

# Kaivalya Upanishad, Class 2

Swamiji continued with his introductory talk. He talked about necessity of self-inquiry. Our idea of our selves and vision of scriptures about us are different. I feel "I am full of defects". I am searching to free myself of these defects. Scriptures say, "You are free of Doshas." There is a contradiction between what I am and what scriptures say.

The instrument to know this knowledge (via self enquiry) is known as Pramanam. There are five types of Pramanam's also known as Pancha Pramanani. All these are Paurusheya Pramanani or human instruments.

The Pancha Pramanani are:

**pratyaksha = direct perception or cognition**

**anumana = inference, reasoning, deduction**

**agamah = authority, testimony, validation, competent evidence**

**pramanani = valid means of knowing, proofs, sources of correct knowing**

**viparyaya = Incorrect knowledge or illusion. Perceiving a thing as being other than what it really is.**

Other than Pratyaksha all other four instruments are derived from perceptual data. Can anyone of them help me with self-enquiry? All five are human instruments and are extrovert in nature. Thus, an eye can see outside but not itself. Science also depends on extrovert sense organs. When we get data based on objective world, knowledge will be of the object. What I need is subjective data. The five instruments are inadequate for Self Knowledge. Every instrument can perform only in its field of operation. Self is not in the field of any instrument.

Why not meditate and get knowledge? Stopping thought cannot produce any new knowledge. Available instruments do not help. Meditation also does not do it. What should I do?

There is a sixth Pramanam. It is not of human origin. It is from outside. It is called Shabda Pramanam. It is a spoken or oral pramanam.

Shabda Pramanam are of two types:

- Laukika Shabda Pramanam, of human origin.
- Shastriya Shabda Pramanam that comes from God.

Laukika pramanam can only deal with objects. Example given was gravitational force. How did Newton get this knowledge? He got it from Paurusheya pramanam or from human evidence.

Shastriya Pramanam is unique and is meant for revealing my true nature. Veda is a unique instrument of knowledge. It is not available from any other source. One who is performing self-enquiry has to use Shastriya Shabda Pramanam. When eye cannot see itself unless you use a mirror. Using the mirror, this is wisdom. I use Shastriya knowledge or Upanishad or Vedanta as a Pramana or mirror. Shastriya knowledge is looking into myself or looking inwards. The clearer I look the clearer is my knowledge. So, I need to study Shastriya Pramanam thoroughly.

Now there are some difficulties in obtaining this clarity of understanding.

Primary difficulty is our own habits. We always assume Shastra is talking about a new object. So, we tend to objectify it and then want to experience the object. We, thus obtain a bookish knowledge, while what we need is experiential knowledge.

Why does this mistake happen? Because we think Brahman is a new object without realizing that it is my own true nature. I should own up to my true nature. Our method of listening to

Shastras also should be somewhat different, therefore Shastras insist upon following:

1. You require a Guru. He will constantly point out Brahman is You and not outside.
2. Since I, the self, am an observer, I am different from everything else, observed. I am unique. I cannot be observed. For this we do not have an example to fall back upon. Scriptures use of peculiar methods of communication that makes it difficult to comprehend. Words like dvaita and advaita are often used. Extracting information from scriptures is not easy and a specific method is followed. This method is called Sampradya or mimamsa or Vichara. The scriptures have six indicators that tell me what is the revelation about my true nature. The six indicators are known as Tatparya Lingani. The six indicators reveal the central theme of Upanishads. It requires study of beginning portion (Upakrama) and ending portion (Upasamhara) and this reveals what is in central portion as well. An example of this is, while listening to the news in TV or Radio; the main points are brought out at beginning and end of the news.

A good speaker should follow the following rules for the six indicators

1. Upakrama and Upasamhara.
2. Abhyasa or repetition. An aspect of scripture is repeated again and again indicating its importance.
3. Apoorvata or Uniqueness. Scriptures reveal what science cannot reveal. Science cannot study consciousness. Vedanta reveals about consciousness and the observer. The subject is not available to science.
4. Phalam: The benefits. The study of scriptures provides benefits. Also called Prayojanam from Advaitam.
5. Arthavadaha: Ninda stuthi. This means glorification and criticism. If you look at yourself as a finite being it

should be condemned. If you consider yourself infinite, it should be glorified.

6. Upapathihi: Knowledge supported by logic. It is not a blind logic. Example: Scriptures say life in heaven is eternal. This is illogical. Whatever is acquired in time is also lost in time. Consciousness is eternal. It is logical. It cannot be disproved.

These above six are called Shat-tatparya -Lingani.

The body, mind and world are perishable. Behind the Observed, is the consciousness. Example: Camera is not in photo; does not mean camera does not exist. So, also, proof of object is proof of consciousness.

Aham Brahma Asmi. If I get this knowledge I need not get anything else for Poornatvam. So struggles for Poornatvam (or end of samsara) will also end. Therefore end of Vedas is called Vedantaha. It is also called Gyana Kandam or Atma Vidya or Brahma Vidya.

After this knowledge all my struggles end. Giving example of puri (the flat bread), the flat dough when it is placed in hot oil rises up and becomes a big round puri. It is so with us too. Now, I live with Poornathvam and life becomes a Lila.

Hence it is called Upani-shad. Upani means wisdom or bringing together (you and knowledge).

This wisdom, Upanishad, occurs at end of each of the four Vedas. Since a Guru is compulsory, A Guru Shishya dialogue occurs in all Upanishads.

Ashvalayana is a Guru. Even Rama and Krishna had Guru's. One or a group of dialogues is called Upanishad. Originally many Vedas were reportedly there. Many were lost in time. Now there are supposed to be 280 Upanishads. Of these 11 are very important and Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and other Acharyas wrote commentaries on them. Of these 11, six are usually

studied. They are: Isha, Kena, Mandukya, Katha, Prasna and Brihadaranyaka. Kaivalya is over and above the six. Between these seven Upanishads the essence of Vedanta is imparted. Kaivalya belongs to Atharvana Veda.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Prasna Upanishad, Class 21

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Chapter 6 of Prasna Upanishad.

Sukesha Bharadwaja asks the sixth and last question. Before asking his question he narrates an incident. The Rajput prince Hiranyanabha asked him about the sixteen-part Purusha. Sukesha told him he did not know about this Purusha. Now, Sukesha, asks his Guru, Pippilada, about this sixteen-part Purusha. Swamiji asked why narrate the incident at all?

Two reasons were presented:

1) To teach the value of Satyam. When one does not know the answer, one should not give the wrong answer. One should accept one's ignorance.

2) A prince approached Sukesha Bharadwaja. This indicates he, Sukesha, was held in high esteem. The fact that he did not know the answer indicates that it is a rare knowledge. Here rareness of knowledge is emphasized.

Finally student asks where the sixteen-part Purusha is? He does not ask who the sixteen-part Purusha is first. Swamiji

says, this maybe because he may have some idea about whom he is. So the question is who is he? And where is he?

Shloka # 2:

To that student, who has approached his Guru properly, who is truthful and deserving this knowledge, Guru Pippilada says:

O Somya, or Pleasing one, He is within the body within Hridayam as the awareness.

Note: Shankara says: When a student is deserving, the teacher has to impart him knowledge.

Brahman in Antahakarana means it is manifest in anatahakarana. It is outside as well and as such all-pervasive. Being all-pervasive does not mean it manifests everywhere. This is the answer to the question where is the Purusha.

Now, who is this Purusha? Purusha, here, means Brahman. Upanishad says Purusha is Niravyavam or Niskalaha. Student is asking about Sakala Purusha, while Brahman is Nishkala.

Teacher is going to reveal Nishkala (without limbs) Brahman. How can Teacher reveal a Brahman without Limbs? Where eyes do not go, intellect does not go, how can one reveal such a Brahman? So, an extraordinary method is used. It is called Adhyaropa Apavada. It is a four-step process.

**First step:** Introduce the world itself as an effect or Karyam. Material world, according to our experience, is always there. The world of matter is always there. It is also called Jada Prapancha.

**Second step:** If the world is a Karyam, then there must be a Karanam, which people do not know about. The cause of the Material universe is Satyam or Gyanam. Gyanam or Chaitnaya is the cause of matter.

Note: As per Science, matter is the basis and Consciousness is

the product of matter or life.

First and second step together are called Adyaropa or Srishti.

**Third Step:** Karyam does not have an existence separate from Karanam. I have to show this. I am negating Karyam as separate from Karanam. There is no matter separate from Consciousness.

**Fourth Step:** Once Karya Budhi is negated, Karana kartavyam is negated from Karanam.

The third and fourth steps together are known as Apavada.

From Pot thought to Clay thought or Clay Budhi. Keeping clay thought , where is the pot? It does not exist. Keeping eye on clay, I negate the Pot (Karyam). Clay can be the cause only as long as Pot is there.

Therefore Clay thought is> Clay was>Clay will be. The word pot caused the confusion.

At this stage Avasishtam or Jada Rahita Chaitanya remains or Adhyaropa Chaitanya or consciousness alone is. Adhyaropa Parkriya begins as Srishti.

Srishti is explained in different Upanishads in different ways. Thus, there are Krama, Akrama, and Vikrama Srishti's. Why this inconsistency in Upanishads? It is only a temporary introduction, eventually it is all negated.

In Prasna Upanishad Srishti is introduced as the sixteen parts. Using the sixteen parts Purusha, the teacher reveals the Nishkala Purusha.

Thus, the sixteen-part Purusha is born from Nishkala Purusha and then again resolved in Brahman.

Thus: Sixteen part Purusha> Born from Brahman> Again Resolved in Brahman.

Sodasha Kala Adishtanam Param Brahma is a new name for

Brahman. Swamii says Shodasha Kala is only an indicator for Brahman.

One more question can come up. When we say Brahman is Karanam, how can Brahman be the Karanam? Karanam undergoes change. Thus, Clay becomes pot or changes to pot. Here Shankara says: Brahman is Karanam. It does not mean Brahman is Karanam. Karanatvam is only a temporary status assigned to Brahman. So, don't go deep into it. It is for this that the concept of Maya is introduced. Karanathvam is Maya.

This sixteen part Material universe is the basis for Universe. What are the sixteen Kalas?

{My Notes: Got this from internet on Adhyaropa Apavada. In the Vedanta, even though the Supreme Purport is in Advaita, we do encounter passages declaring creation implying the duality of a created world (and jIva-s) and the Creator Brahman. This suggests a cause-effect relationship between Brahman and the world. One can appreciate this seeming contradiction, that is, the declaration of Advaita on the one hand and the presence of creation passages on the other, by understanding the principle of adhyAropa – apavAda or the Method of Deliberate Superimposition and Negation.

The source of this idea is the explanation of the principle by Swami Paramarthananda in the course of his mANDUKya kArikA discourse.

The example of a pot is considered for the purpose of understanding the principle. I have a 'pot' vision. The teacher wants to change this vision of mine as he wants me to have the correct vision, that of the clay. This is accomplished in FOUR stages:

Stage 1. The pot is presented as the effect of clay.

Stage 2. Clay is presented as the cause of the pot.



Stage 3. Now, the teacher asks me to find out if I can see the pot without the clay. I look at the pot on all sides and conclude that everywhere it is clay alone. It is not available as different from clay, its cause. The conclusion: the effect is non-different from the cause.

Stage 4. This much is not enough, for the concept of cause and effect does exist. Now the teacher states that since it was concluded that the effect does not exist apart from the cause, it would be correct to hold that the cause alone really exists. But this still limits the cause as a cause. The vision born of wisdom is: There is no longer any need to call the clay as the cause. As clay alone matters in that wise vision, it would be appropriate to divest the clay of its status of a cause. Thus, divested of this status, clay remains as the one that transcends the cause-effect duality.

The first two stages are the 'adhyAropa' stages where the 'effect'-hood of the pot and the 'cause'-hood of the clay were superimposed deliberately. This is done in order to afford the foundation for finally negating them and driving home the non-dual nature.

The latter two stages constitute the 'apavAda' stages where the supposed effect-hood of the pot is negated and even its substantiality is shown to be only in the clay. The pot is shown to be insubstantial as apart from its substance, the clay. Next, and finally, even the causehood of the clay is negated, for when the effect-hood is admitted to be of no consequence, to accord the cause- status to the clay is meaningless. The clay can exist without that definition as the cause.}

{My Notes: More From Internet on Adhyaropa Prakriya:

"May I add my own (2 cents), more with the idea of learning more on the fundamentals of Advaita Vedanta.

Adhyasa is not Knowledge. Adhyasa leads to ~~0~~mithya-gnanam~~0~~ and

because of this  $\hat{m}$ ithya-gnanam $\hat{m}$  one makes wrong conclusions about himself and the world. It is mithya-gnanam because such knowledge changes (budhi vyabhicharati) when one enquires into it.

Adhyasa takes place, just like cooking takes place, when the various factors required for adhyasa to take place are present. This is a natural law.

Adhyaropa and Apavada is the methodology or prakriya used in Vedanta for one to understand that Adhyasa exists and it is like a natural law, but it leads to mithya gnana and fools people. The prakriya is used only to correct the mithya-gnana, (and not to remove Adhyasa) because the appearance of one thing as another thing, or one thing appears as having the qualities of another thing and vice-versa, can continue. The prakriya has nothing to do with the objects, as all it does is to correct one's Budhi, i.e. intellect, so that one does no more get fooled by the mithya-gnana resulting from Adhyasa.

Samsara, rather Samsara Budhi, takes place only because of Adhyasa i.e. Atmani Anatma Budhi and Anatmani Atma Budhi, (intellectual appreciation of what is real as unreal and what is unreal as real). The Adhyaropa-Apavada Prakriya removes this wrong intellectual appreciation, and corrects it with Atmani Atmabudhi and Anatmani Anatmabudhi (intellectual appreciation of what is real as real and what is unreal as unreal). “}

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Prasna Upanishad, Class 14

Greetings All

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad.

Fourth Question

Summarizing the gist of last chapter (Question 3) Swamiji says, the Student asked Pippallada five questions.

1. Where does Prana come from? It comes out of Atma like a shadow.
2. How Prana arrives into the body? It arrives into the body due to Manokrithe from our Sankapla or Karma. So, it comes through our mind because of our Purva karmas.
3. How does Pranas divide itself? It divides into the pancha pranas known as: Apana, Udana, Samana, Vyana and Prana and each has its role defined. Shlokas 4,5 and 6 address this. Like an Emperor it delegates powers to other Pranas.
4. How does Pranas go out of the body? This is addressed in mantras 7, 9 and 10 respectively. Prana goes out through the susuhmna nadi, in case of Upasakas. In a Gyani and non-Upasaka it does not go through the Susuhmna Nadi. At time of death, all pranas are absorbed in Udana with the sense organs. So, Udana and Sankalpa are the only one's left and they together lead the Jivatma to various Lokas.
5. How does it function? This is addressed in mantra 8.

How does it sustain at individual and cosmic levels? At individual level, through the pancha pranas although the individual level is not specifically mentioned. At Samashthi level, through Adithya, Prithvi, Akasha, Vayu and Agni Devatas.

Then Mantras 11 and 12 concluded with Prana Upasana. The

benefits of the Upasana are described. In this world the person's children will not die due to an accident. In the next world one gets Krama Mukthi.

Second chapter was also Prana Upasana. Karma Kanda knowledge does not bring benefits unless it is used to perform Upasana. Vedas give a command or ask one to act and it is called Vidhivakyam. In Chapter 2, it was only glorification and there were no commands. In chapter 3 until mantra 10 it is glorification. Only mantras 11 and 12 are Vidhivakyam's and as such are an important part of the Upanishad.

In Chapter 1, Shukla and Krishna Gathi was discussed in context of Srishthi Prakaranam. In Chapter 2 and 3, it is glorification of Prana. In chapter 3 we got Purva Bhaga (Karma kanda) of the Veda. Now comes the Gyana Kanda or Vedanta from Chapter 4.

#### Chapter 4

Shloka 1: Beginning Chapter 4, Question 4, the fourth student Sauryayini Gargyaha asks five questions. They are:

1. At time of dream what are the organs that are sleeping or not functioning? This is about the Swapna Avastha.
2. Related to dreams what are the organs that are awake?
3. Related to dreams, which Devaha (Karanam or Chetana Tatvam) is seeing the dream (Swapna Padarthaha)
4. To which person this sukham belongs? The benefit of Susushupthi avastha?
5. What is that Adishthanam on which all organs are supported (Turiya Rupa). This question, says Swamiji, makes it Vedanta.

Jagrithi is not considered. If it is included we are discussing Avastha Trayam.

Shloka # 2: Teacher Pippallada now answered the questions.

Q 1: What organs are sleeping or are resolved or in dormant condition during dream state?

The five Gyana indriyas and five Karma indriyas, 10 in all, are all dormant. The Karma Indriyas are: Vak (organ of speech), Pani (hands), Pada (feet), Upashtam (organ of generation) and Payu or Guda (anus, the organ of excretion) are the five organs of action. All ten are resolved in the mind. It is not a permanent resolution. The 10 indriyas come forth during the Jagrithi Avastha. This is a daily affair. Giving example of the Sun and its rays, Sun is the mind and the rays are like the 10 indriyas. In early morning we are able to see the sun. As it rises the rays come in all directions. At sunset the rays are withdrawn. At sunset you can see the orb of the sun. You can see the same at dawn.

Similarly, in the morning the sense organs spring out and reaction becomes brighter and at sunset sense organs are withdrawn and everything becomes less bright. They are partially active until fully withdrawn.

In same manner all 10 sense organs resolve into the mind. What kind of a mind is it? It is the great mind, the effulgent one.

Mind, by itself, is Jadam. However, it is pervaded by Chetana or reflected consciousness ( Chidabasha), hence it is consciousness now. Blessed by the mind, sense organs arise, as well as, get resolved. Hence, mind is supreme. Just like the moon gets its light from the sun, so also the sense organs get their light from the mind. Mind is Paraha or Supreme. Sense organs are Aparaha. All ten organs stop functioning when resolved during dream state.

During dream there is no taste, smell, touch, sight, all five gyanaindri yas are shut. The Krama indriyas of hold, grasp, movement, etc are also resolved. One is considered to be sleeping by other waking people.

With this the first question has been answered.

Q 2: What are the one's that are awake?

The Pancha Pranas are awake.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Baghawat Geeta, Class 13

Greetings All,

Gita, Chapter # 2, Samkhya Yoga:

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

Shloka #5:

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

have to live on alms.

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

Shloka # 6:

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

Shloka # 7:

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

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

come with an open mind. I am surrendering at your feet.

Swamiji says a wise person does not give advice unless the other person requests for it. So, here also, Sri Krishna was waiting for Arjuna to ask for his help. The word Prapanna means surrender. Falling at the feet, Sharanagathi, is one way of surrendering. In this process the other person becomes the Guru. If I have to become a teacher, I need at least one person to ask me to teach him or her. So, here Arjuna has become a disciple and Krishna the Guru. After surrendering also there are expectations. Mantra Upadesha cannot remove ignorance. In such instances, a teaching that distinguishes between the right versus wrong is required.

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

Shloka # 8:

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

Shloka # 9:

Sanjaya now says: In this manner Arjuna surrendered to Sri



Krishna saying, I am not going to fight nor am I going to run away from battle. I want to hear from you (Sri Krishna) and then decide.

Swamiji gave some definitions:

- Paramtapa: Destroyer of enemies.
- Gudakesha: means master of Tamoguna or Satva Guna Pradhana. Human mind swings from Rajasic (very active) to Tamasic (dullness), while the Satvic mind is in the middle as a non-extrovert, but wakeful mind.
- Govinda: Protector of the world, is the Shastric meaning. Another meaning is, Go means scriptures, and Vinda means one who has grasped the scriptures. To this Govinda Arjuna surrenders. Ha: Means everything has become quiet.

Shloka # 10:

Sanjaya continues:

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

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

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## Prasna Upanishad, Class 9

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad.

Second Question, Shloka # 6:, Swamiji said all mantras from #5 to # 13 are Prana Devata Sruthi or praise. Refreshing our memory on Shloka 6, he says all 10 Gyanendriyas are able to function because of Prana Shakthi. At Samashti (cosmic) level each Gyanendriya is also a Devata. Thus Hiranyagarbha Devata represents Prana. All Devatas are able to perform due to Prana Shakthi. At our individual level also we are able to perform due to the Prana Shakthi.

All powers in creation (rain, planetary motion, gravity, atomic etc.) perform because of one basic power called Prana Shakthi. When we worship Prana Shakti it is not the material aspect of the Shakti we worship, rather we are worshipping the intelligence behind the Prana Shakti. Although we are aware of the solar energy, the Shakti, the one we worship is Surya Devata, the intelligence behind it.

Upasana is always performed of an Utkrishta Vastu (A superior force). When we worship Chetana it is spiritual worship rather than worship of a material or inert substance. Swamiji says we should worship Shakti with Shiva. Shakti is the energy while Shiva is the intelligence principle behind Shakti.

Mantra # 6: Discussing this mantra, Swamiji says, the spokes are the many powers while the hub is the Prana where they get their power. Swamiji says rituals or Yagnas are performed in Rig, Yajur and Sama mantras. Yagnas have meaning when there is somebody to perform them. Thus:

Kshatram: means Kshatriya who performs the Yagna of protecting the Yaga and the Brahmana who performs it.

Brahman: Is the one who performs the Yagnas.

Prana Shakti supports all of them.

Mantra # 7:

Continuing praise of Prana Shakti, He says, Prana is the lord of Brahma, Rudra and Vishnu. They are divisions of Prana Shakti. This power is available in every being i.e., power of

reproduction and propagation. It is divided into male and female. Every male and female has the creative power. Only when a male and female join a child is born. You alone are later born in the form of parents. Thus, all Beings are giving oblation to you alone. Each sense organ gives oblation to the Prana Shakti. When this offering or Oblation is stopped, death occurs.

Swamiji says each indriya has a Shakti such as Shruvanam, Darshanam etc. They are all manifestation of the Prana Shakti.

Mantra # 8:

You are the greatest carrier of Oblations. You are Agni, the carrier of oblations. You are the first oblation given to forefathers.

Before any puja, one has to perform Naandi Shradha, a worship of ancestors. This great Karma is performed for Kula-Parampara and Kula-Dharma. This offering is known as Shradha. The offering of Annam is also Prana Shakti.

The way of life of Rishis is the truthful way. Hence we remember them. Atharva and Angirasa are mentioned as Rishis.

Shankaracharya gives a different interpretation: He says Rishis are sense organs. Sense organs know color smell etc. Atharva is another name for sense organs. Angirsa is also another name for sense organs. Their functions nourish the individual Prana Shakti.

Mantra # 9: Hey Paraná, by your power you are none other than Indra or Rudra, the protector. You are moving in the sky as the Sun or as Vayu in the Anthariksa.

Every cause has an effect. Thus Brahman>Maya>Akasha>Vayu>Prithvi are examples of cause and effect. Prana is the cause of everything, says Swamiji.

Manta # 10: Here Prana is praised as rain. Hey Prana, You alone are poring as rain. All people become full of Ananda because sufficient food will now be available. Swamiji says our very living depends on rain.

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# Baghawat Geeta, Class 11

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

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

Summary of Chapter 1

To live a healthy life – consider these 2 factors:

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

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

This same principle can be extended for mental health as well. Mental health means a mind free from all psychological diseases in the form of fear, anxiety, stress, strain, worry, jealousy, anger, inferiority complex (Kama, kroda, lobha, moha, madha, maatsarya are all psychological diseases). We

have a tendency to blame the external factors ie. the world is responsible for my worry, my spouse is responsible for my tension, etc. Scriptures point out that we need to consider two factors for mental health. The external world is not totally responsible for my psychological problem. The weakness of the mind is also responsible for our psychological problem.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Swamiji recites from Chapter 2, Verse 56:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ २.५६ ॥

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ २.५६ ॥

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

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

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

The first chapter can be divided into five parts:

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

The context is the MB battlefield. In Kurukshetra, the Pandavas and Kauravas have gathered to settle their issue. Arjuna is very clear about the battle, he does not have any conflict or guilt because this war was the last resort after unsuccessful non-violent methods. Lord Krishna also goes as a messenger and tries to settle peacefully. But Duryodana tries to kill Lord Krishna even though he is just a messenger. Therefore, Arjuna, has come to the battlefield without any regrets. Duryodana enumerates the Pandavas' army and his won army to Drona. And he betrays his diffidence that the Pandava army is stronger. This is caused by adharma. In reality, Duryodana's army is stronger but the support of Dharma is not there. Seeing this, Bhishma enthuses Duryodana by blowing his conch. Then both sides blow the conches signaling the beginning of the MB battle.

1. Part 2: Arjuna goes near the Kaurava army to see them at closer range. Verse 21-25

Arjuna feels somehow that he should closely see whom he has to fight. This decision was a blessing in disguise even though it seemed it was not a good decision to delay the start of the battle. If this hadn't occurred, we would not have the Bhagavad Gita.

Swamiji recites Verse 20 and the first line of Verse 21:

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

अर्जुन उवाच ॥ द्रुपदगुरुर्षभ ॥ कृपया मे कथय ॥ १.२० ॥

ॐ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

अर्जुन उवाच ॥ द्रुपदगुरुर्षभ ॥ कृपया मे कथय ॥ १.२१ ॥

Arjuna requests Lord Krishna to place the chariot in between the two armies so that he can see his opposition. At this time, Arjuna is the master (not a student) and Lord Krishna is the humble charioteer (not the Guru). Lord Krishna obeys Arjuna and places the chariot in front of the people towards whom Arjuna has a strong attachment.

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

The first weakness presented is the problem of attachment or psychological dependence on external factors. This is called a weakness because psychological dependence for your happiness is no longer in your own hands but it is connected to external factors. Since the external factors are not under your control, depending upon an unpredictable, external factor is risky for your happiness. You should not allow an external factor to determine your state of happiness. For example, the disobedience of your child causing you sorrow is due to the fact that you are depending on your child being obedient for your happiness (external factor). This displays your lack of resistance. Vedanta says that you should not depend upon a certain condition to be happy. This psychological need or

dependence is called the problem of ragaH. Arjuna has this problem because he expected these people to be around him all the time and could not imagine even a hypothetical separation. Arjuna imagined a life without Bhisma, Drona etc. and broke down.

संसारं साक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं – Verse 28, discovery of RagaH (basic samsaara), psychological leaning. Physically, we depend on the world for food, clothing and shelter. Vedanta does not talk about physical independence but talks about emotional/psychological dependence, which is not required at all.

Gita's ultimate lesson is: *आत्मैव हि अहं सुखी* "atma, alone, by yourself, pleased" I am happy with myself, in spite of external factors being favorable or unfavorable. (Sounds so much sweeter in Samskritam). With any addiction, you imagine that you cannot do without it. This is not true. This is your intellect justifying your addiction. Don't have a crutch.

1. Part 4: ShokaH (consequence of RagaH) or VishadaH  
Verses 28 – 35

The title of the first chapter is Arjuna Vishada YogaH. Grief or sorrow is an inevitable consequence of dependence (leaning on an unpredictable, perishable, external factor). Arjuna faces this deep attachment *संसारं साक्षात्संसारं* *संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं*. The intensity of grief depends on the intensity of attachment. For Arjuna, his intense sorrow was overflowing into the physical body also.

संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं  
॥ ॥ संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं ॥ ॥ संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं 1.30

संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं  
॥ ॥ संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं संसारंसाक्षात्संसारं 1.31

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







शरणागति sharanaagati

2. Solution is given, Medication Arjuna has only gone thorough the first stage – discovering the problem of samsaaraH. Arjuna has to go through stages 2 and 3 before Lord Krishna gives his advice. Therefore Lord Krishna observes silently. Since Lord Krishna has not spoken, Arjuna thinks his conclusion is right and so throws down his bow/arrow and sits down in the chariot.

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

शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति  
शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति 1.47

### Introduction of Chapter 2

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

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

Swamiji recites Chapter 2, Verse 6, Line 1:

शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति  
शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति  
शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति शरणागति 2.6

Hey Lord Krishna, I thought I had made the right decision but

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

ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ ಕೃಪಾಂಶ್ಚಾಪಿ ನಮಃ |  
ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ ಕೃಪಾಂಶ್ಚಾಪಿ ನಮಃ ||

Once he discovers his helplessness, he needs to surrender to some one. Voilà, he has the Jagadguru himself (universal guru). Arjuna surrenders and says (Ch2, Verse 7, line 2):

ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ ಕೃಪಾಂಶ್ಚಾಪಿ ನಮಃ |  
ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ ಕೃಪಾಂಶ್ಚಾಪಿ ನಮಃ || 2.7 ||

I am your disciple. The 3rd stage is surrendering (1st is discovery of the problem; 2nd is feeling helpless). The 4th stage is where Lord Krishna accepts the disciple Arjuna and gives the solution.

Gita Shaastram: ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ ; ಉಪದ್ರವಃ ಕೃಷ್ಣಾ ನಮಃ

Worldly illusion, warding off, medicine; state of being, disease, remedy The spiritual pursuit is two-fold:

1. Karma YogaH – to become a Jnana Yogyata
2. Jnana YogaH – to gain Jnanam

Portion 2: Krishna briefs Arjuna about Jnana YogaH; self-knowledge given to a Jnana Yogyata praptiH Jnana YogaH is self knowledge. Krishna will explain “self-knowledge” briefly . But in order to gain Jnana YogaH, one needs to be eligible to receive Jnanam(already be a yogyata praptiH).

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

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

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

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

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## Prasna Upanishad, Class 7

Important points made by first section:

Shristi is the first point: Life and death are not opposite but complementary pair of nature; similar is growth and decay. We must accept the pair. Shrusti as a form of mithunam. Five shristies mentioned in the first section are:

1. Mithuna shristy
2. Loka shrishty
3. Kala shristy
4. Anna Shristy
5. Prajapathi

Second point is Chukla Krishna Gathi topic was discussed after shristi as a diversion.

Third point is discipline of brahmanacharyim

## Second Section

Para vidhya and apara vidhya are from Mundaka Upanishad. Apra Vidhya or preparatory knowledge consists of karma and upasana. First chapter of Mundaka Upanishad elaborately discussed karma (e.g. agni hothram) but upasana (mental activity for saguana brahman) was not discussed in detail. Physical activities like pooja are not upasana. Vedanta is mental activity for nirguna brahman.

Second section: Hiranyagarbha (prana) sthuthi. Prior to upsana, the upsana deity should be glorified.

Hiranyagarbha is consciousness with the total (all) subtle body. This total subtle body is available as individual subtle body for everyone. Of the 17 organs of sukshma sareeram, prana is the most important one. Prana keeps body alive. Also during sleep, all sense organs come to a standstill except prana.

Third Section: Hiranyagarbha (prana) upasana is samashti prana, because Hiranyagarbha blesses everyone as prana.

### V1

Question: What are the devadas that sustain the people (sareeram)? Devadas are various factors or principles behind every inert object. This consciousness principle is called Devada. Sun is not just an object, but when we consider that sun is pervaded by Eeswara, we call it Surya Deva. Each principle is called deva for this reason. So the first question is how many devas are sustaining the sareeram. Second question what principles (devas) are publicizing their own glories. Third Question is among these devas who is the greatest devada?

### V2

First principle sustaining the sareeram is 19 devas. because it provides a place to live. The 24 devas are:

- Panca Botham (akasa – space, vayu – air, agni – fire, apaha – water and prithvi – earth)
- Panca indriyam (hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell)
- Panca karmandhra (Vak – express, upasatha – procreate, payu – excrete, Pani – grasp and Pada – move)
- Manaha
- Budhi
- Ahangaram
- Chitham

All 19 devas except prana claim they are the most important.

The rest of the section is answer to third question.

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## Prasna Upanishad, Class 3

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad. He cautioned that the Upanishad in following Shlokas may be a little confusing and that he will try to make it as simple as possible to understand.

Discussing Shloka # 3, Kabandhi Katyayana, wanted to know the order and manner in which creation came out

Shloka # 4: The teacher Pippiladaha answered by introducing Hiranyagarbha. He says, Brahman created Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha, in turn, created the creation. Hiranyagarbha performed Tapas. Tapas here meant the ability to visualize the previous Srishti or Creation. All Karmas of creatures must be kept in mind including their different fields of activity. This visualization is called Gyana. Here God's Sankalpa is the basis of creation. Thus, Srishti consists of:

Mithuna Srishti

V

Loka Srishti

V

Kal Srishti

V

Anna Srishti

V

Praja Srishti (The final stage of creation of all Beings.)

Swamiji says, this shloka, while discussing creation is also discussing some other things. Shankara's commentary helps us better understand this sholka. Pippilada, while discussing Srishti, also discusses Karma and Upasana. Those who perform Karma will get Swarga through Krishna Gathi. Those who perform Karma and Upasana will get Shukla Gathi and this will lead them to Brahma Loka. This is known as Apra Vidya, consisting of Karma and Upasana.

Pippilada brings up Karma and Upasana while discussing Srishti. Why does he do so? What is its benefit? Swamiji says it is discussed for Vigyana Sidhyartham. Both Karma and Upasana do not give Knowledge, while I require knowledge. Moon Srishti is considered Swarga Loka while Sun Srishti is considered Brahma Loka. Dakshinayanam is Krishna Gathi, while Uttarayanam is considered Shukla Gathi.

Mithunum:

Discussing this first of the five stages of creation, Prajapati first created a pair. They are called Rayi and Prana. Rayi and Prana are two concepts. When two things are mutually complementary that pair is called Mithuna. Examples are day and night together make a full day. Utarayana & Dashinayana; Positive and negative charges; thus whole creation is made of such mutually complementary pairs. Life and death is another example that makes up Life. Male and female are also relative pairs.



Introducing concept of Bhoktha (Subject or Experiencer) and Annam (Object or experienced) Swamiji says Subject cannot be complete without an object. This relative concept is created first by Prajapathi. Rayi and Prana is also such a pair created by Prajapathi so that they may create many more living beings for him, the Grand Father (Prajapathi) of all Beings. Thus Rayi can be the egg and Prana the sperm, depends upon which principle predominates.

Shloka # 5:

Loka Srishti:

After Mithuna the next Srishti is Loka Srishti. This will require a pair of Lokas that are mutually complementary. They are the moon and sun loka pair. Day is presided by sun and night by moon, thus a full Day is maintained. This makes life. Sun presides over activity while Moon presides over rest. Here Sun is Prana and Moon is Rayi.

Swamiji says the Upanishad now takes a diversion from here up to Shloka # 8. A deep analysis of Rayi and Prana discloses that both are one and the same deep inside. So we can say, everything is Rayi or everything is Prana. This naming is only superficial. Steam and Ice are identical. Both are water in different states. Steam is Amurthy (without form) while Ice is Murthy (with form).

Rayi is essential nature of Prajapathi.

Prana is essential nature of Prajapathi.

Prajapathi has become both or male and female. They, in turn, produced more off springs. Rayi alone is everything. Whatever is Amurthy is Prana, while Murthy is called Rayi. Also, Prana alone is everything, since Surya is Prana.

With good wishes to all,

Ram Ramaswamy

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# Discussion Summary, October 25, 2015

Greetings All,

Continuing his recap from last week of Mantra 13 in Part 2, Cantos 3, Swamiji reminded us that in this last and final section Yama is summarizing Brahma Vidya and enumerating some qualifications required for it, as well as, the benefits of this knowledge. With Verse # 13 the first two requirements of what is Brahma Vidya and qualifications required for it have been completed. Faith in Brahman is required. Brahman is not available for objectification by the mind, senses or words. It is totally without attributes. Even Philosophers do not accept Nirguna Brahman. So Sraddha is very important until we absorb the teachings. This open mindedness is very important and is called Shraddha. Now we are entering the description of the Phalam of obtaining Brahma Vidya.

Mantra # 14:

Phalam is freedom here and now. Freedom from what, asks Swamiji? It is not freedom from the physical body. It is the inner freedom from fear, anger, insecurity etc. all symptoms of Samsara. Above all it is freedom from Kama. Due to ignorance we identify with the body mind complex. Due to Ahamkara, ignorance expresses itself in life as something wanting. Since, I cannot withstand limitation, there is always a struggle to remove this limitation. Thus, we experiment and have long struggles to obtain Purnatwam. Kama freedom is freedom from this struggle. I do not do anything for this completion. I do everything out of this completion. Samsara is

the binding desire while non-binding desire is with completion. The binding desire goes away with Brahma Vidya.

All desires are located in the mind including desire for moksha or desire for desire less-ness. Even this goes away. Gyana recognizes I am That. Such a person is immortal, free from the cycle of births. Our next birth is decided in this life, at time of death, by our strongest desire. So he is beyond the cycle of life and deaths. It is the "I" who thought he is mortal, now thinks he is immortal. It is an intellectual journey, not a physical one. The notion of mortality is lost. He becomes one with Brahman, here and now. Moksha is even while we are alive. This is known as Jivan mukta.

Other philosophies believe moksha is obtained only after death or dropping this body.

Mantra # 15:

Here a different aspect of Phalam is presented. With Brahma Vidya the Hridaya Grantha (knots) are destroyed. Shankara says ignorance is the knot. Like a knot it becomes firm and hence difficult to remove.

A knot is that which joins two things. I, the Atma, am associated with body mind complex due to Abhimana. Thus a knot is formed. I think of myself as the body. Ahamkara is the cause of the knot. Deha Abhimana is dropped due to this knowledge. So this mortal Jeeva notion now becomes immortal. Body is mortal but I am not mortal. The Abhimana in us is the Samsara. When somebody dies we do not feel anything. However, when it happens to somebody near, Abhimana comes in, including for my own body. The idea I am mortal is dropped. Yama now concludes and says, this much is my teaching.

Mantra # 16:

In previous two mantras Yama taught the phalam of Brahma vidya. Now he talks about the second boon of Nachiketas called

Nachiketa ritual (Karma with Upasana) that is conducted on Nachiketa Agni. Karma Upasana Samuchaya (combination); giving us an example of this, Swamiji says, when a mantra is chanted with a clear picture of it in mind, rather than blind chanting, it gives higher results. So, chanting the mantra is Karma. Chanting it with focus is Upasana. If one obtains Karma Moksha Mukthi, at death, he will go Brahma Loka via Sushumna Nadi. There, he will obtain Brahma Vidya. If one does Karma without Upasana, at death, he will be emerge from other Nadis and will be born again. Nadis are passages in our body. There are 101 Nadis and only one emerges at top of crown.

Mantra #17:

Yama once again discusses Jeevan Mukthi or Brahma Vidya Phalam.

Antar Atma is as though the size of a thumb. It is also called Purusha (pure vasathi) it dwells in and beyond the body. It is also the Atma. It is present in heart and mind of every one as Consciousness, as the witness of all thoughts and absence of all thoughts. It is within the Anatma Shariram. Brahma Vidya separates the Consciousness from the

body mind complex. This must be clearly understood. Atma Anatma Viveka must dawn within us. It is an intellectual process of understanding. This requires a very subtle intellect. You cannot physically separate from body, only intellectually. Swamiji gives example of the Munja grass from which, very carefully, its tender shoot is separated.

Viveka is required for this separation. Twam pada Viveka or Aikyam is required. One should know this consciousness as Brahman described in scriptures. Separate yourself from body and thus identify with Brahman. This is Vedanta. This will give us Jivan Mukti. This concludes Yama Nachiketas Samvada.

Mantra 18:

Nachiketas obtained this knowledge from Yama. Yama also taught

him Yoga Abhyasa. Having obtained wisdom he became one with Brahman. He became free from all impurities and free from mortality. Not only Nachiketas obtained Moksha, anyone who receives this wisdom in same manner also is freed and gets Moksha. Papam and Punyam both are impurities, per Vedas. Since there is no Karma there is no result as well.

Mantra # 19

This mantra concludes the Upanishad This mantra is a prayer to establish the teaching within us.

Suggested Practice:

When chanting mantras try to visualize the deity and focus. This will be a very powerful Sadhana.

With my good wishes,

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## **Discussion Summary, September 27, 2015**

An Excellent summary by Ram Ramaswamy.

Moving on to Part 2, Cantos 3, Mantra Swamiji says this third and final section of Katho Upanishad deals with Atmavidya, Brahmavidya Sadhanani and preparation for Brahmavidya.

Mantra #1: This is an important mantra. It deals with nature of Brahman. Yama now compares Creation to the Ashwatha Vriksha or Pipal Tree. Shankara in his commentary says there are many things common between the two. Describing them, he says:

1. Both are vast in size.

2. Both do not have a beginning or end. Thus, the tree was from the seed of another tree and so on and on until we do not know when it started. So also with Creation. It came into being due to Karma. Karma came into being because of creation. This endless paradox has been going on and knows one knows what started it all. The same is true of Creation itself. One creation after another keeps coming in an endless parade.
3. It is inexplicable. We cannot say which is the cause and which is the effect. Is the tree the cause or the seed? Same with free will and fate, they are all mutually dependent.
4. There is an invisible root underneath the tree that nourishes it. It is also the cause of the tree. It is same for Creation. There is one invisible root called Ishwara.
5. Both have branches spreading widely. Some are upper, some middle and some lower. So also with Creation; you have Bhu-loka, Patal-loka etc.
6. Both bear fruit, called Phalatwam. Every tree bears fruit. Some are sweet, some sour and some a combination. So also with Creation, we have Sukha, Dukha and Mishraphalam.
7. Because of the fruits, many birds nest on the branches that support them. It is a very noisy tree. Thus also with Creation that provides Jivatma (birds in the body) to nest in the Bhu-Loka branch. Sometimes the nest changes to another higher or lower branch or Lokas. The world is a very noisy place says, Shankara, full of music, laughter and wailing.
8. Even this large and powerful tree is moved by powerful winds. So also Samsara is moved by Prarabhda Karmas. Swamiji clarified that Prarabhda Karma includes my karma as well as karma of my surroundings.)
9. Swamiji says, even this large endless tree can be uprooted. Cut off the branch, trunk and root and it permanently destroy the tree. So also the sword of

Knowledge can destroy this Samsara. The aadhara of Samsara is the Atman, says Swamiji. Just as one holds on to the chain link when taking a dip in the fast moving river, so also hold on to Brahman even as you dip into this fast moving Life, says Swamiji. There is nothing that can exist outside the Brahman.

Elaborating further, even the biggest dream is in the Waker. Nachiketas asks Yama why are you talking about Brahman when I wanted to know about Atman. Yama tells him: You are everything. You are Brahman.

### **Mantra # 2:**

Providing further clarification Swamiji says, Brahman is the intelligent cause of life. Just as dream world emerges from the Waker, everything emerges and functions in presence of Brahman. He is the creator and maintainer of everything.

Swamiji says Brahman also polices this Creation ensuring the Universe functions in an orderly manner. This policing intelligence is also called Ishwara. Those who know this achieve immortality. Swamiji adds every suffering we undergo is a punishment for some violation. Every violation of Dharma results in sorrow.

### **Suggested Practice:**

Mr. and Mrs. Narayan recently visited Swamiji during their trip to Chennai. They informed him of our group's activities. Swamiji was very happy. He suggested that the Vedanta group read and practice the teachings of Chapter 17 of the Geeta. This chapter deals with the Gunas or our qualities.