also that, departing in which, they return.

Having talked about two destinations from shloka 23 onwards Sri Krishna now talks about two types of paths that lead to the two types of goals. A route is required to reach a destination. So, we have two margas. This also means there are two types of travellers travelling the two routes to two different destinations. Shloka # 23 through # 27 discuss the two margas then the two travellers.

In the shloka Kala means marga. Yogin means traveller or seeker. Yanti means reaches. Anavrthi means infinite goal; it is a goal from which one does not return. The other goal is called Avrithi, where they go and return. Avrithi is a finite goal. These two margas, I shall teach, O Arjuna, says Sri Krishna.

The two margas are:

Shulka Marga: Bright path

Krishna marga: Gloomy path. In this path one enjoys pleasures of another world and then returns. It is known as Devayanam or Krishnayanam.

Shloka # 24:

शुक्लमग्नायतन्निष्कामोऽयं पुरुषः ।
अत्रैव भ्रूयते तस्यैव शरणमथ ।॥८.२४॥

The fire, light, day, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern solar movements, departing in time marked by these, Brahman-knowers reach Brahman.

Sri Krishna defines Shukla Gathi or Devayanam here. Those who go through shukla marga attain God or Krama mukti. To attain karma mukti one goes first to Brahma loka, gets Gyanam there and then gets liberation. The nature of shukla marga is now described. Vedas talk of Shukla and Krishna margas. Brahmasutra provides greater details of both these paths. There are guides, devatas, to help travellers in these paths. They take you to a particular destination and hand you off to another guide. Who are these devatas? They are: Agni, Jyoti, Ahaha, Shukla and Uttarayanam. These are the five devatas for Shukla marga.

Uttarayanam is the six-month period when sun travels north. Devata here means the intelligent principle governing laws of nature. All devatas put together is Hiranyagarbha Tatvam. These five devatas are the guides.

Who is the traveller? They are special people entitled to this travel. They are Saguna Brahma Upasakas or worshippers of God with attributes. Ritualists or Karmi's don't get to travel in this marga.

A Gyani will also not get to travel this path because he gets his liberation here itself. A Gyani does not need Krama mukti. The karmi, ritualist, does not get any mukti, jivan or krama. So, the route is shukla gathi and the traveller is also known.

Shloka # 25:

शुक्लं गच्छन्ति ब्रह्मज्ञानिनः शुक्रेण चन्द्रमण्डलम्
शुक्लं गच्छन्ति ब्रह्मज्ञानिनः शुक्रेण चन्द्रमण्डलम्8.25

Smoke, night, the dark (fortnight) the six months of the sun's southern course-passing away during time marked by these, the Yogin reaches the lunar light and returns.

In shloka:

Tatra means the second path or Krishna marga.

Yogi means Karmi or ritualist; they don't practice upasanas. They obtain punyams of a lower quality. Upasana gives the highest quality of punyam, as mental sadhana is more difficult. Karmi reaches swarga loka or Chandra loka that are lower than Brahma Loka (satya loka).

The guides here are: Dhuma Devata (smoke); Ratri devata; Krishna paksha devata and Dakshinayana Devata. More devatas are cited by Chandogya Upanishad to take one to Swargaloka.

Why is swarga loka path a dark one? Here he will go and enjoy, but once punyam is over he has to come back to this world. Even thinking of his return adds to his misery. The traveller here is a karmi or a ritualist.

Shloka # 26:

शुक्लं च कृष्णं च यत्पथं तद्विदुः
शुक्लं च कृष्णं च यत्पथं तद्विदुः 8.26

These two are indeed the light and dark courses held to be eternal for the world. By means of the first one goes and does not return; by the other one comes back again.

Sri Krishna is gives the names of the paths here. The two paths are known as Shukla gathi and Krishna gathi. When were the two roads created? They were created with the creation of the universe and vedas when the Karma Upasana teaching came down, as did human beings. With this the sadhaka also came into being, as did the two paths. So, they are all eternal until next pralayam. They are as eternal as the universe. A person going via shukla gathi will obtain Krama Mukti also known as anavrithi.

Through Krishna gathi one goes to Swarga loka due to his punyam; he will however have to return. The two paths have

been detailed in the Brahma sutra.

The previous two shlokas have some confusing aspects. In the previous two shlokas, Sri Krishna mentions uttarayanam and shukla paksha, and day-time and Sri Krishna says whoever dies in those times, a person will go to karma mukthi. So the confusion that can come is we may think the time of death will determine whether we will get shukla gati or Krishna gati.

Similarly if you study the 25th shloka, it appears as though if you die in dakshinayanam, Krishna paksha or nighttime, it appears as though you will get Krishna gati. Therefore it appears as though the time of death will determine the direction of travel because the word kala is used there.

Brahma sutra however clarifies by saying that time of death does not determine direction of journey; rather it is quality of death that determines which route one takes. For any confusion in understanding the Gita, Brahma sutra's interpretation is considered the final word.

Shloka # 27:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८.२७ ॥

Knowing these courses, Arjuna no Yogin falls into delusion. Therefore, at all times apply yourself to Yoga.

Sri Krishna says, I have talked about two paths and two travellers. Knowing the difference between the two margas a Yogi, an intelligent seeker, a viveki, is never confused with respect to the path.

O Arjuna I assure, you are an intelligent seeker; so become an upsaka or take the path of upsana. Continue with karma but also perform Saguna Ishwara Upasana.

Yoga in shloka means Saguna Ishwara Upasana. Between Karma and Upasana choose upasana. Keep in mind Gyanam is still superior

to both Karma and Upasana. It is, however, not discussed in chapter # 8.

Gyanam comes back in Chapter # 9. With this the discussion on this topic has concluded. Now Sri Krishna glorifies God as the destination.

Shloka # 28:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 8.28 ॥

The meritorious fruits (of learning) the Vedas, of sacrifices, penances and gifts-all these the Yogin transcends by knowing this, and he also reaches the supreme Primal State.

Yogi Idam Sarvam in shloka means Saguna Ishwara Upasaka. Having understood the teaching, this upsaka votes for Krama mukti and attains God.

Here God is described as Param adhyam sthanam; the supreme and beginning less abode; or destination; So adhyam means sarva karanam; param means the highest and sthanam means destination, which is none other than nitya Ishwaram upaiti.

What is glory of Nithya Ishwara? It is greater than all karma phalam's including Veda parayanam, rituals, vows, charity and many more such karmas. Veda promises punya phalam. However, Upsana phalam transcends all these karma phalams. Upasana gets God, so take to saguna Ishwara Upasana. So, O Arjuna! remember God at time of death, says Sri Krishna. With this the seventh question of Arjuna also has been answered.

So thus is concluded the 8th chapter titled, aksharam brahma yoga. Better title for this chapter might have been prayanakala smarana yoga. In some books, this chapter is titled, Taraka Brahma yoga. They are all acceptable.

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 115: Chapter 8, Verses 18 to 22

Greetings All,

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अविद्यायाः कर्मणोः प्रलयोद्भवोऽप्यव्ययः ॥ १८ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अविद्यायाः कर्मणोः प्रलयोद्भवोऽप्यव्ययः ॥ १८ ॥

At break of day, all individuals are born of the Unmanifest; when night falls, they are dissolved in the same Unmanifest.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, from shloka # 15 to shloka # 22, Sri Krishna is comparing two forms of human goals.

One attainable through karma through a varieties of actions, loukika and vaidika; scriptural and non-scriptural; secular and religious. They can give one set of results and the other type of goal attainable is through Nishkama upasana.

Sri Krishna wants to point out that Karma phalam is finite while upasana phalam is infinite. We are not comparing gyanam to any other sadhana here. Here comparison is between karma phalam and upasana phalam. Upasana phalam is superior to karma phalam. Karma can give all types of results upto Brahma loka

but they are all finite in nature. Nishkama Upasana gives one Krama Mukti, which is an infinite result.

Therefore, karma phalam is parichinnam whereas Nishkama upasana phalam, krama mukthi, is aparichinna. This is the idea Sri Krishna wants to convey through the shlokas beginning from the 15th to 22nd.

While talking of material results, the highest goal possible, within time and space, is Brahma Loka prapthihi, which is also finite. Sri Krishna admits that while Brahmaji's life is a long one even he finally faces an end. He spoke about one day of Brahmaji as being 2000 Chatur Yugas. It appears as though it is infinite, while in reality it too is finite.

Sri Krishna gives some incidental information now. When Brahmaji's day starts, creation comes into being. When he goes to sleep creation goes into an unmanifest condition. Similar process plays out with an individual as well. When he wakes up everything rises. And when he goes to sleep his private world is resolved. This is known as Laya.

In Brahmaji's world, objective world rises and resolves. In shloka # 18 all Vyaktas arise from Avyakta condition. They were resting in Brahmaji in a potential form.

We also experience this through our dream world every day. We throw our dream world from our own mind; our today's dream is potentially there in our mind in form of Vasanas and impressions. We throw out the dream-space; dreamtime and dream objects and we have duration for the dream as well. In the same way, with Brahmaji, he withholds the creation and again throws them out. And that form withheld by Brahmaji is called avyaktam.

Similar idea was discussed in chapter 2 as well. Thus we learn that the universe is never created by anybody. Creation is wrong word to use; **nothing is created or destroyed**. This applies to the creation of the world as well. So the question

of why god created does not arise for us. For us, the world is there eternally. Nobody created the world. It is against law of conservation of energy. **Thus the word creation must be replaced by the word manifestation. The world was always there, God did not create; it was there in potential form; and the potential matter; the potential world in time acted upon by time, undergoes a modification and the unmanifest, now modified, becomes manifest.**

Time is an integral part of matter and creation. Matter and time cannot be separated. They are inseparable. That is the reason we do not know about time before the big bang.

With time everything goes back into unmanifest condition then it comes back as manifest. This cycle of manifest and unmanifest is an eternal process. So, unmanifest does not mean an end of the world.

Shloka # 19:

सर्वजन्तुनामोऽपि भूतानां प्रलयकाले भवन्ति
सर्वजन्तुनामोऽपि भूतानां प्रलयकाले भवन्ति 8.19

This same host of beings after repeated births, get dissolved, helplessly, O Arjuna! at the time of nightfall and are born at day break.

If universe goes to unmanifest and then again manifests, what happens to all jivas?

Sri Krishna says the individual will also have the same destiny. They also will go to unmanifest condition; in which all the Jivas will remain potentially inactive, dormant, like the hibernation of some animals; we all will go back to hibernation. And after remaining in potential form for many yugas; again the jivas will emerge with their own karmas, punyam and papam intact.

How will we remain in pralayam? God has given us a simulated

experience. We get a taste of it when we go to sleep. In sleep, our ego gets resolved and it remains dormant without destruction.

Citing an example, suppose in tonight's sleep, all the 8th chapter knowledge was destroyed, then next class I have to again start with the same topic. But how am I able to continue with the same topic? Because, during sleep, your knowledge is not destroyed, it goes to a potential condition. In the same way, during pralaya, all the Jivas go to their potential condition and again come back in the next srishti.

The same group of Jivas will go dormant, but will come back again and again in an eternal process. Thus, no new jiva is created. The question comes up, if no new jiva is created why is there a population explosion? When we think of jivas we tend to think of human beings alone. In reality jivas include all beings including human, animal, plants, insects, lokas, asuras, devas etc. All of them put together, the number remains same as per our scriptures.

Swami Chinmayananda used to say; previously there were many forests with animals. They were hunted and killed. They all were converted to human beings.

New Jivas can't be created. Even if one can be created what type of body should it get? A Jiva has to have past karmas. Only based on its past karma a body comes up. If there is no past karma available on what basis will a new body come into being? Remember the body is not determined by Bhagavan's wish; the body is determined by purvakarma; a fresh jiva will never have a purva karma; therefore it is not possible. And this defect is called krita akrita dosha.

If a fresh jiva cant be created, when were we created first and what was its basis? We were never created; we are anadi. Same jiva remains and goes through the manifesting and unmanifesting cycle. If it is cyclic process why not call it

condition; and **there is total blankness; but even at that time, there is someone who is aware of that condition.** Who is aware of that; I am aware; how do you know, I am aware; because when I wake up, I am able to talk about the blank state, that means I was continuing, unchangeably, even when the duality came and the duality got resolved, I remained unaffected by that. This observer of the matter, this observer of the change, is the changeless consciousness principle, which is beyond time and space. Consciousness does not fall within time. Consciousness does not fall within space.

It is beyond time and space.

Consciousness therefore does not fall within matter and therefore consciousness does not fall within the physical and the chemical laws. That is reason the scientists are struggling to understand Consciousness; the physical and chemical laws do not appear to apply to it. It does not follow physical and chemical laws. Therefore, scientists are not able to understand it. Some scientists have started saying consciousness is beyond these laws and cannot be located. Only something in space can be located. Who is this consciousness? It is the witness consciousness. It is God, says Sri Krishna. It is Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam Brahman.

What about various forms attributed to God? A gross mind cannot grasp the subtle consciousness, which is beyond space and time.

Therefore until the intellect gets sufficiently sensitized, until it is sufficiently prepared, we have to attribute a form. We have to worship form. Ultimately God is Shudha Chaitanya Swarupam. O Arjuna! Become one with this God.

And O Arjuna, I want to you to discover oneness with that God. That is the aim of all religious and spiritual struggles.

One, avyaktha is nothing but unmanifest matter; other than that unmanifest matter, there is something else, which is a

The Unmanifest is said to be “the imperishable”; they say that He is the supreme goal. My supreme abode is that, attaining which none returns.

Sri Krishna talks more about God, the limitless goal; the real goal of life, which is worth attempting; which is avyaktha No.2 mentioned in the previous verse. This avyaktha No.2 mentioned in the previous verse is the Consciousness principle; and this consciousness or chaitanyam is also known in the scriptures as akshara.

It is also known as Akshara, the imperishable or timeless. This word is used in Mundako Upanishad.

Mundako Upanishad calls consciousness as aksharam and defines it as: colorless, formless, smell-less; tasteless; touch-less; etc.

Accomplishing such a Brahman is the real goal. Only then you go beyond time and space. Space is within time. Liberation does not mean going to a place. **It is going to Brahman, reaching which one does not return.**

How to reach Brahman? There is no travel required to reach Brahman. It is possible only through wisdom. It was never away from me. It is “I” myself. So you reach Brahman in the form of claiming Brahman as myself.

Through knowledge you do not reach Brahman,

Through knowledge you drop the notion that Brahman is away. So all these are the important fundamentals of Vedanta, which you have to reflect upon and it is about reaching one from whom one never returns.

Sri Krishna, Rama etc are my inferior nature or Apara Prakriti. Consciousness is Para Prakriti. Start with AP then one day goes to PP.

Shloka # 22:

सर्वेषां च तेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां
सर्वेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां सर्वेषां 8.22

The supreme Spirit, 0 Arjuna! may be won by means of unswerving devotion-the Spirit in whom all beings dwell and by whom all this is pervaded.

0 Partha! So this avyaktha No.2; this consciousness

principle is called Para purusha; So he is the supreme purusha; supreme Brahman, the highest reality; the absolute truth. I have given two meanings of the word

purusha. One is that it is the absolute Brahman in which all beings rest. The other is the idea that Brahman does not exist within the creation rather the whole creation rests in that Brahman.

Purushsa is a description of nature of Brahman.

In him alone all beings rest. By this Consciousness whole creation is pervaded. If anything exists, consciousness must be there. To know it exists, the being requires consciousness. Existence presupposes knowledge; it pre-supposes consciousness. So, this consciousness pervades whole creation. Sri Krishna feels this may be too high a matter to understand. Don't get disheartened, he says. What is required is sincere desire to get this knowledge.

So, Sri Krishna says, You can go to nirgunam brahma by your Nishkama bhakthi; once you understand that alone is the ultimate goal; because anything else falls within domain of time and space and therefore mortality; I am no more interested in mortality and the tyranny of time. But once you have understood tyranny of time, and once you are sincerely devoted to the timeless Brahman, you are called a Nishkama bhaktha; or a mumukshu; and with this sincere desire, you continue your saguna bhakthi; sooner or later, you will get the qualifications required for that nirguna bhakthi;

therefore he says that Brahman is attainable.

So with this Sri Krishna completes his comparative study of God as higher goal and world as the lower goal, and an intelligent person would vote for god and not for

world and if you vote for God you become a Nishkama upasaka.

Take away:

1. The world was always there, God did not create; it was there in potential form; and the potential matter; the potential world in time acted upon by time, undergoes a modification and the unmanifest, now modified, becomes manifest.
2. The same group of Jivas will go dormant, but will come back again and again in an eternal process. Thus, no new jiva is created.
3. Nothing is created or destroyed. Thus the word creation must be replaced by the word manifestation.
4. Through knowledge you do not reach Brahman;

Through knowledge you drop the notion that Brahman is away.

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhawat Geeta Class 114: Chapter 8, Verses 12 to 18

Shloka # 12:

संयम्यैवात्मनो ज्ञानं प्रविशति यो यथा
संयम्यैवात्मनो ज्ञानं प्रविशति यो यथा 8.12

Controlling all gateways of the senses, confining the mind in

the heart, fixing the life breath in the crown and intent on the maintenance of Yoga.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, from shloka # 6 onwards, of chapter # 8, Sri Krishna has been answering Arjuna's questions regarding the method, significance and benefits of remembering god at time of death. Ishwara smaranam at time of death requires a person to be a Nishkama upasaka; upasaka means the one who practices meditation on Ishwara with attributes; therefore we say saguna upasaka.

Upasaka is a meditator on god who recognizes that his highest goal is Ishwara alone. Finite form Ishwara symbolizes infinite God. Symbol is representation of god. We know symbol is finite. Facing this finite symbol he considers the infinite god as goal of life. God alone is Sat. Everything else is Tamas.

He considers that infinite God as the primary goal of life. Thus we have the shloka:

Asatoma sad gamaya;

everything else other than God

is asat, God alone is Sat;

Tamasomaya jyotirgamaya;

everything other than God is tamas; God alone is jyothihi; and

Mrythoma amrutham gamaya;

everything other than God is mruthyu means mortality; God alone represents immortality.

Such a person is a nishkaama upasaka. He remembers god at time of death. As a person thinks so he becomes. Nishkama Upasaka thinks of god and he becomes one with god. This Upasaka then goes to Brahma loka and gets nirguna upasana gyanam. This is

known as Krama Mukti.

Even though infinite god is one, the symbols representing him are finite and can be many. Scriptures give us many symbols such as Rama Krishna etc. There are also Pratika symbols such as fire, lingam, Omkara etc. Omkara is a Pratika alambanam. Upasaka through Omkara remembers God. At time of death too he remembers Om and dies. Some others may remember Rama or Krishna as well at time of death.

Citing a story, a man was about to die. Goddess Parvati wanted to help him. She requested God Shiva to help him. Shiva said that man did not need any help. But upon Parvati's insistence Shiva agreed to help. He said if man remembers amma, it would mean he remembered parvati and if he remembers appa it will mean he remembered Shiva. Unfortunately at time of death the man said Ayyo and died. Shiva told parvathi that human beings are like that. Even if you want to rescue them they wont allow it.

Shloka # 13:

ॐ ब्रह्मन्महात्म्यं सर्वलोकेश्वरं ॥
ॐ नमोऽस्तुते त्वेयं कथा ॥ ८.१३ ॥

Uttering the monosyllable AUM representing Brahman and remembering Me, who goes forth leaving the body, he proceeds to the highest goal.

What does this Nishkama Omakra Upasaka do at the time of death? Since he has not come to Vedanta Gyanam, Vedanta considers him an Agyani.

Even though he is a very informed person, with regard to all other things, even though he is well informed with regard to upasana, he is ignorant with regard to the essential oneness between the jivatma and paramatma. And if he has that knowledge, he need not bother about krama mukthi at all; because with this knowledge itself liberation is guaranteed

here and now.

This Agyani Nishkama Upasaka uses Omkara to remember God. He remembers Om the Ekaksharam (one syllable), the word revealing Brahman.

Everyone does not have to remember Om; other names such a Rama or Krishna will also do. Through this word he remembers not any finite thing but god alone. Finite things wont accompany him after death only god will. The one who travels with God, nishkama Upasaka, upon death he takes the Shukla Gathi. Sthula sharira is dropped, atma does not travel, and therefore, what travels is the subtle and causal body in which all the punya papa karmas are stored. It is that one which travels, which alone we call the soul or jivaha and therefore this jivaha consisting of sukshma shariram and of course the reflected Consciousness, it travels. And it, the jivatma travels towards the highest goal of life; so the travel is towards krama mukthi. Krama mukti means one goes to brahma loka, and gains knowledge and liberation there.

Shloka # 14:

एकचिन्तयन्ममैवमन्त्रं तदात्मनोऽहमेवमन्त्रं
तदात्मनोऽहमेवमन्त्रं तदात्मनोऽहमेवमन्त्रं 8.14

To the single-minded Yogin in perpetual communion, who constantly remembers Me, I am easily accessible, O Arjuna.

Question comes up how all these things are possible especially at time of death? Sri Krishna says, it is possible by sheer abhyasa or practice. Everything I am associated with belongs to God alone.

This life is a field, an exercising field, to learn loving other people. Not to get security from them; not for taking anything from them; we will only be training in giving care, love, and compassion; and through my training I have been given a nice opportunity.

Shastras say, at time of death hand over everything to God then mind will not dwell on them.

Suppose a person remembers me all the time, and remembers God represents the totality. Personal God is only for convenience, but the personal God also represents the totality. The one who remembers this fact that there is no individual separate from the total, that there is no wave separate from ocean, reaches Me. If wave claims I have a separate existence, it is ignorance on the part of the wave; enlightened wave never claims individuality; it knows that there is nothing separate from ocean; with this awareness, one who remembers regularly this fact is an upasaka. That is why I repeatedly tell this example: a wave is always permanently related to the ocean alone; because it rises from the ocean; it exists in the ocean; and it resolves into the ocean. And not only in this birth; if the wave takes a punarjanma, again it is born out of the ocean; and therefore, wave's permanent relationship is with the ocean alone. The relationship between any two waves is temporary and incidental. In my preoccupation with incidental relationships, I should not lose sight of the fundamentals.

The fundamental relationship makes me a bhaktha; incidental relationships make me a husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, in laws, etc. So, all the roles that you play are incidental; and you have to play those roles, you need not deny them. But remember, that fundamental relationship is with the Lord, the one who remembers this without being distracted by the incidental roles that he plays, the one who remembers this fact in the background like a tampura sruti reaches Me. Just as a musician does not lose sight of tampura sruti, the moment tampura sruti is lost sight of, apa sruti comes; then the music will not be music anymore. And, therefore, in the background, the one who remembers Me, for such a Nishkama upasaka, O Partha, I am the easiest person to remember. Just as a person who is attached to money always remembers money,

ultimately you are going to discover God not outside but as tat tvam asi; therefore ultimately God dependence is going to become self-dependence, because God is not going to be away from me. Therefore God represents tripathi; God represents security; God represents fulfillment. So, he is a wiser choice.

Now, a comparison is provided between two goals of God and world. He says: If a person attains Me, the Lord, then what is the advantage?

If one attains Me such a mahatma won't come to finitude or mortality; he will have no ups or downs in life. I am on top of world. He is like a floating log. Finitude represents a temple of sorrow. In Ramalaya, Rama is permanently placed in temple, as is Shiva in shivalaya. In world, dukham is permanent placed. Dukham is a source of dissatisfaction that is fleeting and impermanent.

This samsara is not for wise person. They have accomplished the much higher goal of moksha.

Shloka # 16:

संसारं विजित्वा भूयः संसारेति भावः ।
मोक्षं लब्ध्वा तत्रैव तिष्ठति न पुनरिह ॥ १६ ॥

Worlds upto and including Brahma's are repeatedly won and lost, O Arjuna! but, on reaching Me, there is no more rebirth.

What about heaven?

In some religions heaven is called eternal. Sri Krishna says heaven is also a finite goal. Scriptures say there are six heavens: bhuvan loka, svar loka, mahar loka, jana loka, tapo loka, and satya loka. In each higher loka the pleasure goes higher and higher. Brahmaloaka is place of highest pleasure. But even Brahmaloaka cannot assure Security. You can go there enjoy and come back to the world. All 14 lokas exist within

time and space. There is only one beyond time and space, and that is Ishwara. He is un-located. That is the reason you have to travel to Lokas. Even Brahmaji is not permanent. It is only a name of a post. Even he will have to vacate. He too depends on Gyanam for security. O Arjuna, if you come to Me, who is beyond time and space, there is no question of the infinite becoming finite again, therefore, that alone will give you permanent security.

Shloka # 17:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १७ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ १७ ॥ 8.17 ॥

Men who know about day and night hold that a day of Brahma consists of a thousand ages, and that night also is of a thousand ages.

In these shlokas Sri Krishna talks of Brahmaji's longevity. Brahmaji is different from Brahman. Brahman is timeless God. Brahmaji is finite husband of Goddess Saraswathi. Brahman is nirguna while Brahmaji is saguna.

One Brahmaji day is 2000 human chatur yugas. One Yuga is a measurement of time like a month or year. We have four yugas. They are: krita yuga; threta yuga; dvapara yuga and kaliyugah.

We are in kali yuga. Its duration is 432,000 human years.

Dwapara yuga was double of Kali yuga or 864,000 human years.

Tretayuga was three times kaliyuga or 1,296,000 human years.

Krita Yuga was four times kaliyuga or 1,728,000

Therefore one chatur yuga is a combination of all four yugas or 4,320,000 years.

One day of Brahmaji is 2000 chatyr yugas. After 2000 chatur yugas Brahmaji will tear off his one day. He has 365 days in a

year as well. He has 100 years to live. Brahmaji is now 51 years old. We are in first day of his 51 st year. This is 27th or 28th chatur yuga. We can estimate chatur yugas years left.

For 1000 chatur yugas Brahmaji is awake. For 1000 chatur yugas Brahmaji will sleep. In shloka yuga means chatur yuga.

In shloka ahaha means day time or half a day. Those people who have studied scriptures alone know these details. What happens to a day and night of Brahmaji is detailed in next Shloka.

Shloka # 18:

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At break of day, all individuals are born of the Unmanifest; when night falls, they are dissolved in the same Unmanifest.

Brahmaji’s day and night is similar to our day and night. When our day begins our interactions begin. It is an active world of space, time, people interactions, consequences and responses as well. The moment I go to sleep my world of plurality is resolved for me. Emotions are resolved. It is Nirvikapla avastha or undifferentiated state. In my sleep, only my world is resolved. My private world rises and resolves. For Brahmaji it happens at macro level. When I sleep it is called Laya, at micro level. When Brahmaji sleeps it is called Pralaya, at a macro level. In Pralaya whole creation goes to sleep.

When I sleep my private world goes into dormancy. In Brahmaji it goes into Avyakta avastha. Here all individuals are resolved into unmanifest condition. As per science, matter cannot be created or destroyed. In atomic explosion matter becomes energy; or visible become invisible; like water to vapor. So, too, visible universe becomes an un-manifest condition or it becomes prakriti or Maya. When he awakens, energy becomes matter. Non-duality becomes duality and

activity begins again. Out of unmanifest they become manifest. Thus the world goes in a cyclic form of manifestation and unmanifestation; expansion-contraction; evolution-involution. Thus, the whole universe continues in a cyclic form, eternally.

Take away:

Your mind remembers what you value most in your life.

Asatoma sad gamaya;

Tamasomaya jyotirgamaya;

Mrythoma amrutham gamaya;

Ram Ramaswamy

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Shloka # 8:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८.८ ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ८.८ ॥

O Arjuna! Steadily thinking with an unswerving mind, disciplined in the yoga of repeated practice, one proceeds to

the supreme, divine Spirit.

Continuing his teaching Swamiji said, Sri Krishna answering the seventh question of Arjuna, from the fifth shloka onwards, is dealing with topic of remembering God at time of death. He is also dealing with Saguna Ishwara Upasanam or meditating on god with attributes. This Upasaka is a nishkama upasaka whose goal in life is spiritual and who has acquired Vairagyam.

And this Nishkama upasaka can take to two different courses of life, one is practising Nishkama upasana for sometime, and thereafter switching over the sadhdana to the vedanta vicharah; or nirguna ishvara gyanam in form of sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. By performing this upasana one obtains Jivan mukti. This topic of nishkama upasana is however further elaborated in chapter # 9.

Another path for an Upasaka is where he or she continues in Saguna Upasana. Here Upasaka feels he is not qualified enough; or an appropriate acharya was not available to him or due to his poor health etc. So, due to some obstacles he is not able to perform Nirguna Upasana. So, he continues in Saguna Upasana. Sri Krishna says, since this upasaka values Ishwara parpithi he too remembers god at time of death. He, however, after his death goes to Brahma Loka where he enters into Nirguna Ishwara Upasana. In Brahma Loka he obtains Gyanam and this gyanam is called Krama Mukti. This Krama Mukti is the topic of the current Chapter 8.

How can a person remember god at time of death when my control over my fading senses is weak? Sri Krishna says it will become effortless if your devotion enters and permeates your subconscious mind. So, at time of death, even if conscious mind does not think, subconscious mind will certainly think of god. Swamiji repeated his favorite phrase in this context:

Watch your thoughts; they become the words;

Watch your words, they become your actions;

Watch your action, they become your habit;

Watch your habit; they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

So therefore an alert life from now itself is called abhyasa yoga. And with a mind which is strengthened by abhyasa yoga, and therefore with an undistracted mind, when a person remembers the Lord, he will attain krama mukthi.

Shloka # 9:

कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं
कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं
कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं
कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं कृष्णं 8.9

Whosoever remembers the wise, ancient Ruler, subtler than subtle, the Upholder of all (things), imponderable of form, resplendent like the sun beyond darkness.

So here Krishna talks about the attributes of the Lord who is remembered by the Nishkama upasaka at the time of death. Each word in the shloka is an attribute describing God. Eight attributes are mentioned. So, here, it looks like the Nishkama Upasaka appears to be in touch with scriptures.

The word **Kapi** means total mind or omniscient.

The word **Puranam** means ancient one; one never created; the creator.

The word **Anusashithanam**: One who gives karma phalam to Jivas according to laws of karma, including moral laws.

The word **Anoh aniyamsam** means the one who is subtler than even the subtlest atom; which means the one who is not available for any sense organs or any sensory perception. So the one who is beyond shabda, sparsha, rupa, rasa and gandha. So, from

this, it is very clear, that a physical form that we attribute to the Lord is only symbolic, like a national flag; the flag is not India; but the flag represents India. Similarly, the form-full God represents the formless reality; the formless beauty; the formless immortality; the formless peace; the formless security, in fact everything that we seek in life that is symbolized as God. These are the things that we seek, peace, we seek, security we seek, fullness we seek, all these are abstract goals; and these abstract goals are concretely symbolized as the physical God; and therefore anoh aniyamsam, whose real nature is formlessness.

The word **Sarvasya Dhataram** means the one who is the substratum; the support of the entire creation; being the very cause of the creation; just as ocean is the very substratum for all the waves and bubbles, they all rise in the ocean, rest in the ocean, and resolve in the ocean. Similarly, the Lord is vishva-adharam and in vedantic context, we use the word, sadrupam; sattha; the one who is the very existence principle.

In Chandogya Upanishad, the Lord is presented as the very existence principle, which supports all. But to understand the existence principle, we require a subtle intellect and therefore we symbolize the 'sat' in a particular form; but existence has no form at all. Therefore sarvasya dhataram;

The word **Achintya rupam** means one who is incomprehensible, one, who cannot be objectified.

Mind can only study attributes. It cannot study one without attributes; just as a car cannot move in the ocean or a ship on the land; the Mind is not meant for a field without attributes.

God is the subject that objectifies everything; so he can't be objectified. But God is temporarily objectified in the physical formed god. By stepping through every attribute one

reaches the attribute-less god.

For those people who cannot conceive of the attribute-less truth, the Upanishad comes down and presents the attributed God. By stepping through every attribute one reaches the attribute-less god; therefore achintyarupam

The word **Adityavarnam** means One who is like the sun. In Katho Upanishad it says one sun illuminates everything. Just as one Sun illumines everything, God is that one consciousness, because of which we are conscious of everything else; therefore adityavarnam is the one who is all-illumining consciousness.

Tamasaha Parastat means one who is unaffected by darkness. The difference between sunlight and atma jyoti is that sunlight can't illuminate darkness. Swami Chinmayananda used to tell a story: somebody told Sun God: There is a beautiful girl, Miss Darkness; so you can get married to her. Therefore the Sun God decided he should meet Miss Darkness; so he asked, where is Miss Darkness; they told him it is on the other side of the earth; so the Sun started running after Miss Darkness. The Sun is still going round and round; that is why we have sunrise and sunset;

Sun can illumine everything, but he can never illumine darkness; that is the limitation of the Sun. Consciousness is, however, a superior light, which can illumine the Darkness as well. Thus, think, how do you know if it is dark? Because you know it is dark. It is not affected by darkness.

Such a nishkama upasaka meditates upon god including at time of death. Swamiji said this shloka is grammatically incomplete as such we have to add that: he obtains god or krama mukti.

Shloka # 10:

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□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 8.10

At the hour of departure whoso with steady mind, and with devotion and the power of Yoga, sustains aright the life force between the brows (and remembers), reaches the Spirit supreme, divine.

Here Sri Krishna talks of how the Nishkama Upasaka remembers god at time of death. This process is detailed in Katho Upanishad.

At time of death the pancha prana's are withdrawn to Hridayam; then they are directed to Sushumna Nadi that opens at the top of the head; then Brahmarandram launches prana through shukla gathi to take it to Brahma Loka.

For all these things, he has to prepare. Therefore, he has to bring the prana to a place between the eyebrows; which represents sushumna nadi, because it is supposed to travel through the middle of the head and directly behind the bru deshaha.

How can I withdraw prana, at time of death? Sri Krishna says if a person wants karma mukti, he must not only be a great upasaka but a great yogi as well. A yogi well versed in ashtanga yoga so that he can control prana. There are yogis who can control involuntary muscles. So Sri Krishna says, upasaka must be a yogi to obtain karma mukti.

To obtain jivan mukti one need not be a great yogi. By strength of yoga one can withdraw prana and direct it. He also enjoys a mind, which is very steady and undistracted at time of death. This is possible through the discipline of yoga.

He must be totally devoted to Me. This devotion is powered by yoga by which he can direct the mind towards the Lord.

By such upasana he obtains lord himself. What type of Lord?

One who is param purusham divyam or the highest, limitless and is of the nature of consciousness. This leads him to karma mukti.

Shloka # 11:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 8.11

That Imperishable which the Veda-knowers set forth, which ascetics, devoid of attachments, enter, and seeking which, they live a life of continence-that goal, briefly, I shall declare to you.

Here, Sri Krishna talks of glories of god.

All Vedic learners learn that the aksharam or ultimate reality is the only source of fullness, happiness etc. Committed seekers reach this ultimate reality.

The word Yataha means Sanyasi, who single-mindedly pursue spiritual goal. Sanyasi need not be an external sanyasi; it is anyone who has turned away from finite goals of life. They understand that everything is Apra Prakriti; that they are not permanent, that they cannot give emotional security. So, they have turned to the infinite. They lead a life of Brahmacharya or committed to study of scriptures.

Word Brahmacharya is Brahma, meaning scriptures and Charya meaning dwelling in them.

Sri Krishna says I shall briefly define the nature of this Ishwara. However, he does so, only in shlokas 20, 21 and 22.

Shloka # 12:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 8.12

Controlling all gateways of the senses, confining the mind in the heart, fixing the life breath in the crown and intent on the maintenance of Yoga.

God's nature is formless. It is difficult to conceive this formless god, hence scriptures created alambanam, a concrete symbol. And this alambanam or symbol is of two types; one is called prathima alambanam, and the other is called pratheeka alambanam; prathima alambanam is a symbol, which has got all the limbs or organs like a head, hands, legs etc. where the Lord is personified.

Thus, Sri Rama's picture is a pratima alambanam. Pratika alambanam, like a shiva linga does not have limbs. Even a flame can be a pratika alambanam even as turmeric powder too is one used to denote Ganesha.

One can choose whichever alambanam suits him or her.

Omkara is also an alambanam. Katho Upanishad says when you visualize god in Omkara it is Omkara upasana. It is a well-known upasana. It is discussed in several Upanishads. So, Sri Krishna also borrows it here in shloka's # 12 and 13 respectively.

When Sri Krishna talks of Omkara upasana, it is just one of the choices, among several upasanas. The goal here is that one should have a concrete symbol for the abstract god to meditate upon. Then, one should withdraw from one's sense organs at time of death and bring mind to one's heart where god is visualized. Shankaracharya says: "at time of death all yama dutha's are coming and threatening me and criticizing me for wasting my life. At that time when I am frightened, I am booking you now itself; you should come into my heart and dance in my heart so that Yama duthas run away." This poem is known as Shivashankara ashtakam.

So, having withdrawn mind and having placed it in the heart, prana should be withdrawn and brought to top of head. At that

time mind should be focused. This comes from long practice.
This is Omkara Upasana.

Ram Ramaswamy