

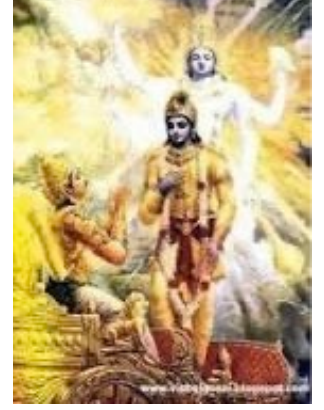
Bhagavad Gita Chapter 8 online Part 9 dated 06/07/2020 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from Bangalore, India)

Subject: Chapter 8, Verses 22-28

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 Kamsa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.



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

**Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanah |
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 dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Recollection:

We have come to the end of the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita known as
“**Akshar- Brahm-Yoga** अक्षर ब्रह्म योगः

The Lord has said previously, “The goal of life is to realise Me/God. The way to achieve this goal is to remember Me all the time. So, that at the last moment of your life, you would be able to remember Me only nothing else and attain Me/Moksha/Liberation.”

In the next few verses, Shri Krishna brings up another subject. There are two paths for the attainment of *Mukti/Liberation* or the attainment of *Non-Mukti*.

These two paths are:

(Please refer to the transcript of Chapter 8 part 8.)

Let me give you a small introduction. In our ancient scriptures, two paths have been mentioned. They have been especially mentioned several times in the *Chandogya-Upanishad*, also in the *Rig-Veda* and in the *Brihadaryanaka-Upanishad*. These paths are described as:

1. **Dev-Yana** देवयान (**Path of the gods**) - also called as *Uttarayana* or Northern Path or the Path of Light or also known as आर्चीमार्ग *Archi-Marga* (*Archi means light, Marga means path.*) *Uttarayana* - when the sun moves from the South to the North side. I prefer to call it the 'Path of knowledge'.
2. **Pitra-Yana** पितृयान (**Ancestral Path.**) also called *Dakshirayana* or Southern-Path or the Path of Darkness. *Dakshirayana* - when the sun moves from the North to the South. I would prefer to call it the 'Path of Ignorance'.

Naturally, a conflicting thought comes to our minds. Is liberation or *Moksha* conditional? Does it depend upon external conditions such as daytime or nighttime or darkness or light or a particular phase of month or year at the time of death? According to this belief system, if a spiritual aspirant dies in certain particular circumstances (in *Uttarayana*) then he will attain *Moksha* otherwise he has to born again and again. These types of statements create some doubts.

At the end of this chapter, the Lord makes a very interesting statement, "A real yogi understands the meaning of these two paths correctly. He attains the highest goal and never returns to this world again." I would try to give a very easy explanation of the above mentioned two paths to make you understand this. Let us recollect verse 22:

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 22

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।
यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ २२॥
puruṣhaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha bhaktyā labhyaṣ tvananyayā
yasyāntaḥ-sthāni bhūtāni yena sarvam idaṁ tatam

Meaning: The *Supreme-Purusha* in whom all being abiding and by whom the entire universe is pervaded, can be attained O, Partha/Arjuna by whole soul devotion directed to Him alone.

One must have *bhakti* or devotion. What is devotion? The ability to concentrate solely on God and have a firm conviction that nothing else is important except God. (The mind of a yogi is completely under his control, he doesn't think of anything else except God. He is not attached to his body and would discard his body like an old torn dress (just like a snake sheds its outer skin.)

According to modern philosophers, the Bhagavad Gita is a far more advanced scripture than the ancient ideas. As we have discussed, in the earlier *slokas*, Shri Krishna has told Arjuna, "The real goal of life is to realise Me/God and there will be no rebirth after God-Realisation. A person who has intense devotion and surrenders to Me/God gets liberation or *Moksha*."

How can we realise God?

The Lord has given us the answer, "At the time of death, the only thought that should occur in the mind of a spiritual aspirant and a devotee is the

remembrance of Me/God only.” To achieve this, we must start remembering God from now onwards. We have to discharge our duties based on our circumstances but must remember God all the time in our minds. As Shri Ramakrishna used to tell, “A part of the mind should always be on God.” It is absolutely possible to do this. Shri Ramakrishna used to give some very interesting illustrations.

Rice husking in rural Bengal and Odisha

[**Sri Ramakrishna** would often explain to the devotees, in his own simple and inimitable style, how they could fix their minds on God. He would explain this in various ways using instances from daily life as illustrations. He was born in *Kamarpukur*, a village in rural Bengal. He had a keen power of observation. He would often refer to the following incident.]

There was a village grocery shop managed by a woman. On a daily basis, she would perform several activities at the same time; she would breastfeed her child and simultaneously would also talk to her customers, reminding them about their dues even while supplying their requirements. At the same time, she would help another woman in the process of husking paddy. A husking paddy is a mechanical device used in rural Bengal where one woman would operate the machine with her foot while another woman would churn the paddy which is being husked. The woman, using her hand, must be extremely careful and alert to avoid hurting her hand. When the husking machine is operated, a pestle which is made of iron, strikes the paddy hard, which is stored in a hole at the centre of the machine. At that time the paddy has to be churned constantly to ensure proper husking. But if the person performing the task is not attentive, the pestle can land on her hand and hurt it badly. Therefore, the women must concentrate on the task to avoid being injured.



Moral: We should constantly practise fixing our minds on God. Just like the village lady who was doing several worldly duties but her mind was fixed on the pestle of the husking machine.

Now, the Lord is going to expound two pathways. The first path leads to liberation or *Mukti*. The second path inevitably brings a person back to the world of suffering. These teachings may seem to be contradictory to the earlier teachings but they are not.

To summarise:

As we have discussed. It is believed that man travels after death through two pathways. The first one is the Path of Knowledge and the second one is the Path of Ignorance.

1. **The Path of Light:** also known as the path of fire (or the path of bright daylight or the moonlit bright forthright of *shuklah-paksha* or [the bright ascending moon] or *Uttarayana* or Northern Course etc). Here, light is symbolic of knowledge

and this path is known as the 'Path of Knowledge'. A person who travels on the Path of Light/Knowledge attains liberation. The 'Path of Knowledge' - means to realise that "I am Brahman".

2. **The Path of Darkness:** The other pathway is the path of smoke (or the path of darkness or the path of dark forthright/*krishna-paksha*, and also known as *Dakshirayana* or Southern Course). The darkness is symbolic of ignorance - the 'Path of Ignorance'. If a person travels through the Pathway of Darkness or Path of Ignorance then inevitably he will return in another lifetime to complete his spiritual practices. The Path of Darkness or *Dakshirayana* or (as I would like to call) Pathway of Maya/Ignorance means - the person feels that he is body and mind.

Lord Krishna never mentioned in the earlier verses that a yogi who gives up his body in the bright daylight or bright forthright called Northern Course will attain Me nor did He say it the other way. As we know, many saints have passed away during the Southern Course/*Dakshirayana* for example Shri Ramakrishna passed away in August (Southern Course).

We have read in the Mahabharata about Bhishma. He was a very noble and knowledgeable person and he had a boon from his father Santanu that he would only die at his will and can pick the time of his death called 'इच्छा मृत्यु *Eiksha-Mritu/Death at will*'. He had chosen deliberately only to die in *Uttarayana*. Let us not try to compare Shri Ramakrishna with Bhishma. Bhishma is just trying to set an example for ignorant people. (Let's try to understand the real meaning.)

A man of knowledge or lover of God/true *Bhakta* does not care where he dies, when he dies, how he dies or in what manner he dies. He may die peacefully or someone may cut off his head or he may die in an accident or he may die in a coma - he doesn't care. I have seen so many saints who have passed away in a coma. The ignorant people might think that because the saint died in a coma, he may have forgotten God at his last moment. However, there is an inner organ inside a true saint that is remembering God alertly and more joyfully all the time - these yogis go to God regardless of when and where they die.

As we know, many yogis got up at midnight and said to the saint sleeping next to them, "Look, Divine Mother has come and is asking me to go with Her and I am going with Divine Mother." Now, imagine if an evil person dies in *Uttarayana* (bright daytime, in light, in bright fortnight etc) do we think he is going to attain *Mukti*. Absolutely not!

Similarly, people believe that if a person's body is immersed in the holy Ganga water at the time of death then he will get *Moksha*/Liberation. Now, suppose a great yogi dies away from Ganga. Is he going to return? Absolutely not. On the contrary, if a wicked person's body is immersed in the holy Ganga water at the time of death. Will he get *Moksha*? Absolutely not!

Conclusion: These are childish notions and we have to get rid of them. What is the message? Be a devotee, be a man of knowledge, constantly practise the remembrance of God, then it does not matter whether you die in a hospital or at the roadside or in a palace or a temple or the Ganga (or in *Uttarayana* or *Dakshirayana*). It really does not matter. All these things were mentioned for ignorant people so that they can develop some faith in the scriptures and God. In the beginning, this type of faith even in the form of superstition is positive and helpful.

It is interesting to note that if a person believes in the existence of a ghost, then he is more likely to believe in God rather than a person who is a complete non-believer. Swami Vivekananda used to say "If a person happened to see a ghost then he is far nearer to God than a person who has never seen a ghost." Why? Because - 1) Fear of the ghost puts the fear of God into his mind. 2) He is convinced that after death, life does not end. Even a ghost proves that the subtle body and causal body do not die at the time of death.

A saint, as well as a sinner, can die at any time, at any place in any manner; they will only attain that station which they will deserve as the result of their actions. This is the most important point. The point we have to keep in mind and what we need to understand, is that attainment after a person dies, has nothing to do with these two pathways शुक्ल गति *Shukla-Gati/Uttarayana* or कृष्ण गति *Krishna-Gati/Dakshirayana*.

Actually speaking, it is not darkness as such but the presiding deity of the darkness, the presiding deity of night, the presiding deity of smoke, the presiding deity of the dark forthright, the presiding deity of *Dakshirayana* or Southern course. Similarly, there is the presiding deity of light, the presiding deity of bright forthright, the presiding deity of *Uttarayana* or Northern Path. In Hinduism, there are presiding deities for almost everything and this is what we are trying to refer to.

A meritorious person would go to the higher worlds through these deities, enjoy there but will come back again and again. These are like various *lokas/worlds* like *Indra-loka*, *Pitra-Loka* etc. which we have discussed.

However, the path of knowledge means to know that - I am a devotee of God; God is gracious; I can enjoy a higher world and can also attain *Mukti*. This is known as क्रम मुक्ति *Krama-Mukti*. The path of light is advocating the path of gradual liberation and this should not be confused with the path of ignorance. Let me make a very important note. We can divide all human beings into three categories.

1. **Materialists or चारुवाक *Charuvakas* or Non-believers:** Those who do not believe in God, other worlds and the afterlife. These are called Materialists or *Charuvakas*. They do not worship God. They wish to squeeze as much happiness as possible from this world. We do not wish to discuss them here.
2. **Believers:** Some people who believe in God, other worlds and after birth-known as believers. These believers are of two types.

A) Kramo-Mukti क्रमोमुक्ति or Gradual Liberation: Those who believe in God, in the other worlds and afterlife. However, they do not feel an urge for *Moksha* or *Mukti* or Liberation. They wish to go to higher and higher worlds, enjoy there, come back and again accumulate necessary payments (*karma-phala*) and again go to the higher worlds. Such people, after some time, become purified because they obey the scriptures. (Example is Nachiketa's father.) Eventually, their desires get completely fulfilled then they become enquirers and attain knowledge. This is called 'Gradual liberation or *Kramo-Mukti*'. The Lord is referring to 'Gradual-Liberation or *Kramo-Mukti*' by mentioning bright fortnight or path of Light etc. In Hinduism, there is a presiding deity for everything in this world such as a presiding deity for a mountain, the presiding deity for a plant - for example, tulsi plant is a deity. River Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati are all goddesses. 17.50

गंगे च यमुने चैव गोदावरी सरस्वति । नर्मदे सिन्धु कावेरी जलऽस्मिन्सन्निधिं कुरु
Gange Cha Yamune Chaiva Godavari Saraswati
Narmade Sindhu Kaveri Jalesmin Sannidhim Kuru.

[**Meaning:** O rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri, please enrich the water I am bathing with, with your presence. All these are gods and goddesses.]

अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा हिमालयो नाम नगाधिराजः ।
Kalidasa in the RaghuVansham

The above sloka is beautifully depicting the Himalayas. Himalaya is not a lifeless mountain; it is the king of the mountains; it is in the northern direction; it is one of the greatest *devatas/deities*; its daughter is Goddess Parvati. Every Hindu is advocated to deify everything. It is not just hypnotism but truly practising the divine light everywhere.

B) Those who desire liberation or *Mukti* only.

Swami Vivekananda on *Uttarayana* and *Dakshirayana*:

I would like to quote the opinion of Swami Vivekananda on these verses and subjects. When Swami Vivekananda delivered a lecture abroad on this subject of two paths (*Uttarayana* and *Dakshirayana*), he said, "I don't know what all this means. Everybody says something or the other. Since it is there, I am presenting it to you. I cannot make head nor tail of it."

If this was the statement of Swami Vivekananda then we can leave the complexity aside and just keep our mind focused on the most essential points. There are two pathways. These two pathways are not determined by any god or by any devil or by any deity/*devata* but exclusively by our efforts in this life. One is the path of knowledge - go on acquiring more and more spiritual knowledge and eventually we will attain liberation. The other path is a path that will result in many

many returns. We are not talking about non-believers but talking about believers whose vision is obscured by some unfulfilled desires. As soon as they experience those desires, gradually and gradually they will reach Brahma-Loka and then attain liberation along with Brahma and will never return.

Essence: Devotion alone can give us liberation. Devotion has to be practised so that we can remember God all the time. True *bhakti/devotion* means remembering God all the time. If we can do this then God will lovingly take us into His lap. Out of His infinite grace, the Lord will destroy all the bondages of his devotee, for example as Lord Vishwanath (of Varanasi) destroys all the bondages of His devotee who dies at Kashi/Varanasi.

Let me also emphasise - some fanatics declare that liberation can only be attained by *Jyanam*. I would like to say that if our *Ishta-Devata*/Chosen Deity is highly pleased with us - He can grant us *Bhakti, Mukti, Jyanam* and anything He likes. How? He is called '*Mayadhisha*/Master of Maya'. Let's proceed with this understanding.

Recording time 22 minutes approx.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 23

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ 23॥

*yatra kāle tvanāvṛittim āvṛittim chaiva yoginaḥ
prayātā yānti taṁ kālaṁ vakṣhyāmi bharatarṣhabha*

Meaning: Now, I will describe to you, O greatest of the *Bharatas*/Arjuna, the time in which the yogis depart never return and also the time in which if they depart will return. (In other words, the path of non-return is like a one-way ticket and the path of return is like a return ticket.)

yatra—what; *kāle*—times; *anāvṛittim*— never going to return; *āvṛittim*— has to return, there is no choice; *yoginaḥ*—a yogi, *sakama* yogi (a yogi who wants to enjoy this world and depends upon God) and *atmkama* yogi(a yogi who wants only God and nothing else, he is not going to return.) both of them sooner or later without the least bit of doubt are going to attain *Mukti/liberation* either gradually or instantaneously if God is gracious What are these paths?

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 24

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ 24॥

*agnir jyotir ahaḥ śhuklaḥ ṣhaṇ-māsā uttarāyaṇam
tatra prayātā gachchhanti brahma brahma-vido janāḥ*

Meaning: Fire, light, daytime, the bright half of the moon and the six months of the northward passage of the sun, taking this path, the knowers of Brahman go to Brahman.

agniḥ—fire, means the deity of the fire known as *Agni-Devata*.

jyotiḥ—light, means the deity of light.

ahaḥ—day, means the deity of the day.

śhuklaḥ— means the deity of the bright fortnight of the moon.

ṣhaṭ-māsāḥ—six months.

uttara-ayanam—the sun's northern course when the sun starts travelling from the southern side to the northern side, **ayana** means path, **uttara** means north. On January 14th or 15th which we call संक्रांति *sankranti*, the sun turns its gracious face towards us, starts travelling towards us and as it comes nearer and nearer towards us, light and warmth increase. **tatra— prayātāḥ**— a yogi who gives up his body there; **gachchhanti**—go to Brahman.

brahma-vidah—those who know the *Brahma*, those who are contemplating on Brahman they will go to *Brahma-Loka*. In *Brahma-Loka* all the unfulfilled desires are fulfilled. Brahman removes all the impurities and provides the opportunity to contemplate on *Nirguna-Brahman*. They become knowers of *Parabrahma/Supreme-reality*. They attain unity with *Parabrahma* through *shravana, manana and niddhidhyasan* (listening, thinking and deep contemplation) they get the knowledge - I am Brahman. This is called *Kramo-Mukti*.

The Important point of the Verse 24: There are two types of contemplatives of Brahman.

- 1) **The Yogis with unfulfilled desires.** They are devotees of *Saguna-Brahman*. They go to *Brahma-Loka* or we can say *Vaikuntha/abode of Lord Vishnu, Goloka/abode of Shri Krishna, Deviloka/abode of Divine Mother* or *Ramakrishna Loka* etc. Their desires are completely fulfilled, the Lord will remove their impurities and ignorance then they will realise - I am none other than Brahman Himself.
- 2) **The Yogis with completely satiated desires** excepting one desire to attain oneness with Brahman. They are devotees of Brahman as *Nirguna-Brahman* and known as *Atmarama*. It does not matter at what time they die, they will attain liberation/ *Mukti/Moksha*.

Verse 25 - is exactly a counterpart of Verse 24th.

Time 28 minutes approx.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 25

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ 25॥

**dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ ṣhaṇ-māsā dakṣhiṇāyanam
tatra chāndramasaṁ jyotir yogī prāpya nivartate**

Here, a yogi means a devotee of God with less purity and with unfulfilled desires. When he dies -

dhūmah—smoke, means the presiding deity of smoke.

rātriḥ—night, means the darkness of ignorance. **tathā**—and;

kṛiṣṇaḥ-paksha —the dark fortnight of the moon.

ṣaṭ-māsāḥ—six months when the sun is going away from us.

dakṣhiṇa-ayanam—the sun's southern course. **Dakshirayana** is when the sun travels from the northern side to the southern side. It is the winter season.

chāndra-masam— a deity of the moon/*chandra* but not the deity of the moon which we see, this a far higher deity almost nearer to Brahma.

jyotiḥ—light; **yogī**—a yogi with some impurity has to come back. Why? Because he has to purify his heart. He might go to *Brahma-Loka* and gradually he will attain purity (by attending classes of Upanishads by *Brahma*!). Eventually, he will become one with *Brahma* then along with *Brahma* he will merge in the Supreme-Divine.

A true *Bhakta* has practised so much that he sees God; he hears God; he smells God and he touches God; he tastes God and nothing else.

One pointed devotion of Shri Ramakrishna:

I will give you a small illustration from Shri Ramakrishna's life:

One day, and after narrating his experience of Krishna to his devotees, he said, "One day I was walking and suddenly I saw a pure gold coloured flower. Immediately my mind merged in Radha, in Radha's mind there is no other thought except Krishna. I became completely unconscious."

As we know, Shri Ramakrishna's mind used to merge in Krishna while listening to Krishna's devotional songs. Similarly, his mind used to merge in Divine Mother while listening to the devotional songs or spiritual discussions regarding Divine Mother and this is also true for other deities.

An important point to note is this - suppose Shri Ramakrishna was listening to the bhajans of Kali and plunged into samadhi, if his devotees would start singing Krishna's bhajans or Shiva's bhajans then his mind would get disturbed and with great difficulty he would bring his mind down and tell his devotees, "Do not sing Krishna's bhajans or Shiva's bhajans but sing Mother Kali's bhajans." Why? Because as his mind was filled with the thought of Mother Kali, he would like to hear songs of Mother Kali. The devotees would understand him and would start singing Mother Kali's bhajans. These incidents happened in his life. It is like - the

ladder through which he has gone up to samadhi, he has to come down the same ladder such as Krishna ladder or Kali ladder or Shiva ladder etc.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 26

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ 26॥

*śhukla-kṛiṣhṇe gatī hyete jagataḥ śhāśhvate mate
ekayā yātyanāvṛittim anyayāvartate punaḥ*

To summarise:

- When a devotee remembers God at the last moment of his life - he will see God in everything; God is bright daytime; God is *agni*/fire; God is bright fortnight; God is *Uttarayana* etc.
- When a yogi with unfulfilled desires dies, his desires are due to ignorance. Ignorance means darkness, dark fortnight or *Dakshirayana*.
- God in His brightest manifestation is *Uttarayana* and in His dimmest manifestation is *Dakshirayana*.

The Lord is going to conclude this topic by telling us the result of knowing these two paths. **Recording time 34 minutes approx.**

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Verse 27

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ 27॥
*naite sṛitī pārtha jānan yogī muhyati kaśhchana
tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu yoga-yukto bhavārjuna*

Meaning: A yogi (means a mature spiritual personality) who understands these two paths very well can never be deluded. O, Arjuna you should be steadfast in yoga at all times.

What does it mean? A wise yogi knows that there are two paths. The first path leads to samsara or transmigration and the second path leads to *Moksha* or liberation. Therefore, he rejects the first path without a second thought and takes up the second path of *Moksha*. Suppose there are two objects - one is a superior object and the other one is an inferior object. The superior object is less expensive, everlasting and available everywhere, whereas the inferior object is very expensive and difficult to find. Which one would a wise person choose? A wise person will always go for the superior object. [Here, God is the supreme goal and present everywhere. One should desire God only.]

A devotee never wishes to come back to the ephemeral world. He knows that if I forget God that is known as dark forthright or night or smoke or ignorance. He chooses the path of light.

Bhagavat Gita: Chapter 8, Last Verse No.28

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥ 28॥

***vedeṣhu yajñeṣhu tapaḥsu chaiva dāneṣhu yat puṇya-phalaṁ pradiṣṭam
atyeti tat sarvam idam veditvā yogī paraṁ sthānam upaiti chādyam***

Meaning: A yogi who knows this (about two paths) transcends all the rewards laid down for the study of vedas, for sacrifices, for austerities and for making gifts. Such a yogi reaches the supreme primal abode, which is known as *tad vishnuh paramam padam*.

These are the answers by Bhagwan Shri Krishna to the seven questions of Arjuna in the eighth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. We should not just understand them but must put them into practice. These are the most invaluable teachings of Bhagwan Shri Krishna.

- Be a devotee.
- Desire liberation only.
- Always remember Me and surrender to Me completely.
- You will joyfully give up your body at the last moment of your life.
- You will unite with Me forever.

vedeṣhu—the study of all the rituals advocated in the four vedas.

yajñeṣhu— performance of sacrifices/*yajnas*, rituals, pilgrimages etc. Some people are dedicated to rituals.

tapaḥsu— some people believe in performing tremendous austerities.

dāneṣhu— some people have plenty of wealth and they believe in charitable activities and happily donate their wealth for good purposes. Not only just by wealth but there are many ways to help other people such as by doing voluntary work or by giving knowledge or by expressing sympathy for other people etc.

puṇya-phalam pradiṣṭam— the fruit of merit is gained. What does happen when a person performs all these rituals, austerities and charities etc? He earns a tremendous amount of *punya*/merits.

atyeti tat sarvam idam veditvā - a yogi who knows that his goal is God only such a person deliberately gives up the path of darkness and takes up the path of light which is the path of knowledge.

param sthānam upaiti cha ādyam - the yogi attains that eternal, infinite, pure *Parbrahman*, known as *tad vishnuh paramam padam*. He experiences God through a direct experience called साक्षात्कार *Sakshatakara*. Such a person firmly rejects the path of darkness or the path of gradual liberation. The Lord is assuring that such a person attains Me and becomes one with Me.

We have come to the end of the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

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Recording time 40 minutes approx.

Summary of the Eighth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita

- There is only one reality known as Imperishable *Akshar-Brahman*.
- God manifest Himself as *Ishwara*/the creator, *Jagat*/the world and *Jivatma*/Individual soul - the triangle of *Adhidaivam*, *Adhibhutam* and *Adhyatman*.
- God is known as *Ishwara - Adhidaivam*.
- Whatever is changing, perishable and temporary is known as *Adhibhutam* - means every single experienceable object or so-called the world.
- The Supreme Brahman exists in every individual body as the *pratek-atman* प्रत्येक-आत्मन् or as ego, known as *Adhyatman* - is also known as *Jivatma*.
- There are constant interactions between the world, *Jivatma* and the presiding deity. This is called *Brahma-Lila*.
- Some devotee becomes more purified and develops a longing for God, they are known as जिज्ञासु *jijnasu*. They realise that they are in the *samsara*/bondage and try to find a way out of it. The sincere prayers of such a person are answered by the Lord in the form of a सद्गुरु *Sad-Guru/noble teacher*. The *Sad-Guru* teaches him the ancient spiritual path and advises him to have faith, practise with full devotion and sincerity, be humble and surrender yourself to God, you will attain *moksha*/liberation.
- A spiritual aspirant should practise remembering God constantly. God will make sure that he will not forget the Lord at the time of death and attain *mukti*/liberation. The spiritual aspirant will realise that God is the brightest light and he is just a reflection of God as a small light. However, by the grace of the Lord, his limitation of smallness and infinite-ness of God disappears and both merge and become one just like a drop of water poured into the ocean or milk poured into milk and become completely one. There is no rebirth for such a yogi.

- Some people have some unfulfilled desires. They will not be left alone. Eventually, they will reach *Brahma-Loka* and attain God by a gradual process known as *Kramo-Mukti*. However, it is advisable to desire God and nothing else.
- This is the essence of the Eighth Chapter called Akshar-Brahm-Yoga.

Here are some of the most beautiful slokas of the Eighth Chapter:

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

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ 6॥
yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajatyante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामेवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥ 7॥
tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu mām anusmara yudhya cha
mayyarpita-mano-buddhir mām evaiṣhyasyasanśhayam

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ 8॥
abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena chetasā nānya-gāminā
paramaṁ puruṣhaṁ divyaṁ yāti pārthānuchintayan

ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ 13॥
om ityekākṣharaṁ brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran
yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ sa yāti paramāṁ gatim

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ 14॥
ananya-chetāḥ satataṁ yo mām smarati nityaśhaḥ
tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ

नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ 27॥
naite sṛitī pārtha jānan yogī muhyati kaśhchana
tasmāt sarveṣhu kāleṣhu yoga-yukto bhavāṛjuna

I would like to narrate a beautiful incident from the life of Shri Ramakrishna before I end today's class.

Ramakrishna's Compassion for the Lowly & Humble Sweeper Rasik

Rasik was the Sweeper at the Dakshineswar Temple Garden. He belonged to a low-caste family, so wasn't allowed to meet people who used to come to the Temple Garden. He was almost unknown to the visitors of the Temple Garden.

He was a simple and spiritual man. He used to watch Sri Ramakrishna from a distance, but couldn't touch his feet due to social restrictions. He saw many devotees were visiting the Master and receiving His grace. He felt an intense yearning to go to the Master and ask for His grace, but couldn't, for a few years.



One day, when Sri Ramakrishna was returning to his room from the pine grove, near Temple Garden, Rasik thought the moment to be the ideal one to disclose his desire to the Master. The Master was near the Panchavati, Rasik hurriedly ran and fell on the Master's feet. He exclaimed to the Master: "Baba/Father, what will happen to me?" Sri Ramakrishna went into samadhi. Some time passed. Rasik waited with tears rolling from his eyes. Then the Master came to the phenomenal plane, touched Rasik's head and said: "You have achieved everything."

Sri Ramakrishna showed the world that every human being, beyond any caste and creed, bears the same light within him or her. Rasik's story is one of the best examples of this idea of Him.

Last minutes of Rasik:

[Two years after the demise of the Master, Ramlal met Rasik's wife near the *Panchavati*. She was weeping inconsolably. Ramlal asked her, "What has happened? How is Rasik?" She replied that her husband was very ill. Her sons had called in a Doctor, but he refused to take any medicines. He insisted on being given *charanamrita* (sanctified water). As Rasik was a devout *Vaishnava*, Ramlal immediately went to the Radhakanta temple, collected some sanctified water and some tulsi leaves, and gave them to Rasik's wife. Since Ramlal did not see her again, he went to their hut a few days later. Rasik's wife and sons cried and said that he had passed away.



They narrated the last days of Rasik: The sanctified water of the Radhakanta temple seemed to have a stimulating effect on Rasik. He felt better. His fever abated and he spent his waking hours chanting the Lord's name and in fervent prayer. One day when they returned home after their work at about midday, he insisted that they should take their meal at once. After they had complied with his wish, he asked them to take him out to the tulsi grove. It was hot outside. They reluctantly obeyed him. He lay on a mat with his rosary in his hand and asked them to chant God's name. After

half an hour his face brightened up. There was an ardent look in his eyes and a smile on his lips. He exclaimed: "Oh Lord, You have come at long last! How unsurprisingly beautiful, glorious resplendent!" He then closed his eyes and it seemed to them that a halo played around his radiant peaceful face as he fell into eternal sleep.

Rasik was not a prominent figure in Sri Ramakrishna's divine drama. Although the audience did not see him on the stage, he had the responsibility of keeping the stage, the temple garden of Dakshineswar clean. He demonstrated in his life that work is worship and each is great in his place.]

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