

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 156 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 3 to 5



The 12th Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna. Arjuna asks whether saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam is superior. Saguna dhyānam means meditation up on the Lord with various features. Nirguna dhyānam means meditation up on the lord with no features. This question is wrong because the idea of superior comes only when you can choose. According to Krishna, there is no choice between saguna dhyānam or nirguna dhyānam as everyone has to go through both. Everyone needs to do both. What saguna dhyānam can give, nirguna dhyānam cannot give, so both are compulsory. They cannot be simultaneously practiced. Everyone should start with saguna dhyānam, purify the mind, go to nirguna dhyānam and get moksha. Krishna says that saguna dhyānam is superior, but nirguna dhyana devotees will reach him. The benefits of saguna dhyānam is not material wealth, but transformation of inner personality.

Verses 3 and 4

Having restrained the sense organs, being even-minded towards all, and being interested in the welfare of all beings, some (devotees) meditate upon the imperishable (Brahman) which is indefinable, unmanifest, all-pervading, incomprehensible, immutable, immoveable, and eternal. They attain Me alone.

There are people who follow nirguna dhyānam as part of jñāna yoga. In these three verses, Krishna is elaborating jñāna

yoga, which is nirguna dhyānam nidhithyasanam. Nirguna eeswara is:

- Avyaktam: Not perceptible to any sense organs. The universe is made up of five element and our five sense organs recognize each one of them. When we close the five sense organs, and then meditate upon nirguna Brahman. Brahman or nirguna brahman is inconceivable, imperceptible, incomprehensible and indescribable or in one word unobjectifiable or Aprameya. Nirguna Brahman is everywhere. Saguna Brahman is finite and can move from one place to another. But nirguna Brahman is infinite and formless and all-pervading and cannot move from one place to another. Nirguna Brahman is free from spatial limitation.
- kūṭastham: Brahman is free from sixfold modifications caused by kala tattvam – time. kūṭa is also the anvil, the base used by iron smith for hammering iron. Up on the anvil, the smith places the hot metal and shapes the metal. The metal undergoes change, but the anvil remains chanceless. Nirguna brahman is like kūṭa or anvil that does not change. Changeless substratum is required for all changes. All lifestyle event shape our personality, but the witness principle, the Brahman remains changeless.

How can we meditate up on a featureless Brahman. Krishna says one must qualify oneself for such mediation.

The preparation for nirguna eeswara dhyānam is fourfold qualifications are sādhana catuṣṭaya saṃpatti or:

- Discrimination
- Dispassion
- Discipline
- Desire

Sādhana catuṣṭaya Saṃpatti is described in these verses.

Krishna has said that nirguna eeswara is not objectifiable, that eeswara can exist in only one way. The un-experienceable principles is experienter alone. Therefore, nirguna dhyānam is mediating up on myself, the atma or meditating up on the meditator. Therefore, the mediator must be non-extrovert at the time of nirguna dhyānam.

- Mastering indriya grama or group of five sense organ
- Maintaining equanimity under all circumstances. The mind must be free from raga dwesha – likes and dislikes.
- Being committed to the well beings of all creatures; universal love; Expanded mind; Mind must be sensitized to feel the difficulties of others and interested in their wellbeing.

Verse 5

Difficulties are more for those people whose minds are committed to the pursuit of the unmanifest Brahman, for the goal of unmanifest Brahman is attained with difficulty by the people of bodily attachment. jñāna yoga is difficult because the destination of the formless one is difficult to reach; a highly refined mind is required. jñāna yoga requires sravanam, mananam and nidhithyasanam and nidhithyasanam is jñāna yoga. The difficulties of people committed to jñāna yoga is many. Because the destination of the formless Brahman, is difficult to reach. The common obstacle is deha abimana or strong attachment to one's own physical body and we are busy maintaining and improving the body. Stronger the body attachment, the more difficult jñāna yoga.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 154 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yogaha, Verses 1 to 2

The 12th Chapter gives a comprehensive essence of Vedas. The first part (the first 12 verses) of this chapter deals with Bhakti Yoga as a means of moksha. This chapter removes many confusions regarding bhakti yoga. Second part (13 to 20th) Bhakti Yoga palam or moksha is discussed in the second part – 13th to 20th verses.

Bhakti yoga is not a particular sadhana, but the range of spiritual sadhana culminating in Moksha. There are three sadhanas of bhakti yoga:

1. Karma Yogaha. Krishna divides this into sakama and nişkāma karma. In both of these, a person is extroverted, dependent on the world. This is an obstacle to jñāna yoga.
2. Upasana Yogaha
3. Jani Yogaha

These three sadhanas should be practiced only in the atmosphere of eeswara bhakti, therefore these three yogas are called bhakti yoga.

Krishna subdivides these three into five levels; karma yoga is subdivided into level one and level two; and upasana yoga is also divided into level one and level two. jñāna yoga is the fifth level.

In Karma yoga level one Krishna wants to accommodate all materialistic people.

- In the first level of karma yoga, we practice karma yoga for selfish activities, but accept the results as prasadam from the lord. This attitude will purify the mind. In this level, karma yoga is pursuing worldly pleasures but with two conditions.
 - First condition is you pursue worldly pleasures only by legitimate means.
 - The second condition is attributing these acquisitions as eeswara parasadam. Claim everything as eeswara prasadam.

This first level of karma yoga is sakama karma yoga, where we have desire only for taking.

- In the second level, the karma yoga practiced for sharing. This is niṣkāma karma yoga. This will give purity at a faster rate. In sakama karma, we measure our success based on how much we have taken, in niṣkāma karma, we measure success based on how much we have given. This will give purity at a faster rate.
- In the third level, or first level of upasana yoga, Eka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This Krishna calls this as abyāsaḥ yoga.
- In the fourth level or the second level of upasana yoga is aneka roopa Eeswara dhyānam. This helps in expanding the mind. Both third and fourth levels come under saguna Eeswara dhyānam.
- Once a person has completed the four level, that person is eligible for jñāna yoga. jñāna yoga consists of three levels:
 - Sravanam, systematic study of scriptures for a period of time under a competent guru.
 - Mananam, resolving all doubts.
 - Nidhithyasanam: Converting the intellectual knowledge to strengthen emotional personality;

dwelling on the teachings of scriptures.

Karma yoga is important for the purity of mind, but it has the disadvantage of extroverted, which is an obstacle for jñāna yoga. In upasana yoga, I invoke the Lord inside and therefore upasana yoga is invertedness. All these five levels put together is Bhakti yoga.

In the last eight verses, Krishna discusses the character of a person who has successfully completed these five levels. Krishna calls him para bhakta, and there is no difference between him and the Lord.

Verse 1

Arjuna asked: Who are the best yogis among them – the ever-steadfast devotees who meditates up on You as described before and those who meditate upon the imperishable unmanifest Brahman?

This Chapter begins with a question from Arjuna, based on the previous chapters. Arjuna asks who is superior – saguna bhakta or nirguna bhakta?

Saguna eeswara can be eka roopa eeswara or aneka roopa eeswara. Nirguna eeswara is not perceptible to anybody. There is only way to meditate to nirguna eeswara that is to see as the subject itself as there is no subject object division in nirguna brahman.

Arjuna is asking indirectly who is superior – saguna eeswara or nirguna eeswara?

Verse 2

Lord Krishna said – Fixing the mind upon me with great faith, those ever-steadfast devotees who meditate upon Me are considered to be the best yogis by Me.

The real answer to Arjuna's question is that the question is wrong; for a wrong question, there is no right answer. Comparison is possible only between two similar items. There is no question of choice between two dissimilar items. Saguna eeswara and nirguna eeswara are not comparable.

Saguna bhakti is the means and nirguna bhakti is the end. Saguna bhakti is the steppingstone and nirguna bhakti is the goal. There is no choice between the two. Without saguna bhakti, nirguna bhakti is impossible, without nirguna bhakti saguna bhakti is incomplete.

Krishna does not want to tell Arjuna that the question is wrong. But he says saguna bhaktas are superior and nirguna bhaktas attain me. There is no question of choice.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 152 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 51 to 55

Viśvarūpam is a mixture of positive and negative; As long as we are in the relative world, everything has an opposite. If Lord is Srishti kariyam, the same lord will also be laya karanam. Lord will give both punyam and pavam. We should see them as complementary and accept or reject them both. But immature mind only accepts positive aspect of creation. Mind is interested in accepting birth but not willing to reject negatives like death.

Arjuna was able to see everything in creation, but not able to accept the death of his friends and relatives. So he requests the Lord to withdraw dhivya chakshu. Krishna obliges and

removes the dhivya chakshu from Arjuna. All of these are reported by Sanjaya.

Withdrawal of viśvarūpa means removal of dhivya chakshu. Dhivya chakshu is freedom from ahankara and mamakara. Ahankara and mamakara are obstacles to dhivya chakshu or divine vision. Withdrawal of dhivya chakshu is getting back ahankara and mamakara.

Verse 51

Arjuna said – Oh Krishna! Seeing this pleasing human form of Yours, I have now become peaceful. I have come to normalcy.

Arjuna looks upon Krishna as eka roopa bhakti. When aneka roopa bhakti is frightening, Aroopa Brahman will not appeal at all. It doesn't matter, we can confine to eka roopa bhakti.

Verse 52

The Lord said – This form of Mine which you have seen is very difficult to see Even gods are always craving for the vision of this form.

Lord Krishna glorifies viśvarūpa darshanam. He says this darshanam is extremely difficult, and it is a glorious vision. Even gods regularly pray for this darshanam.

Verse 53

Neither by the study of the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by charity, nor by worship can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me.

If viśvarūpa darshanam is a rare thing, what are the means of getting viśvarūpa darshanam. Lord Krishna gives the means in verses 53 and 54. The means given by Krishna is intense bhakti. Other sadhanas are important but will not lead to viśvarūpa darshanam, only bhakti alone will lead you to viśvarūpa darshanam. Other sadhanas mentioned are vedic

scholarship, intense tapas or austerity and charity. These sadhanas will not give viśvarūpa darshanam. But this doesn't mean we should drop these sadhanas, only that they will not give viśvarūpa darshanam.

Verse 54

Oh Arjuna! However, by undivided devotion I can be seen in this form known truly and merged into Oh Arjuna!

Lord Krishna gives the means of viśvarūpa darshanam which is bhakti or intense love for the Lord.

Three levels of bhakti:

1. Arthaha and Artha: Devotion to lord for the benefit of worldly goals; Sakama bhakti. We use this sadhana as a means for worldly benefit. Purely commercial bhakti. Here god is a means to worldly benefit. This bhakti is better than no bhakti and this bhakti makes mind purer.

Worldly benefits have three defects:

1. They are mixed with painAthrupthi, we seek more and more

1. Bandha tatvam; binding nature.

- Mumukshu or Ananya bhakti where god is an end itself; god is both sadhana and sadhanam.
- jñāni: Look upon God as myself; god is neither the means nor destination but the god is the traveler; God is not sought but god is the very seeker himself. Lord is neither sadhanam or sathyam, but I myself. With this knowledge, the devotee becomes one with the Lord. The notion of division between jivatma and paramatta is removed and this is merger with Lord.

Verse 55

He who does works for me, who is My devotee, who keeps Me as the supreme goal, who is free from attachment, and who is free from hatred towards all reaches Me. Oh Arjuna;

This is a seed verse, which will be expanded in the next chapter. Bhakti is not a particular sadhana but it is the entire range of spiritual sadhana which will take one to moksha.

This is divided into three and Lord Krishna will divide them into five. The three levels of sadhana are:

1. Karma lakshana bhakti: Bhakti expressed in the form of karma yoga; Karma Yoga is impossible without devotion. Karma yoga involves two stages. In the first stage of karma yoga I am a kartha doing various actions which are converted to karma palam making me to karma boktha. Karma palam can be favorable and unfavorable. As a kartha, I am dedicating all karma palam to the lord accepting them as Eeswara prasadam. Every experience in life is karma palam. Because of this, karma yoga becomes a form of bhakti.
2. Upasana roopa bhakti: Bhakti in the form of meditation or dhyānam. This is required because karma yoga is always an extroverted act. An extroverted mind can never realize God. The real god is not outside, is inside so an extroverted mind can never realize God. Here we visualize lord within ourselves.
3. jñāna lakshana bhakti: Study of scripture to discover the real nature of God. Study of scriptures is also a form of bhakti.

A person must practice these three forms or stages of bhakti. Lord Krishna elaborates the bhakti in the next chapter.

Krishna state first become a karma yogi. Accepting all results in life is karma yoga. Slowly convert goal as God himself. Don't lean on the world, lean on God. Graduate from world dependence to God dependence. Train saying all the time that my support is God. Gradually become a thevara mumukshu where moksha is the only goal. As you lean more and more on higher things, the attachment to other things will diminish. Freedom from raga dwesha means presence or absence of anything will not impact me. Developing Sādhana Catuṣṭaya Sampatti is our goal, Bhagavan will give other means like Guru etc. Develop viveka, develop vairāgyam and develop mumukshu and become a bhakta.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 151 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 44 to 46

Lord Krishna pointed out that he is kala tattvam – time principle. Time and space are inseparable; when you appreciate lord as kalaha you also appreciate the lord as desaha. Then everything existing in time must also be Eeswara. We won't be able to answer questions like when the time was created or where was the space created or what was the object with which space created. Bagawan is time, space and objects. Then Bagawan includes events. And lord is the order or laws which govern all the events. Desa, kala, vasthu, sambavaha (events) and niyamaha (laws) are all Bagawan. Whenever I experience any one of these, I am experiencing Bagawan, but we are not aware of experiencing eeswara darshanam.

Madhyama bhakta asks for viśva roopa darśana not realizing that he is already experiencing visa roopa darśana when he looks at the universe or nature. Madhyama bhakta looks at the universe and appreciates it as Bagawan. Uthama bhakta looks at the universe as himself. At this point, Arjuna feels a deep guilt because he did not look at Lord Krishna as viśva roopa Eeswara.

Stages of appreciation of eeswara:

Stage 1: Bagawan creates the world. Nimitha kāraṇa eeswara or eka roopa eeswara.

Stage 2: Bagawan appears ass the world – Upadana kāraṇa eeswara or aneka roopa eeswara.

stage 3: Bagawan is the world. niverta kāraṇa eeswara or Aroopa eeswara.

Verse 44

Therefore, saluting and prostrating the body, I propitiate You, the adorable Lord. You should forgive my offences just as a father forgives those of the son, just as a friend forgives those of the friend, and just as a husband forgives those of the wife.

Arjuna feels that it is a great insult as a friend; in fact treating the Lord as friend is a form of bhakti and he offers prāyaścitta namaskara. He requests the Lord to forgive and forget the offenses just as:

1. The parents forgive offenses of children.
2. A husband forgiving the offenses of wife.
3. A friend forgiving the insults and offenses of a friend.

Verse 45

Seeing the universal form which has not been seen before. I

am delighted. At the same time, my mind is afflicted with fear. Oh Lord! Show me that familiar form itself. Oh God of gods! Oh Lord, who is the abode of the universe! Be gracious.

One part of Arjuna's mind says he is one of the few luckiest persons as he received Dhivya Chakshu and this part makes him happy. At the same time, he is also seeing the Lord as a destroyer and that part makes him distressed with fear. Between these two, bhayam or fear is more. Because Dhivya Chakshu was an artificial one given by the Lord. We must get Dhivya Chakshu by practicing karma yoga. When it is naturally developed by the practice of karma yoga, then it won't be fearful. If we want to go from eka roopa bhakti to aneka roopa bhakti, we have to reduce raga dwesha tremendously; ahankāra and mamakara must be reduced. Then viśva roopa will be enjoyable.

Verse 46

I wish to see you in the same form as before with crown, with mace and with disc in your hand. Oh Lord, with a thousand arms! Oh Lord with universal form! Appear with that very same four-armed form.

The three stages Arjuna goes through are:

1. Acharya – Wonderment
2. Bhayam – Fear
3. Bakti – Reverence

How does Arjuna say four hands? There had been many explanations. We can conclude that either Krishan had four hands or Arjuna is confused. There is no need for deep thinking. It just that Arjuna wants Krishna to appear as his friend.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 149 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 33 to 34

Acting according dharma is surrendering individual will to Dharma. Dharma is the will of God, surrendering to dharma is surrendering to the will of the god. When you act according to your will without regard to Dharma, then the individual will is not in alignment with Dharma or the will of God. Arjuna's will based on raga dwesha is to run away from the battlefield; his will based on dharma is to fight the war. He has two choices, going by raga dwesha and not fight the war or going by dharma and fight the war. Dharmic based action is use of free will and adharmic based action is abuse of free will. Choosing the will based on raga dwesha will be abusing free will. Karma yoga requires one to follow dharma, so a karma yogi surrenders his free will and raga dwesha to dharma or to the free will of God. This voluntary surrender is called bhakti. Saving the people from adharma is the duty of kshatriya.

Verse 35

Sanjaya said – Having heard these words of Krishna, the trembling Arjuna saluted and, bowing down with great fear, falteringly spoke to Krishna once again with joined palms.

Arjuna now understood that Krishna is not responsible for the suffering of people. Krishna's compassion is not to alter the results of karma, but to pass the karma palam and maintain dharma. If God alters the results of karma for one's benefit, then one may benefit but the society as a whole will suffer.

The laws of karma should continue to work for the benefit of the whole society. We should learn to accept the suffering without complaining to God. Instead of saying I am suffering, learn to say I am becoming purer because the accumulated pavam is getting reduced. God's compassion is shown by maintaining dharma.

By practicing prāyaścitta karma, I am producing positive karma, which will produce agami that will neutralize praraptha karma. Whether prāyaścitta will neutralize praraptha will depend on the strength of praraptha karma. Every praraptha karma can be weak, medium or strong. Prāyaścitta can be helpful for weak and for medium it will help managing the praraptha. But when it is strong, praraptha will not help, but it will create punyam for the future. However, when karma matures, we will not know whether it is weak or strong. God is defined as the order of creation. So, surrendering to God is surrendering to the order of creation. The law of karma is like law of gravity, it will not change because you dislike.

Surrender is the physical expression of intellectual appreciation and acceptance of the law of karma or the order of creation. Ripeness of bhakti is that bhayam or fear is gone, because I learn to go with the laws of karma. Bakti melts away the fear of raga.

Verse 36

Arjuna said – Oh Lord! It is but proper that the world is delighted and gratified by the glorification of You. The frightened demons run in all directions and all the hosts of siddhas bow down to you.

Arjuna's three stages of viśvarūpa darshanam

1. Wonderment
2. Fear
3. Surrender

One must come eka roopa to viśvarūpa to nirguna roopa, universal laws of dharma. If you want to conquer fear you must expand your mind to appreciate totality or viśvarūpa and the laws of karma. As an individual, you cannot escape the laws of karma. For that you should transcend ahankara. That can happen only with viśvarūpa darshanam.

When you are narrow minded, immature and ahankara is in force, religion and God become sources of fear. But the pleasure that comes with the appreciation of totality and viśvarūpa is ananda.

Total identification is Brahman; Zero or no identification is Eeswara; in both have no samsara. But we all have a selected few identification (family, friends etc.) that gives samsara. This will not make them escape from the laws of karma. We should pray to give the strength to accept the karma palam.

Verse 37

Oh great Lord! Why would they not salute You who are greater than even Brahma and who are the first creator? Oh limitless one who is the ruler of gods, and the abode of the universe! You are the cause and the effect. You are that imperishable Truth which is beyond both.

Any one who appreciates totality and doing namaskara is intuitive and natural. If you read any science after viśvarūpa darshanam, wonderment will not be avoided. If you are a bhakta it will lead to namaskara and surrender. Whoever has not understood the scriptures properly is missing a totally different dimension. If I say there is no god, it is not absence of God, I don't have the sense to appreciate viśvarūpa and harmony. I don't live in the universe, the universe is in me.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 148 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 33 to 34

Seeing the Viśvarūpa darshanam, Arjuna goes through two emotions. The first emotion was wonder and the second was fear, because he saw Lord destroying everything. Arjuna had a question whether the Lord was compassionate. He asked Krishna who are you and what are your functions. From the standpoint of time, the Lord is called kala or Yamaha the one who controls everything. He also states that I am going to kill the warriors on both sides, because their time has come. Arjuna is simply an instrument. According to the law of karma the time has come for Bhishma, Dhrona and gowravas have to die. Krishna, as kala principle, is only giving an opportunity for Arjuna to be an instrument in the process.

Superficial study of verse 33 may lead to fatalistic view because everything is pre-determined, and we are all only puppets or instruments and the Bagawan holds the strings. Sastras rejects fatalism and do not consider humans as puppets because humans have free will. When we are rejecting fatalism, we are not rejecting fate. Fate is very much accepted by sastra. Fate is the result of action done by us in the past, this and previous jenma. Karma palam is otherwise known as destiny, prarabtham, daivam. Prarabdha karma influences our life, but not the horoscope or the planetary position. Fate is not the only factor influencing life. In addition to fate, free will (purusārtha) decides your future. If you say fate and free will decides future, it is sastra. If you say fate alone decides your future, it is fatalism. Free will has no place. In fatalism everything is

pre-determined by God. God's will alone exist, and we are all mere instruments.

Minor advantages of this point of views are:

1. You need not take responsibility for your atrocity and avoid guilt.
2. This theory is useful to accept the sufferings of life. In sastra, fatalism is temporarily used to accept suffering.

Six problems of this theory of fatalism:

1. God becomes kartha and we are all only instruments. All the pavam and punyam will go to Bagawan. Bagawan becomes mahā samsari.
2. Since we are all only instruments only, we will not get any karma palam – punyam and pavam.
3. All the sufferings are the responsibility of the god. That god must be most cruel god.
4. Not all people enjoy uniformly; some are happier than others, so God is partial.
5. Since we are all only instruments, we need not know what proper action is and what improper action is. Study of dharma sashtra is not required.
6. As mere instruments, we need not choose a course of action; we will never have conflict in life. As long as there are choices, there is free will. Only animals do not have conflict because they have no free will and they have no choice.

Free will and fate are the two factors that contribute to our future. For animals only fate contributes to their future. Some of our actions are because of fate and some others are because of our free will and yet others are because of a mix of the two. So, you are one of the contributors to our future

along with fate. By our prayer we try to control our fate and by our freewill we try to control our choice.

Bagawan harmonizes the world with dharma when I align my free will with dharma, then I become the instrument of the Lord. Arjuna faces this conflict before the war. Dharma sastra says Arjuna's duty to fight the war. But his raga dwesha says that he should not hurt his next of kins. Krishna tells him not to go by raga dwesha but go by dharma. Dharma is god's will. When free will is aligned with dharma, then I become an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Verse 33 says align your will with dharma.

Verse 34

Kill Drona, Bhisma, Jayadratha, Karna as well as other great warriors who are killed by Me. Do not fear. Fight, you will conquer the enemies in battle.

According to the law of karma or law of dharma has indicated the death of all the warriors in the battlefield. In our life, our fate is not knowable and that is why it is called adhrishtam Therefore, we should do our action as though everything in our control and consider all the result as the action of God.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 147 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 30 to 33



Viśvarūpa consists of everything including time. Time and

space are an integral property of creation. Time and space can never be separated from creation, they arise along with creation. When Arjuna experiences the viśvarūpa, he also experiences time principle. This invisible all-pervading time principle or kala tattvam is symbolized by the mouth of the lord. This kala tattvam has twofold power – creation and destruction. But Arjuna, being in a battlefield, sees only the destruction part of the kala tattvam. If he had seen the totality, creation and destruction, he would have seen the mangalam swaroopam and amangala swaroopam of the Lord. We only have two options – accept the whole as mangalam or reject the whole as amangalam. But we only want to accept the birth as mangalam and not accept the death as mangalam. Either totally embrace the whole world or reject the whole world. As long as you accept only one part and reject the other part, there will be samsara.

Verse 30

Swallowing all the people from all directions with blazing mouths, You repeatedly lick with relish. Filling the entire universe with radiance. Your fierce rays scorch everyone, Oh Lord.

Bagawan doesn't seem to have any sympathy towards people crying for the death of family and friends. But by giving intelligence, Bagawan has given us an opportunity to know what death is. If we do not grow and mature, Bagawan will have no sympathy. Kala tattvam affects all the time – not just at the old age. Arjuna wonders whether Bagawan is extremely cruel. When suffering in life, we all will get this doubt. We may even doubt the existence of Bagawan.

Verse 31

Who are you with this fierce form? Tell me, Oh Supreme Lord! Salutation be to You. Be gracious. I desire to know You, the primal one. Indeed, I do not know Your function.

Arjuna asks who are you – the frightening one or the gracious one? Who is Bagawan and what is your function? Why can't the whole world be beautiful?

Verse 32

The Lord said – I am the mighty Time, the destroyer of the world. I am proceeding to destroy the people here. All the warriors who are arrayed in both the armies will cease to exist even without you.

Bagawan answers that he is kala tattvam. There are two planes in Vedanta, vyāvahārika tattvam and pāramarthika tattvam. With regard to vyāvahārika tattvam either you accept totally or reject it totally. There is no good or bad. You accept both or reject both. You renounce both and death. This requires inner strength. Total acceptance also requires strength. This strength you get only with atma Jñānam.

Partial rejection or acceptance is not acceptable. As vyāvahārika tattvam, Bagawan creates and destroys. Pāramarthika tattvam -in which there is no time and no space and there are no pairs. No good and bad; no death and birth.

Verse 33

Therefore, get up and attain fame. Conquering the enemies, enjoy the prosperous kingdom. Indeed, they have already been killed by Me. Be a mere instrument, Oh Arjuna!

Krishna says the time has come for people on the battlefield to die. Only the means of destruction is not decided, but the end of the people has already been decided by kala tattvam. The option that Arjuna has is to join and do his duty by defeating the enemies and establishing dharma. Arjuna is only an instrument in Bagawan's hand.

When we read in this contest, it looks like he is only an instrument or puppet of the Bagawan. Looks like Bagawan has already decided everything and everything is predetermined.

Seems like human beings do not have any choice and do not have any free will. There is only one doer and Bagawan determines everything. This will be the wrong conclusion that we can come to from this verse. Human beings do have free will.



Bhagwat Geeta, Class 146 – Chapter 11 Viśvarūpa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 23 to 29

Blessed by Dhivya Chakshu, Arjuna is having viśvarūpa darshanam of the Lord. He goes through three stages and his reaction to each stage is different. First stage is wonder. Anything in mass scale results in wonder, similar to seeing water in a huge waterfall.

Verse 23

Oh Lord! People are frightened by seeing your huge form which has many mouths and eyes, which has many arms, thighs, and feet, which has many abdomens, and which is fierce with many tusks also am I frightened.

While witnessing viśvarūpa, Arjuna sees the mouth of the Lord. The mouth here is the symbol for time principle. Time can be a preserver, protector or destroyer. Kala as preserver is Brahma, kala as protector is Vishnu and kala as a destroyer is Shiva. Here Arjuna is looking at the mouth as agni or

destructive kala or Shiva and gets frightened. Viśvarūpa consists of pairs of opposite. We must accept both aspects of viśvarūpa. If we see them as a complementary whole, it will not frighten us. Birth and death are two complementary visions of viśvarūpam. We should accept both birth and death as mangalam. We should see everything as undivided part of viśvarūpam, and this is maturity. If we do not have this maturity, Bhagavan may appear cruel sometimes. Viśvarūpa as a source of fear is described from verses 23rd to 30. Viśvarūpam is fearful for immature people. Arjuna says the whole world is frightened, and he is also frightened.

Verse 24

Indeed, I am frightened at heart by seeing you who is touching the sky, who is brilliant with many colors, whose mouths are wide open, and who has large fiery eyes. I do not find courage or composure, Oh, Lord.

Many arms, thighs and feet refer to the arms, thighs, and feet of all the people in the world and not Krishna with many thighs and feet.

Time or kalam has many frightening aspects. Old age is one of them. Lord is often named as kala.

Verse 25

Having just seen Your mouths which are fierce with rusks and which are like the fire of dissolution, I do not recognize the quarters, nor do I find peace. Be gracious, Oh Lord of lords, who is the abode of the universe.

Arjuna's mind goes again to the Lord's mouth. Protruding teeth symbolize the pain caused by the passing of time.

At the time of creation, akasha, vayu, agni, jala and prithvi. At the time of pralaya or end, it happens in reverse order. Arjuna sees mouth as agni and greatly disturbed.

Verse 26

All these sons of Dhruvharashtra along with hosts of kings, Bhishma, Drona and that son of charioteer along with the prominent warriors of ours are entering You.

Arjuna does not want to see the mouth, but he is getting a closeup vision of mouth. Mouth is symbolic of kala and the purpose of mouth eating. Here the kala refers to the passing of time or getting old and passing away. We should avoid the fear of old age, disease and death and accept them.

In the battlefield many people are going to die and this verse is the symbolic expression of the death caused by the Mahabharata war. Arjuna asked for Gita wisdom, because he could not accept the death of Dhrona, Bhishma etc. But here he is seeing the death of those very same people he had difficulty accepting. As long as we refuse to accept a situation, life becomes difficult. Intelligence is accepting choiceless situations.

Verse 27

Speeding, they enter Your terrible mouths which are fierce with tusks. Stuck between the teeth, some of them are seen with their heads crushed.

Arjuna continues to see the frightening mouth of the Lord, with frightening teeth. This symbolizes different diseases taking away parts of the body.

Verse 28

These heroes of the world of men enter Your blazing mouths just as many streams of rivers flow towards the ocean only.

All the living-being must be ultimately resolved. Birth and death are very course of life. Arjuna gives the example of river. All rivers rush towards one destination, even though they may take different routes. That destination is the

ocean. Rivers come from the ocean in the form of rain, and they go back to the ocean.

Verse 29

Again, people enter your mouths with great speed for their own destruction just as moths enter the blazing fire with great speed for their own destruction.

The example given is small insect and fly. All the insects and flies rush towards flame, even though the flame is going to cause their destruction. But they are attracted by the brightness of the flame and fly into their own death. Similarly, we are all rushing towards the death by the passing of time. Kala tattvam is described as part of viśvarūpa darshanam. Atma is the only place where kala and desha (time and form) is absent and atma tattvam is the only solution. As long as we are away from atma, we should accept kala and desha, old age and ultimate death.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 145 – Chapter 11 Viśva Roopa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 18 to 22

To have viśvarūpa darshanam, we require physical eye to see the universe as the body of the eye. We are all gifted with physical eye. But this is not enough, we also need the attitude by which we look upon the universe as the body of the Lord. Lord is the material cause of the world, the Lord himself manifesting himself as the universe. We should learn

to train the mind to look upon the universe as the body of the Lord. This attitude is the second factor required which we call as divya shakshu. This is similar to the prasadam from a temple. Ordinary food gets a special designation as prasadam. This change is brought up by inner attitude, divya shakshu. This divya shakshu was given to Arjuna by the Lord. When this change takes place, Arjuna goes through several emotional transformations. One of the transformation is acharyam or wonder in seeing totality. This totality is available all the time. But because of mamakara and ahankara, we were not able to see the totality. Arjuna expresses this wonderment from verses 15 to 22. Arjuna sees the Lord as the ultimate support is something which supports everything but is not supported by anything; that is support less support; Changeless reality; One who maintains the harmony of the creation. Wherever human beings enter, harmony is violated. When the violation is unbearable, Bagawan takes an avatar and eliminates the violation. This is similar to when something poisonous enters digestive system the expulsion comes, and these are in built remedy. Similarly, whenever there is a toxin to the universe, Bhagavan comes as an avatar.

Verse 19

I see you as one who has no beginning, middle or end, who has limitless power, who has countless arms, whose eyes are the moon and the sun, whose mouth is the blazing fire, and who scorches this universe with Your radiance.

Do not imagine one Lord standing with countless hands, mouths, eyes etc., but see everyone's hand, mouths, eyes etc. as the hands of the Lord. For viśvarūpa, sun and moon are the eyes. This indicates that viśvarūpa is the universe itself.

In Tattva Bodha, we learnt that every sense organ has a presiding deity. The presiding deity of eyes is Sun. Agni or fire is the mouth of the Lord, because Agni is the presiding deity of mouth. Also, mouth swallows everything, similarly

Agni the fire principles every oblation offered during an oblation. With its radiated heat, heat is scorching the earth, and this is experiencing viśvarūpa darshanam.

Verse 20

The space between heaven and earth as well as all the quarters are indeed pervaded by You alone. Having seen this wonderful and fierce form of Yours, all the three worlds are frightened, Oh great Lord!

The whole universe is the Lord's body. Earth is the feet of the lord, and the upper sky of the Lord. All the stars are decorations for the Lord. The whole universe is pervaded by the Lord, without a second. Arjuna says he is able to appreciate the universe as the body of the Lord. Lord as the creator and sustainer, we all enjoy and admire. But the Lord as the destroyer is feared by most of us. Arjuna says he enjoys and fears at the same time.

Verse 21

These hosts of gods are entering You indeed. Frightened, some of them pray with joined palms. Having uttered the word "peace" groups of sages and siddhas praise You with complete hymns.

All the devas, appreciate the viśvarūpa and they approach the lord. They understand that Bagawan's destruction is dharmic destruction. Others approach the lord with fear. Religion is often practiced because of fear. Fear is required to keep a person in dharmic path, until a person becomes discriminative, wise and mature. The wise sages praise the lord with complete hymns.

Verse 22

Rudras, Adityas, vasus, sadhyas, visvadevas, two asvins, maruts, pitrs, groups of gandharvas, yaksas, asuras and

siddhas are all looking at you with wonders.

This viśvarūpa darshana is available for all. The people miss it because of ahankara and mamakara; it is my private projection that is preventing from getting the viśvarūpa darshanam. Wherever mamakara and ahankara is subdued, the viśvarūpam is available. Rudra, Aditya, vasus, maruts, aswin, sadhyas, all are apricating the viśvarūpa and are in wonderment like Arjuna.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 144 – Chapter 11 Viśva Roopa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 14 to 18

For viśvarūpa darshanam in addition to regular eye, we need a special attitude which is born out of study of scriptures as well as a prepared mind. Without the prepared mind, we can see viśva but it will not be seen as viśvarūpa Eeswara. Knowledge, cognitive factors, and a pure mind all required for viśvarūpa darshanam. Arjuna was missing this divya sakshu and Krishna granted this divya sakshu – prepared mind – for Arjuna to have the viśvarūpa darshanam. Sanjaya gives the description of viśvarūpa darshanam.

Verse 14

Then, Arjuna, who was wonderstruck and thrilled, saluted the Lord with his head and spoke with join palms.

Because of the change of perspective, Arjuna had an impact.

Arjuna was struck by this extraordinary change of perspective. This change of perspective showed at the physical level also.

Verse 15

Arjuna said – Oh Lord! In your body I see all the gods as well as hosts of various beings. Lord Brahma who is seated on the lotus, all the sages, and the celestial serpents.

Arjuna goes through several emotional stages and the first stage was wonderment or acharyam; Arjuna sees the world as wonderful. If you look at the totality of the cosmos, all the problems like terrorism, wars etc., will seem to be insignificant. This Acharya bhava is described from verse 15 to 22. His first response is wonderment. He sees all 14 lokas. A question may arise whether Arjuna saw other lokas. But it is not important what lokas Arjuna saw, it is important how he saw: he saw ordinary world as viśvarūpa darshanam, the manner of seeing is important and not what was seen. This alone gives liberation.

Verse 16

I see You everywhere with countless forms, with many arms, abdomens, mouths and eyes. I see neither Your beginning nor the middle, nor the end, Oh Lord of the universe! Oh Lord with universal form!

The idea is all the hand of all the people, all the mouths of all the people etc. are all viśvarūpa darshanam. Lord has limitless form. The definition of the word viśvarūpam is the one whose body is the world itself.

Verse 17

I see You as a mass of effulgence shining everywhere with crown, mace, and disc. I see you all around, radiant like the blazing fire and sun, blinding and immeasurable.

This is continuation of Arjuna's description of viśvarūpa darshanam. In India, deities are installed in difficult to reach places like Himalayas, so we can appreciate viśvarūpa darshanam.

Verse 18

You are the supreme imperishable one to be known. You are the ultimate support of this universe. You are the eternal protector of eternal dharma. I regard You as the eternal Purusha. Both nirguna and saguna eeswara are eternal, because the universe is anādi – no beginning and no ending. Ultimate support is that which supports everything, but it is not supported by anything. Even though Arjuna is seeing saguna brahman, he is describing nirguna brahman.