

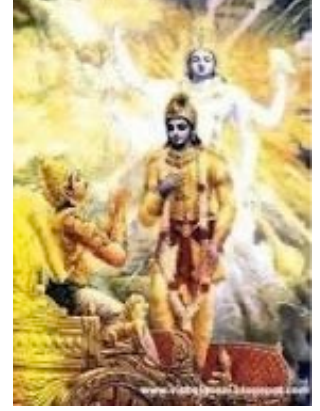
Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8 online Part 2 dated 14/06/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from Bangalore, India)

Subject: Chapter 8, Verses 3-7

ॐ वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम्
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

**Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam,
Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum**

I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.



सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः।
पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

**Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanaha|
parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat |**

All the Upanishads are likened to cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda.. Partha (Arjuna) is likened to a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं ।
यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

**Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim |
Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam ||**

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Recollection:

We are discussing the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavat Gita, very aptly called “**Akshar- Brahm-Yoga** अक्षर ब्रह्म योगः

Arjuna has asked seven questions to Lord Krishna. I have tried in my previous class to put these questions into simple words:

- Who am I?
- Where have I come from?
- Why am I here on this earth?
- What is my origin?
- Is there a God?
- Did God create this world?
- What is the nature of this world?
- What is the meaning of all my actions in life?
- What is the goal of life?

- What am I supposed to do in my life?
- How am I going to attain this goal?
- What is bondage and what is liberation?
- Who is going to teach me?
- Will I ever reach my goal? Will I ever become completely free?

Bhagwan Krishna is going to give the answers to these questions in this Eighth Chapter.

Our next birth is determined by our last thought at the time of death.

Shri Krishna tells us a very important point in this chapter - when a human being leaves his/her body (means at the time of death) then his/her next birth is determined by the last dominating thought in his/her mind before leaving the body. Here, thought does not mean an accidental thought.

What is meant by the last thought? Means the **idea** in the mind or *bhava*, not the sound produced by the mouth.

Let me clarify this point. Suppose a person has a dog called *Narayana*. He loves his dog very much and just before leaving his body, he says '*Narayana Narayana*'. Now, if he is saying *Narayana* but thinking about his dog, then he will be born as a dog in his next birth. This is a fact. We know the story of 'Jad-Bharata'.

Another example is - suppose a man's head is in fire, what should he be thinking? He should be thinking about water but by mistake, he says, 'Please bring some fire.' He actually wants some water. So, the last thought does not mean the last sound which comes from our mouths but the last deep desire or *bhava* in our minds.

This deep desire or *bhava* भाव to attain God will only come at the time of death if we have practised it sincerely since we started our spiritual practice. Therefore, Lord Krishna is advising us, "Do not think about anything else except Me. This is the only way to attain Me." The Lord is going to explain this to us later on in this chapter. At the moment, we are discussing Arjuna's questions.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 3

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।
भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसञ्ज्ञितः ॥ 3॥

***śhrī bhagavān uvācha
akṣharaṁ brahma paramaṁ svabhāvo dhyātmam uchyate***

bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo visargaḥ karma-sanjñitaḥ

Meaning: The Lord says - Brahman is imperishable. It is called the अक्षर **akshara** or the Supreme-Reality. The same Supreme-Reality or Brahman dwelling in each body is called the Individual-Soul or *Jiva*. The offering of the oblation which brings all beings into existence and supports them is called karma or action.

Here, three technical terms are being explained so beautifully. We will try to understand them in simple words -

Q. 1) What is Brahman?

The Lord says, “अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं **akshara brahma paramam.**” The Supreme-Reality which cannot be described - which is infinite, indescribable, indivisible, unborn, eternal, all-pervading is called ‘**akshara —Parmatma** or Supreme Reality’. **Kshara** क्षर means which slowly decays or gets destroyed. But Brahman is infinite and infinite can never be destroyed. That is why called अक्षर **akshara**. As described in the Bhagavat Gita and Katha-Upanishad अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे । Iajo nityaḥ śāśvato'yaṁ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre |Gita C2.V20, Kathaupanishad 1/2/18

Q. 2) What is this Adhyatman?

The Lord says, “**Svabhavo adhyatman uchyate** स्वभावो स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते - this world which appears broken, divisible, finite, separate from each other and changeable has come from Brahman. Brahman which is limited by the body and the mind is called ‘an Individual-Soul or *Jivatma*’. The Supreme Brahman exists in every individual body as the *Pratek-Atman* प्रत्येक-आत्मन् or as Ego, known as **adhyatma** - which dwells in the body known as *Jiva*.

Q. 3) What is karma?

The divine Lords answers - **bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo visargaḥ karma-sanjñitaḥ** - **karma** or action is defined as - that which creates which was not before. Ishwara's karma is creation/सृष्टि *sristhi*, maintenance/स्थिति *esthiti* and dissolution/प्रलय *pralaya*. **Visargaḥ** means creativity. **Bhuta-bhavodbhava - karo** - means that sacrifice or that karma which brings into existence all beings and also supports them is called ‘**karma or action**’.

Philosophy of Karma-Sidhanta कर्म सिद्धांतः

We are also doing exactly the same thing. Whether we are human beings or animals or plants, we all are creating something at every single moment of our lives. We are creating our individuality in the form of body and mind and we are creating our happiness or unhappiness by our कर्म फल *karma-phala*. A very

important point which we should know - our body and mind are our instruments. A part of the mind is called knowledge. This knowledge is responsible for our happiness or unhappiness. For example - the body of a wicked person is not wicked; a part of the mind is possessed by evil thoughts and that is the creator of his wickedness. Every creature is creating and recreating its life - whether life is bright or dark, good or evil, meritorious or non-meritorious, all depends on our karmas. This is the philosophy of *Karma-Sidhanta*.

This is what the Lord is telling us; “*Ishwara* or God is also *karta/doer* of creation, maintenance and destruction or dissolution.” Within this creation, maintenance and dissolution, we as an individual also follow. How does *Ishwara* create this world? The world consists of people like us, animals, trees and particular circumstances. Interestingly, *Ishwara* or God does not create anything in this world independently. I will give you an illustration - suppose my *karmas* dictate that I am to be born in India, then God will create a place called India and will make me take birth there so that I can exhaust my *karma-phala*. God will select my parents so that I get the right type of body and circumstances to exhaust my *karma-phala*. This is the reason that some are healthy; some are not healthy; some are beautiful; some are not; some are very intelligent; some are not so intelligent and so on. We are creating our own selves. Then what is the role of *Ishwara*? He is the supervisor of our *karma-phala*, but what type of *karmas* we will do, God leaves that to us. *Karma-phala* depends upon our *karma*. God places each one of us in the right place to exhaust our *karma-phala*. What is karma? *Karma* means creating our life, bondage and our liberation. This is called कर्मसञ्ज्ञितः ***karma-sanjñitah***.

Visargah means offering. What is the offering? According to Vedas, the offerings of oblations to the Gods brings about the birth of all creatures. How? The oblations cause rain; rain produces food; food causes the creation of beings. The offerings of oblations in sacrifice/*yajna* are called *karmas* or actions.

This idea is expressed in a beautiful hymn called ‘*Purush-Sukta*’. It is expressed in this hymn that *Purusha* has created the universe. *Purusha* or God has sacrificed Himself to create the world. The world was non-existent before its creation, God or *Purusha* is the creator of the universe. He is the material cause; He is the efficient cause; He is the instrumental cause and He is everything. He is transforming Himself through the act of ‘sacrifice’, ‘as if’ (this is the keyword) He became the world (because actually, no real change happened in Him). The very first word in ‘*Vishnu-Sashatranama*’ is विश्वम् *Vishavam*. *Vishavam* (or *Jagat* or the Universe) is nothing but *Vishnu* or God. Why can’t we understand it? Because of Maya i.e. we are covered by a veil called ‘*Maya*’. This *Maya* consists of *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas* and these three *gunas* appear as infinite names and forms or *nama* and *rupa*. Brahman is hiding like an actor behind these dresses of names and forms.

Illustration of actors in various performances:

For example, when an actor is dressed up like Duryodhana then we call him Duryodhana. When the same actor is dressed up like Ram then we call him Ram.

When the Lord appears as Ram then Ram-Bhaktas worship Him as Shri Ram, however, the devotees of Shiva may not like this idea. Interestingly, when the Lord appears as Shiva then Vaishnava's or Ram-Bhaktas may not like Him as Shiva!! What are these bhaktas hating or loving? They are loving or hating the 'costume' which the Lord is putting on. Of course, they cannot hate God because God is beyond love and hate. They are mistaking God in a particular costume.

I would like to tell you a very interesting incident - a very popular TV serial was on television a few years ago called 'Ramayana'. Some North Indian actors acted as Ram, Sita, Hanuman, Lakshman and so on. The serial became extremely popular and people went mad about it. In the eyes of the general public, these actors and actresses were considered as real Ram and Sita etc. Once it so happened, these actors were roaming around in a public place in Indian. Unfortunately, at that time, the actor who acted as Ram was smoking a cigarette, unfortunately, fans recognised him, could not tolerate his behaviour and started throwing stones at him because, in the eyes of the public, this actor was Ram!

In the words of Shri Ramakrishna, "Every form belongs to God; every name belongs to God; there is no difference between God and His names." We could say, "Behind every body; behind every mind and behind every manifestation - there is only one reality called Existence-Knowledge and Bliss or Sat-Chit-Ananda.

What is meant by sadhana or spiritual practice? To get rid of this veil of Maya and rediscover the reality behind the veil of name and form.

Vidyaranya and his Panchadashi:

[**Panchadashi** पंचदशी is a simple yet comprehensive manual of Advaita Vedanta (अद्वैत वेदान्त, advaita vedānta) written in the fourteenth century A.D (1386-1391) by Vidyaranya (विद्यारण्य).]

Vidyaranya puts it so beautifully in his Panchadashi.

What is Brahman? *Asti-Bhati and Priyam* अस्ति-भाँति-प्रियम् or Existence, Knowledge and Bliss.

What is the world or prapancha प्रपंचor jagat? *Asti, Bhati, Priya* plus Nama and Rupa or Existence, Knowledge, Bliss + names and forms.

If we can understand this fact then people do not need to quarrel about religious differences or language differences etc.

Shri Ramakrishna has incarnated to preach this great truth - everybody is worshipping God only, but with different names, forms and qualities.

Next Verse:

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 4

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ 4॥

***adhibhūtaṁ kṣharo bhāvaḥ puruṣhaśh chādhidaivatam
adhiyajño ham evātra dehe deha-bhṛitām vara***

Meaning: O, best of the embodied souls, that which under lies all the elements is the perishable entity; that which underlies all the gods is the *Purusha* or the Cosmic-Spirit and He who sustains all the sacrifices is 'Me'.

In this verse, the Lord is giving answers to further three questions of Arjuna.

(These questions are no. 4, 5, and 6.)

Q. 4) What is *Adhibhutam*?

Q. 5) What is *Adhidaivam*?

Q. 6) What is *Adhiyajna*?

Shri Krishna is addressing Arjuna as देहे देहभृतां वर **dehe deha-bhṛitām vara** means the best of the embodied souls.

Q. 4) What is *Adhibhutam*?

Now, the Lord is answering Arjuna's fourth question.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः **adhibhūtaṁ kṣharo bhāvaḥ** -That which is subject to change is called **kshara**. **Adhibhutam** means that which is subjected to destruction or which is perishable. This includes every object that the seer experiences - all that is seen; all that is heard; all that is smelled; all that is tasted and all that is touched.

If we take this further - we are seeing and experiencing our body. This body is changing constantly, sometimes thin, sometimes fat, sometimes young, sometimes old and so on. Similarly, our mind is changing constantly - sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy, sometimes dull, sometimes very enthusiastic and so on. We are experiencing these changes all the time. Now, after experiencing the changing mind, we commit the mistake of identifying ourselves with our minds. Suppose, our mind is jumping up and down, we experience it as a witness, then we identify ourselves and say, "I am jumping up and down." Similarly, if there is an angry thought then we say, "I am very angry." So first, we witness a thought then identify ourselves with the thought.

The Lord is telling Arjuna, "O' Arjuna, the entire experienceable world is called - **Adhibhutam and** whatever is experienced is destructible '*kshara*' or

temporary.” Why? Because, before we have experienced the object - it was not there, while we are experiencing the object - it is there and after we have experienced it - again it will not be there. We have to understand it from a subjective and objective point of view.

Illustration of a Chair:

Just take the example of a chair - when a chair is here then we can experience it. If someone comes and moves this chair to somewhere else then the chair will not exist in this place - this is from the objective or chair’s point of view.

However, from our point of view, if we are seeing the chair and sitting on it then the chair exists for us. However, if our mind wanders somewhere else then again, for that moment the chair does not exist for us. Therefore, anything which is experienced is temporary and whatever is temporary is called *Adhibhuta*.

(The same idea is expressed in the Fifteenth Chapter as well.)

To experience something, an experiencer must be present. Who is the experiencer? As discussed earlier, it is *Jivatma* or Individual-Soul. Our Individual-Soul or Consciousness is not attached to body and mind, however it appears to be attached due to delusion.

5) What is *Adhidaivam*? - पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम्

Within each one of all these billions and billions of living creatures, there is only ‘One Divine Being’ who is accepting everything. Let me give you an illustration.

Shri Ramakrishna - Who is eating?

Once Shri Ramakrishna sat down to eat his food. There were varieties of very tasty dishes in front of him. He was eating these dishes and enjoying them. A devotee was watching Shri Ramakrishna while he was relishing all these delicious dishes. A doubt came into the devotee’s mind and the devotee started thinking that “Well, Shri Ramakrishna is a great realised-soul but he loves to eat.”

(These ideas are contradictory ideas and do not tie up with each other. Because if Shri Ramakrishna is a realised soul then he is not conscious about his body and mind and therefore, should not be interested in eating or smelling etc. However, if he is conscious about his body-mind then he is not a realised soul.) This confusion among devotees is very common - this is due to the power of Maya.

Coming back to our topic: So, this devotee was thinking that Shri Ramakrishna loves eating delicious dishes and casting doubt over his position as a realised soul. Whilst the devotee was thinking like this - something extraordinary happened; the devotee saw a big snake came out of the mouth of Shri

Ramakrishna, grabbed the food out of the hands of Shri Ramakrishna and went back inside him. Shri Ramakrishna looked at the devotee and smiled gently. The devotee got frightened and after some time understood the meaning of his vision.

Who was eating? Not Shri Ramakrishna, but Brahman who is within Shri Ramakrishna.

A very similar incident happened on a different occasion. Shri Ramakrishna was eating and relishing a variety of delicious dishes. The devotees were watching him. Suddenly, an idea came into the devotee's mind - O, Shri Ramakrishna loves eating!! (Shri Ramakrishna could read people's minds.) Shri Ramakrishna out of his infinite compassion explained and said, "A natural tendency of my mind is to dwell in the impersonal aspect of God and get merged into it (samadhi state). I deliberately try to create some desires like "I want to eat this or that". These desires help me to keep my mind at the worldly plane so that I can relate with you all, otherwise it will disappear into deep samadhi."

Shri Ramakrishna used to create some desires deliberately, such as a desire to see a friend or to attend a *satsanga* or to meet a scholar etc. so that he could keep his mind on the earthly plane. He had absolutely no desire because he was a realised soul. There is a big difference between our desires and the desires of a realised soul. A realised soul is master of his self-created desires and we are slaves of our desires.

Within each one of us resides the same Ishwara. This is beautifully expressed in the Bhagavat Gita C18, V61.

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥

**I Īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ hṛddeśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati,
bhrāmayansarvabhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā. (Gita C18/V61)**

[In the heart of all beings, O Arjuna, resides the Lord, whirling all of them by His Maya as if they were mounted on a machine.]

So, whether we are eating or a dog is eating or a mosquito is sucking blood etc. none of us knows that it is not for *us* that the food is going inside but it is for that 'One Divine Being or God' Who is residing inside us and Who is the 'real *rathi* or the rider' inside us.

The Chariot allegory in Katha-Upanishad:

The Katha-Upanishad deals with the allegoric expression of an individual as a chariot. The body is equated to a beautiful chariot, where (i) the horses are the senses, (ii) objects after which our sense organs are running are like the roads, (iii) the reins are the mind, and (iv) the charioteer is the intellect. The Master of the

chariot is the Self. The Master has bought this chariot and has employed the charioteer to get to his destination. The chariot is moving; the charioteer is also



moving; the wheels are moving but only for the purpose of the Master. The verses conclude by stating that - he who has the understanding of the driver of the chariot and controls the rein of his mind, he reaches the end of the journey, that supreme abode of the all- pervading — *Katha Upanishad* 1.3.10–11

Who is within us?

Parmatma or the Universal-Soul in the form of *Jivatma* or the Individual-Soul is sitting inside us. *Parmatma* wanted to experience and enjoy this world, therefore He created all these bodies, sense objects, sense organs etc so that He can experience this world. Everything is created for His purpose. We are not the master of our body but just the charioteer of our body.

Bengali Song:

There is a beautiful Bengali Bhajan to express this idea, “*Ami jantro tum jantri; ami ghor tumi ghoroni; ami roth tumi rothi; je maam chalo temni choli; ja maam bolao temni boli*” means: I am the machine and you are the mechanic; I am the house and you are the house-keeper; I am the chariot and you are the rider; I move as you direct me; I speak whatever you instruct me to speak.

The Lord has answered so beautifully five of Arjuna’s questions. Now we move on to the sixth question.

6) What is *Adhiyajna*?

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे **adhiyajño 'ham evātra dehe** - The Lord is saying, “In every being, I am in the form of *yajna*.” This means the Lord sustains all sacrifices or *yajna*. What is meant by *yajna*? Every activity which we do is a *yajna* or sacrifice. However, it does not become a *yajna* or sacrifice unless we bring about the idea that we are doing all these activities for the Lord.

Who is the *yajna-pati* or the master of sacrifices/actions? The Lord is the *yajna-pati*, the results of all activities go to Him only. This is a beautiful concept that the performer is *Ishwara*; the enjoyer is also *Ishwara*; karmas belong to *Ishwara*

and *karma-phalas* also belong to *Ishwara* and this beautiful concept is also called *karma-yoga*.

In a traditional *yajna*, we light the fire and offer various objects such as ghee (clarified butter) flowers, sweets, fruits, clothes etc. To whom are we offering? We specify a particular deity, god or goddess and offer these oblations to that particular deity and chant '*Indra svaha or Varuna svaha*' etc. (*Svāhā* is chanted to offer an oblation to the gods.) Shri Ramakrishna's devotees will chant "*Sarva devi-devaya swaroopaya Shri Ramakrishna svaha.*" etc. "O, Lord all these offerings are meant for You."

So, every activity is a divine sacrifice and all sacrifices are offered to the Lord. What does this mean? God is seeing through all eyes; God is hearing through all ears; God is smelling through every nose; God is tasting through every tongue; God is experiencing touch through every skin and so on. God is *Vayu-Devata* (air) inside and outside; God is *Agni-Devata* (fire) and so on. The entire universe is nothing but the manifestation of God with names and forms.

Summary and Essence of the Fourth Verse:

- **Adhibhutam** means any experienceable object. The Lord is saying, "O'Arjuna - everything which you experience is called *Adhibhutam*."
- **Adhidaivam**: This is so beautifully expressed in the verse पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् - all are attributed to One Divine Being. *Purusha* means the 'Divine Being' which pervades the entire universe. In other words, this universe is nothing but the body of Brahman. The Divine Lord is sitting in each one of us and it is for His sake all the activities are going on including eating, seeing, hearing, tasting, touching etc. The 'One Divine Consciousness' which is residing inside the infinite numbers of bodies or vehicles is called *Adhidaivtam*. This 'Divine Consciousness' is also manifesting as all the gods and goddesses. Lord *Ganesha*, Goddess *Saraswati*, Goddess *Lakshmi*, Goddess *Parvati*, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva are all the manifestations of 'One Divine Consciousness'. (Why do we have so many Gods and Goddesses? Because it is like the government of a country. Prime Minister or President wants to rule the country; he rules the country but he employs different ministers and officers for different departments. The public is advised to approach a particular department as required.)

This idea has been explained beautifully in the *Upanishads* - the Sun/Surya, the Moon/Chandra, the Vayu/Air, the Agni/Fire are functioning because of God's power only. [Katha-Upanishad 2/2/15 and Mundaka-Upanishad 2/2/10]

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥

**na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakaṁ nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto'yamagniḥ |
tameva bhāntamanubhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsā sarvamideva vibhāti ||**

[Neither does the sun shine, nor the moon with all the stars, nor does this lightning shine. What to say of this fire? Everything shines after Him who alone shines. All this universe is effulgent with His light.]

- **Adhiyajna** -Every activity is a sacrificial activity provided we have the feeling that God has given me the body, sense organs etc. and He is manifesting through my body for His sake. He created this universe for His sake. Therefore, this entire universe is God or *Paramatma* in the form of *Ishwara*, *Jiva* and *Prakruti*. So, every activity is a divine sacrifice and all sacrifices are offered to the Lord.

So, six questions of Arjuna have been answered by Lord Krishna.

=====

Now, comes the seventh question of Arjuna.

Q. 7) How can a person get out of the ignorance or bondage of Maya and attain God?

The answer to the above question is - practice the presence of God and remember God all the time. Why? So that when the time will come to give up the body then the dominant thought in the mind will be God only. This idea is expressed in the fifth sloka.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 5

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् |
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः || 5||

***anta-kāle cha mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ yāti nāstyatra sanśhayaḥ***

anta-kāle—at the time of death, when *prana* is about to give up the body. (Usually, our dominant thought is about this world that we have not been able to enjoy this world and would like to enjoy in our next birth. Most of us think that our rich neighbour is a very happy man. However, the neighbour is probably thinking that my neighbour is not a rich man but is much happier than me because he doesn't need to worry about relatives or threats of murder or the tax man or children's disputes about inheritance etc!)

mam eva smaran - remembering Me alone. What is meant by remembering? God is everything; God is the ultimate goal of life; *Moksha*/Liberation is the goal of life; I

will attain *Moksha* by His grace. These thoughts must be our predominant thoughts at the moment of death.

muktvā kalevaram - given up the body. (In our case, we like to cling to the body, but the body leaves us. However, an advanced spiritual aspirant is the master of his body.)

yaḥ prayāti - he who succeeds in giving up this body in a particular manner. What is meant by a particular manner? He who remembers Me only.

sa mad-bhāvaṁ yāti - he attains My nature. Here, *bhava* means God's nature and God's nature means - he realises that he is Brahman himself.

nāstyatra sanśhayaḥ - there is absolutely no doubt about it. Now, comes a big question.

Next Verse;

Who can remember God at the moment of death?

If a person is immersed in worldly activities throughout his life then he can never remember God at the time of death. Then who *can* remember God? This is going to be answered in the next verse.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 6

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभाविताः ॥ 6॥

***yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajatyante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ***

Meaning: for whatever object a man thinks of at the final moment when he leaves his body - that object alone does such a person attain. O, Son of Kunti, be always absorbed in such contemplation.

Again, a very beautiful hint for all of us; if we wish to attain God then He should be the object of our desires and thoughts. We cannot have the world as well as God. However, if we have attained God then we have achieved everything. Why? Because wealth is God; beauty is God; strength is God; energy is God; as a matter of fact, the whole world is nothing but God with name and form.

yaṁ yaṁ bhavam vāpi smaran - whichever thought or bhava or idea a person thinks. (However, we cannot think about an idea unless an object is involved. Suppose, we want to think of beauty. An abstract idea of beauty cannot be thought of unless we have an object such as a beautiful flower or the sight of a beautiful

sunset or a beautiful river or a beautiful mountain etc. There must be some object because beauty is a quality or *guna* which cannot exist without an object or substance.) Therefore, here whichever object a person thinks or remembers at the final moment, is that which such a person attains.

tyajatyante kalevaram - when a person gives up his body at the end. Here, a very important point is - he gives up his body because he is the master of his body and he has control; this mastery comes only when a person totally relates himself with God. He feels that nothing belongs to him except God. He desires only God. He remembers God only by the grace of God. Whereas in the case of us or other people - the body leaves them.

taṁ taṁ evaiti kaunteya - such a person attains “that particular object”. What do we mean by “that particular object?” It is like this - most of us do not think of *Parabrahma* or God as *Nirguna* (without qualities) and *Nirakara* (without form) but we think of God as our *Ishta-Devata*/Chosen Deity. Devotees of Ram will think of God as Shri Rama; devotees of Krishna will think of God as Shri Krishna; devotees of Christ will think of God as Jesus Christ and so on. So, we will think of God as *Saguna-Brahma*/Personal-God. By the grace of *Saguna-Brahma* (Rama, Krishna, Shiva, Divine Mother, Christ etc) the aspirant will attain *Nirguna-Brahma*/Impersonal-God. Every sincere and true devotee firmly believes that bondage and liberation are in the hands of his *Ishta-Devata* and his *Ishta-Devata* is none other than *Paramatma*. (This is the greatest contribution of Hinduism to the world religions - the truth is one but people choose to call it by various names - “*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti.*”)

sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ - *sada* means unceasingly or non-stop. One should be completely merged in the thought of God. One should become one with the thought of God.

Two Important Points:

1. The mind can only think of limited beings. Brahman as *Nirguna-Brahman* cannot be contemplated by the mind.
2. Every devotee firmly believes that God can grant us everything. Therefore, a true devotee would pray to God, “O, Lord please make me remember You at the last moment of my life and remove all other desires from my mind.” It is God’s *Maya* as we have discussed in the Seventh Chapter-

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ 14॥
daivī hyeṣhā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te

Summary and Essence of Fifth and Sixth Verses:

1. Whichever thought dominates in the mind of a person at the time of departure of his body that thought will determine his next birth.
2. An ordinary worldly person's mind is dominated by worldly objects and he does not give up the body but his body gives him up.
3. A spiritual aspirant or a sincere devotee becomes the master of his body, he gives up his body and joyfully looks forward to a higher state.
4. To remember God or obtains God's grace, a devotee must constantly repeat God's name with full devotion, practice self-surrender to God and he must firmly believe that whatever happens is God's grace.

Next Verse:

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 7

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामिवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥ 7॥

*tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu mām anusmara yudhya cha
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir mām evaiṣhyasyasanśhayam*
Your browser does not support the HTML5 Audio element.

Meaning: Once again the Lord is saying, "Therefore, always remember Me and fight the war, with your mind and understanding absorbed in Me, you will surely come to Me."

tasmāt - therefore, if you wish to think of Me at the time of your death.

sarveṣhu - in all; *kāleṣhu* - times; *mām* - Me.

anusmara—remember.

Now a question can arise in the mind - If I go on remembering you then what will happen to my duties?

yudhya cha - you fight. As we know, Arjuna was supposed to fight the war. The Lord is telling Arjuna that this is your duty at the moment to fight the war but do it as an offering to God - this is called karma-yoga.

Two meanings of the word युद्ध *Yudha*:

1. This word *yudha* means whatever duty we are discharging; we must think that God is the doer; God is the enjoyer and we are just an instrument.

2. The second meaning is - two ideas are fighting in our hearts since the time of creation. One idea tells us that we are potentially divine and another idea tells us that we are human beings; we have got a family, a country, a religion, a language and we identify ourselves with body and mind. We swing constantly from one idea to the other and this is called 'spiritual warfare'. This 'spiritual warfare' is constantly going on. What is the way out? We must remember the Lord constantly; must perform our spiritual practices and must discharge our worldly duties as well (The worldly duties could be a hindrance if we fail to remember the Lord but they can be our greatest helper if we constantly remember the Lord.) Therefore, we must control our mind so that it does not wonder here and there.

mayi - to Me; *arpita* - surrender; *manah* - mind.

buddhiḥ— means firm understanding that Moksha or God-realisation is the only worthy goal of life. Dharma, Artha, Kama are not our main goal. Once our goal is determined then we must fight to achieve it.

The following mantra we utter at the end of Homa - offering everything in the fire of Brahman.

***“Om Itah purvam praana buddhi deha dharmadhikarato jaagrata svapna
sushupti avastasu manasaa vaachaa karmanaa hastaabhyaam padbhyaam
udarena sishna yat smritam yat uktam yat kritam tat sarvam brahmaarpanam
bhavatu Svaha”***

[Whatever I have done until now through my mind, speech and body—I offer all that unto Brahman.]

mām - to Me; *eva* - surely; *eṣhyasi* - you shall attain; *asanśhayaḥ* - without a doubt. You will attain Me

We must control our mind and make a firm decision that we want God only and nothing else. We must discharge our duties but keep on remembering and worshipping God constantly. If we do that then - we will attain Him without a doubt.

So, the Lord has answered the seventh question of Arjuna.

The Lord is telling us, “Always remember Me, surrender to Me, and discharge your duties, with your mind and understanding absorbed in Me, you will surely come to Me and reach the state called *Moksha*.”

We will further elaborate on these ideas in our future class.

Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,

Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

With kind regards

Mamta Misra