

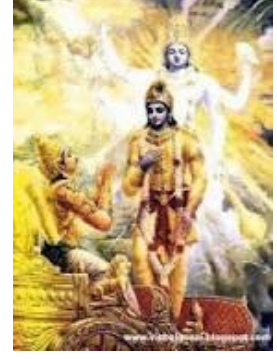
Swami Dayatmananda on Bhagavad Gita Class 49 date 10/11/18

(Lecture is delivered online from Bangalore India)

Class begins with chanting of slokas and prayers

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् । देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥ 5॥

Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum II 5



सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः। पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥ 4॥

Sarvaopanishadho gaavo dogdhaa Gopala Nandana,
Parthoo vathsa sudheer bhokthaa dugdam Geetamritham mahath II 4 II

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥ 8 II

Mookam karothi vaachaalam, pankhum lankayathe girim,
Yath krupa thaham vandhe Paramananda madhavam. II 8 II

Summary of class 48. Chapter no. 1 of Bhagavat Gita called 'Arjuna Vishad Yoga'

In our last class I gave you a summary of the first chapter of the Bhagavat Gita called '**Arjuna Vishad Yoga**'. I am going to recollect some of the points so that we can continue to the next chapter.

Who is an Arjuna? Every sincere spiritual Sadhaka or aspirant is an Arjuna.

Vishad-Yoga विषाद योगः First chapter is called Arjuna Vishad Yoga. Without **Vishada**, without experiencing a tremendous amount of suffering, no one can turn to God. If we understand it in this way, this means suffering imposed either by our *Karmaphala* or by the grace of God is ultimately for our own good. That is why Holy Mother has repeatedly said that **misery is a gift of God**.

What is an absolute solution for our sufferings?

Even though we are all suffering, we do not immediately turn towards God. We do try various methods to overcome our sufferings but ultimately we learn our lesson that it is only possible by turning towards God. There is no permanent or an absolute worldly solution to our sufferings.

There is only one permanent solution and that is called आत्म ज्ञानम् **Atma-Jyanam or Self-knowledge** which means, we come to know who we really are. When we really understand that we are not the mind-body complex but we are the Atman, only then will all miseries come to an end forever. However, it is not very easy to have *Atma-Jyana*. Bhagwan Krishna Himself tells us in the second chapter. C2 V29

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-माश्चर्यवद्भवति तथैव चान्यः। आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित्॥29॥

**āśhcharya-vat paśhyati kaśhchid enan āśhcharya-vad vadati tathaiva chānyaḥ
āśhcharya-vach chainam anyah śhṛiṇot śhṛutvāpyenam veda na chaiva kaśhchit**

Meaning: Some people when they behold The Atman it is such a great wonder that they are unable to express anything because they have never ever encountered such an experience in their lives. Many other people hear about the glory and the description of The Atman but even then, it remains a great mystery for most of them.

How can we know about the Atman?

It is not easy, but this knowledge can only be obtained through the grace of a Guru. A real Guru is none other than *Satchitanada* as said by Shri Ramakrishna. A real Guru is God Himself but He comes in the form of a human being to facilitate the transmission of divine knowledge to all of us. If we can know about The Atman at all, then it is only possible through a Guru but the Guru only instructs about Self-knowledge after the disciple surrenders to him completely. Arjuna exhibits this self-surrender attitude at the end of the first chapter by saying:

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्॥ **śhiṣhyaste 'haṁ śhādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam C2/ V7**॥

Meaning: I am your disciple. I am ready to be instructed. Here, “ready” means not merely to listen but to do your bidding in every respect. A disciple should never just say 'I respect you' but should say 'You command me.'

शाधि **Shadhi** means command. Arjuna says "when you are pleased with me, for my own good and when you command me, that will be very helpful to me." Only after this surrender by Arjuna, Bhagwan Shri Krishna starts **Gitoupadesha** गीतोपदेशा.

Important point: Even though the first chapter ends in a particular place, practically it continues in the second chapter until the 10th Verse of the second chapter. Bhagwan Shri Krishna starts His **Gitoupadesha** from the 11th Verse of the second chapter.

Bhagwan Shri Krishna starts the Gitoupadesha from the 11th Verse of the second chapter. Gitopadesha begins with the verse:

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रजावादांश्च भाषसे । गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ C2 / V11॥

śhrī bhagavān uvācha
aśhochyān-anvaśhochas-tvaṁ prajñā-vādānś cha bhāṣhase
gatāsūn-agatāsūnś-cha nānuśhochanti paṇḍitāḥ

It is said that the entire essence of the Bhagavat Gita is embedded in this one particular Sloka.

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं **aśhochyān-anvaśhochas-tvaṁ** “O’ Arjuna you are grieving for those who do not need to be grieved and who do not deserve to be grieved because everybody is really an Atman. Yet you are speaking like a big Pundit.”

What is the nature of a Pundita?

गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिता **gatāsūn-agatāsūnś-cha nānuśhochanti paṇḍitāḥ**

The Lord is giving a beautiful definition of 'Who is a पण्डिता **Pundit?**' A Pundit is one who neither grieves for the living nor grieves for the dead. Why? Because, “living or dead” only refers to the mind-body complex...not really to the Atman.

It is said that if a person understands this one Sloka ...that person becomes a Pundit. “Pundit” means a person with self-knowledge. A person who has self-knowledge does not suffer any grief because he understands that his nature is सच्चिदानंद स्वरूपा **Satchidananda- Swaroopa**.

Overall picture of Bhagavat Gita Recording 8 minutes

This particular Sloka is the essence of the entire Bhagavat Gita and the rest of the Bhagavat Gita. From the 11th sloka of the second chapter until the end of the 17th chapter it is considered by

many to be an elaboration of the 11th Sloka of the second chapter only. Therefore, if a person studies this 11th Sloka then that person is likely to be liberated. Therefore, the rest of the second chapter is an elaboration of this 11th Sloka of the Bhagavat Gita and rest of the Bhagavat Gita until the end of the 17th chapter is an elaboration of the second chapter. The 18th chapter consists of the recapitulation and essence of all seventeen chapters. This is the overall picture of the Bhagavat Gita.

Today, I am going to give you the very essence of the second chapter.

Essence of the second chapter

This second chapter has got 72 slokas/ verses. Here, Bhagwan expounds on three particular subjects:

- 1) **What is Atman?** Lord Shri Krishna will tell us in crystal clear terms...what is Atman? An elaborate beautiful description of Atman is given.
- 2) **Characteristics of a Self-realised soul/ स्थितप्रज्ञ लक्षणा *Isthitiprajna Lakshana*:** Arjuna having listened to this description asks a question "If what you are telling me is the nature of the Atman, how do I know and understand that this is the truth? If I believe this is true then I need to come across some people who are the knowers of the Atman. If a person is a knower of the Atman then he must surely exhibit some characteristics. So, O' Krishna, how do I recognise a person who has really realised the Self or God or Brahman or Atman?" There is a particular word used in the Bhagavat Gita for this...Arjuna's question takes that particular word.

अर्जुन उवाच ।

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम् ॥ 54॥

Arjuna uvācha

**sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣhā samādhī-sthasya keśhava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣheta kim āsīta vrajeta kim**

Lord gives a beautiful description of a realised soul. If a person has realised the Atman then he will and he must exhibit these characteristics. This forms the second part of the second chapter of the Bhagavat Gita.

- 3) A Little bit about the third part: Arjuna was overcome by *moha* i.e. delusion. Delusion in this context means to think that I am consist of the mind-body complex and I am not the Atman. Therefore Arjuna's whole problem is exactly the same problem that all of us face. We are 100% certain that we are not the Atman but we are the mind-body complex. As soon as we identify ourselves with the body, then the body by nature has to undergo six changes like *janama, asthi, jayatey, verdhate etc*, birth, growth, old age, disease, death etc. It is inevitable... Something which is born has to die.

But what we do not understand is that what has died will also be reborn again. We all know that whatever is born will grow. A child becomes a young man, then he becomes a middle-aged man,

then comes old age (diseases might also affect us) then after old age, death will come eventually. This is our day to day experience but what we do not understand is that we have to take it for granted by having faith in the scriptures, that death is not the end of the affair, it is just merely giving up or discarding a worn-out dress and putting on a new one. A beautiful verse is there in the second chapter. **Recording 13 minutes**

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि। तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही॥ V22॥
vāsānsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya navāni grīhṇāti naro 'parāṇi

tathā śharīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇānya nyāni sanyāti navāni dehi

There is again birth and this cycle of birth and death will continue until we really know 'who we are;' that is to say when teacher tells us "**Tatwa-masi** तत्त्वमसि or **Thou art the truth/ Brahman/ Atman.**"

Three steps of Sadhana

Three steps of Sadhana are:

- 1) **Shravana** श्रवन् 2) **Manana** मनन् 3) **Nidhidhyasana** निदिध्यासना: Hearing the truth again and again until it goes deep into our mind. Thinking it over and getting rid of all doubts until we become 100% certain that what the scriptures tell us, what the Guru teaches us, is the absolute truth. Further, through deep meditation and with the Grace of God we can ultimately realise that अहम् ब्रह्मास्मि **Ahm Brahmasmi** - I am really that Brahman and only then will we become free. These are the well-known steps **Shravana Manana Nidhidhyasana**. This is how Sadhana will go forward.

The third part of the second chapter states that Arjuna was overcome with moha. Moha means delusion. Delusion always springs from the ignorance of one's true nature. Arjuna thinks that he is the mind-body complex. There is a law - if we think that we are the mind-body complex then we necessarily think that everybody is also mind-body. As a result, Arjuna loved some people and hated others. This is called **Raga & Dwesha**.

Raga & Dwesha of Arjuna: Arjun was very much attached to people like Bhishma & Drona etc. and hated people like Duryodhana, Dushashana, Shakuni etc therefore he was caught in the see-saw chain of *raga & dwesha* i.e. attachment and hatred. That covers up one's true nature. Therefore, the Lord also had to consider that Arjuna was not really in a fit condition to grasp and to accept that he is not the mind-body at that time.

The Lord had to give him an answer with the help of युक्ति **Yukti** or "reason," to temporarily quell the restlessness and delusion of Arjuna. Arjuna identified himself only with the body and so he thought that everybody else was also "body" and therefore... there would be birth, there would be death. Arjuna was worried that he would have to fight a war where he might have to kill Drona & Bhishma etc. If he had to kill Duryodhana etc then he had no problem. But, if he had to kill Bhishma and Dhrona then he felt a tremendous amount of delusion.

Three arguments or reasons that Bhagwan Shri Krishna used to bring peace of mind to Arjuna

First of all, Shri Krishna tries to deal with this *moha* of Arjuna. As explained before, *moha* means delusion and delusion means to not know who we are. All grief called *Vishada* stems from this ignorance of one's own nature. Therefore, Lord tries to bring peace of mind to Arjuna by giving three kinds of arguments: **Recording 17 minutes**

- 1) **Worldly view:** If you think you are the body then naturally you will think that Bhishma and Drona are also bodies. Duryodhana and Dushashana are also bodies whether you like them or not. However, if you think that you are the body then you know very well that whatever has been born must go through changes and inevitable that the body will ultimately die. Therefore, Bhishma and Drona also being bodies have to go through these changes; they are already old therefore they already have one foot in the grave. Whether you kill them or not, they all have to die and will die. Bhishma and Drona also have to die. On this account there is no need for you to grieve. **You just do your duty.** That is all.

Because of their कर्मफला **Karmaphala**, you can only kill them when their time comes to be killed and if they are killed by you then you are not the killer but it is their **Karmaphala** which kills them. You are just an instrument. If you do not kill them then sooner or later somebody will

come or something will happen and they will have to go in that way. Therefore, from mind-body complex point of view you do not need to worry because whatever is going to happen is going to happen. This is the first reason which Shri Krishna uses to try and bring Arjuna to a rationale state of mind.

- 2) **Moral view:** All Hindus are believers of the Law of Karma. This means, if someone lives a life of virtue called dharma then after death they are sure to attain *Swargaloka* or heavenly world. Bhishma and Drona are very virtuous people and because they are very virtuous people therefore even if you happen to kill them they will attain स्वर्गलोका *Swargaloka* heavenly world. Therefore, you are only assisting their entry into *Swargaloka* which is a world of much higher happiness therefore even from this point of view there is nothing for you to grieve about. In fact you should rejoice because soon they are going to the heavenly world. You are only assisting them in reaching their higher destination. This the second reason Bhagwan Shri Krishna takes in order to convince Arjuna that grieving is completely unnecessary.
- 3) **Spiritual view:** The third reason Bhagwan Krishna gives is the spiritual view. Everybody is an Atman. You are the Atman even if you do not know it. If you are an Atman and it is a fact whether you know it or not then whether Bhishma, Drona etc know it or not, this fact cannot be changed. If Bhishma and Drona are the Atman, you are the Atman, everybody else is also an Atman and also even the most wicked person whom you consider like Duryodhana, Dushashana, Shakuni, Karna and all their followers, they are the Atman. If one is Atman then we are all of the same nature. Even then you have nothing to worry about because the Atman does not have birth, does not have a growth, does not have a disease, does not have an old age, Atman does not suffer from any of these six changes which the physical body of everyone has to go through. This is the tag or argument Shri Bhagwan Krishna has taken with the spiritual view.

Nature of The Atman:

The very first subject which Bhagwan Krishna takes... "O'Arjuna, I am going to describe to you the nature of the Atman". **Recording 22 minutes**

Atman is eternal, it is infinite, it is without birth, it is deathless, it is *Sat-chit-ananda*.

Therefore, if this is the nature of the Atman and if you are the Atman then there can be only one Atman.

A point to be noted here: it is only according to ***Adwaita Sampradaya*** अद्वैत सम्प्रदाय (Non-dualistic philosophy) that the Atman is one but if it is ***Vishishta-Adwaita*** or Qualified non-dualism philosophy and द्वैत ***Dwaita*** or Dualistic Philosophy....every creature is an Atman but there are many many Atmans. It is not one Atman but an infinite numbers of Atmans. However, even from that point of view also, an Atman does not have a body; it is of the nature of Sat-chit-ananda and therefore, it only experiences indescribable infinite joy. Therefore, there is no need for you to worry at all.

So, The Lord goes on and describes the Atman. This is one of the best descriptions we can get in the Bhagavat Gita about the Atman.

Atman is neither a कर्ता *karta* or a doer nor Atman is a भोक्ता *bhokta* or an enjoyer .

Therefore, you are under the delusion that you are going to be a killer or killed and others are also going to be killers or killed; both views are wrong.

In the words of Swami Vivekananda; Nature of the Atman is... existence absolute, knowledge absolute and bliss absolute.

The Atman is eternal.

There was never a point in time when the Atman did not exist. It did not “come into existence” and neither will it ever cease to exist. The law of nature prescribes that whatever comes into existence at one point of time must and will eventually cease to exist at another point in time. This is called manifestation and un-manifestation.

Therefore, it is illogical to think that Atman has a birth and death – it does not.

As I mentioned earlier, this is the description given in the Upanishads. This is also the description given in the Bhagavat Gita because Bhagavat Gita as we have often discussed before is the very essence of all the Upanishads.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः। पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥ 4॥

**Sarvaopanishadho gaavo dogdhaa Gopala Nandana,
Parthoo vathsa sudheer bhokthaa dugdam Geetamritham mahath II 4 II**

A beautiful description of Atman has been given in the Bhagavat Gita. I have elaborately talked about it in my classes on the second chapter of the Bhagavat Gita. I am only recapping some of the important points here.

Characteristics of a Realised Soul or *Esthitprajna Laxshana*.

Arjuna's asks a question to Bhagwan Sri Krishna about the Characteristics of a Realised Soul

Arjuna has a doubt: “O' Lord, whatever you are saying is absolutely fine. I do not know what the Atman is; I am still under the impression that I am the mind-body complex - I am a youth now, I am going to be old and one day I will die.

I do believe your words.

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्॥ **śhiṣhyaste 'haṁ śhādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam. C2/ V7**॥

I have taken complete refuge in you; I believe every single word that comes from your mouth. However, this is only an intellectual knowledge for me at the moment.

Arjuna's questions to Bhagwan Shri Krishna

- 1) How can I really understand the Atman?
- 2) Is there someone who has fully realised the Atman?
- 3) If there is someone who has realised the Atman, how can I recognise such a person?

This final question is a very beautiful question. Suppose someone points out to us that Shri Ramakrishna is a realised soul, a knower of Brahman but, by looking at Shri Ramakrishna, we may not be able to understand it and would not be able to tell. Therefore, how do we know that a person is a spiritual person and a spiritually advanced person - this must inevitably manifest itself in the form of certain characteristics.

Here, I will mention these characteristics very briefly even though Bhagawan Shri Krishna describes these characteristics very elaborately at the end of the second chapter of the Bhagavat Gita....called ***Esthitprajna Laxshana***. For the sake of convenience, I have summarised and condensed all these characteristics into four.

Four main characteristics of a realised soul

First Characteristic - सदानन्दमया *Sadanadamaya*.

The first Characteristic of a realised soul or a knower of Brahman is सदानन्दमया *Sadanadamaya*. He is always happy. He is happy because he knows that he is the Atman. He is happy because there is nothing which can affect him. A body can be affected or changed, a mind can be affected and changed but in Atman there is no change and it's nature is sat-chit-ananda. Absolute existence therefore no fear of death, absolute knowledge therefore no fear of ignorance, absolute bliss therefore there is no fear of *dukha* or grief or unhappiness. This nature of Atman will not change. Therefore the very first characteristic to recognise, is that this person is always happy.

Recording from 30:11 minutes

Therefore, the very first characteristic that we really encounter in a person who is always happy, not because circumstances are always happy but in spite of difficult and even painful situations, he will ever be swimming in the ocean of bliss. Sri Ramakrishna is an example, Holy mother, Swamiji, direct disciples, Ramana Maharishi are all examples that, when you find a person, who is always happy, always cheerful, always positive - know for certain that he is a knower of Atman. That is the first characteristic.

Second Characteristic

When a person knows he is the Atman, he can only look upon everything else as none other than Atman. It is impossible for him to only consider himself as the Atman and nothing or nobody else - that is the special sight an **Atmajnani** will always have.

Therefore, O Arjuna, when you find a person who is **Samadarishi** [equal sighted], in his eyes, there is no greater person, inferior person, desirable person, undesirable person, good person, evil person. In the sight of such a person, everyone else is none other than Paramatma - this is called **Samadarishana**. That is why every night, we go on singing in the Avatara-stothram, "**Premarpana sama-darshana Jaga-jana dukkha jay**". That is the second characteristic - he looks upon everybody with the same eye.

This is also beautifully expressed in the Bhagavat Gita [ch. 5.18] :-

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini /
śhuni chaiva śhva-pāke cha paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ || 5.18*

One definition of *paṇḍitāḥ* in the 11th verse is, he will never grieve, either for the living, or for the dead :-||

gatāsūn-agatāsūnśh-cha nānuśhochanti paṇḍitāḥ

But the second characteristic is **Premarpana** as he is the knower of Atman, he can only look upon everyone else and think, "you are also Atman!" Therefore the question of making any distinction doesn't arise. That is why Holy Mother is also called Holy Mother, as in Her eyes, every child is only holy, like her own son. If Holy Mother is the Divine Mother, then all her children must also be divine. So Swami Chandikanandaji has composed a beautiful poem which says :-

Sadhu sajana janani tumi maa
asadhu durjan srutha thomaar

Good people, spiritual people as well as evil people, wicked people - all are none other than your own children who are equally holy in the eyes of the Holy Mother - **Amjad and Sharad** both are equally my own children - that is the second characteristic.

Third Characteristic

As a man of knowledge perceives Atman everywhere, even if someone comes to kill him, he will only say, "Welcome Lord, welcome Death - you are none other than my beloved, you are my own self!"

So this is the third characteristic - spontaneous love, without the least distinction. Love for everything, not only for every body but every thing. Usually we classify the experiences we have into two types - the living and the non-living. For a Hindu, the living and the non-living are none other than the Divine Lord alone. That is why a mountain is God, that is why a river is God, that is why a tree is God, that is why the earth is Goddess. Water is a God, jaladevata. Fire is God, Vaayu, air is God. The Aakasha, in which we move about, that is also none other than God only.

Everything is divinised - we are not divinising what is not divine; we are recognising what is already divine but in our ignorance we do not see it as divine. This is the third characteristic of a realised soul, an Atmajnani.

Fourth Characteristic

Then there is the last characteristic - such a realised soul is ready to give up his very life for the sake of anybody. I will quote from **Sri Ramakrishna's Aratrikam, Khandana :-**

prāṇārpaṇa jagata-tāraṇa kṛtana-kaliḍor ||

Prāṇārpaṇa - the very avatarana of an incarnation of God is for the sake of uplifting this world. Uplifting means - from the delusion that I am not the Atman to the Knowledge that everything is divine, everyone is divine. This was the message that Swami Vivekananda had sent across at the Parliament of Religions :-

*Shrinwantu vishwe amritasya putra
arya dhamani divyani tashtu
vedamayetam purusham mahantam
aditya varanam tamasa parastath
tvameva vidithvati, mrityu methi
nanyah pantha vidyathe ayanaya*

Christianity, in the early days, out of ignorance, used to teach that man is a born sinner. Incidentally, that idea was not prevalent earlier - it was only after Saint Augustin that the sin of Adam and Eve transmitting itself through the very birth of a human being became an accepted dogma. Swamiji put an axe at the very root of this strong dogma - man, if he is a born sinner, is never ever going to get out of that situation. But if man is a child of immortality, and for some reason has temporarily forgotten his real nature, then that real nature, whether now or some time in the future, will definitely manifest itself and has to come out. That was the Vedantic teaching of Swamiji..."Each soul is potentially Divine." Whether a person knows it or not, he is going only towards that destination where he self-realises that 'I am not anything else but the Divine Atman!'

Summary of Esthitprajna Laxshana.

So I mentioned 4 characteristics - there are many other characteristics, but for the sake of convenience and remembrance, I only outlined 4 characteristics :-

1. he is always happy, cheerful, positive,
2. he loves everybody,
3. he doesn't make any distinction between anybody and,
4. he's ready to give up his life for the sake of anybody.

So Bhagavan Krishna gives a beautiful description of what are the characteristics of a realised soul starting with - that a realised soul is completely free from any sort of desire [ch. 2.55] :-

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् | आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ||

*prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadochyate*

He is completely happy in his one self, therefore he doesn't have any other desire. Whatever desires we have, it is for one purpose. I'm not happy therefore I desire to be happy - probably some object will make me very happy. That's all - every desire is an indication that I am not happy and I want to be completely happy. Fulfilment of every desire is supposed to lead us to that complete happiness but we know by experience that it can only lead us to temporary quenching of that desire leading to temporary happiness. But each fulfilled desire becomes stronger next time. The only way out is for a realised soul to know, "I am poorna पूर्ण ": I am perfect, I am infinite, I do not have any lack, I do not need anything, this is called '*Atha kamaha*', I am completely self-fulfilled.

So the Lord describes, and Arjuna hears, and Bhagavan says, if you can attain to this knowledge of the Atman, at the very last breath of your life, before you kick the bucket, you will be free. You won't have any more rebirths. *Punarjanma* पुनरजन्मा, the next birth, is not an option for you, it will not come, you will be free. Wonderful knowledge of the Atman, wonderful description of a realised soul.

So how am I going to go about it? That is the most wonderful thing - we hear it lots of times, we also read books, we also try to meditate but it seems as though the Self is as far away as when we started.

What is the reason? Because we have to have the fitness to understand. We can hear, any fool can hear, but to grasp what it really means and to accept what it clearly entails and to convert our life according to our faith is a huge task, and only those who undertake can really appreciate. Therefore, we have to start somewhere and that is where Bhagwan Krishna starts his teachings in between, which later on came to be known as **Karma Yoga**. We know what is Karma yoga. Yoga means that which brings us into complete oneness with God :-

- if action brings us to God, it is called Karma Yoga,
- if devotion brings us to God, it is called Bhakti yoga,
- if will brings us to God, it is called Raja yoga,
- if knowledge brings us to God, it is called Jnana yoga,

But even though there are so many choices, so many paths, certain preconditions need to be fulfilled - these are only obtained by the practice of Karma Yoga.

So Bhagavan, in the 2nd chapter gives a hint [Ch. 2.48] :-

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

yoga-sthah kuru karmāṇi saṅgaṁ tyaktvā dhanañjaya

You become a yogi, that means you perform your karma as a Karmayogi. In what way? First way is, to fulfil Karmayoga, you need to fulfil two conditions.

Karmayoga Condition 1

We should be able to perform any action in 3 ways. Bhagavan Krishna defines yoga in 3 ways :-

1. *Samatvam yoga ucyate* समत्वम् योग उच्यते

that means whenever we perform any action, we must perform that action with complete serenity, equanimity of mind. If it undergoes any emotional turmoil, to that extent our skilfulness, our intelligence, our concentration will all be clouded. Therefore, the first condition is - keep the mind equanimous, whatever the circumstance. Is it possible, yes, it is possible! How is it possible - only after a long practice. It is not possible that today suddenly I start and I become a Karmayogi? No! Gradually, slowly, through consistent practice, it's possible to keep the mind calm, serene, peaceful and alert. That is the first definition of yoga if we want to skilfully perform Karmayoga.

The second qualification is :-

2. *Yogah Karmasu Kaushalam* योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्

Yoga is to discharge our duties skilfully. The first meaning of skilfulness is with concentration, with intelligence, so that when we put all of our mind on a particular task, it can be done in the best possible manner, in the shortest possible time and in the best way. This is a superficial meaning of the word skilfulness. The real meaning of skilfulness is - that whatever action we do, and despite every action gives its own specific result, we don't want any result. We only want one particular result - even if we perform one million actions, every action ultimately must give us only one particular result - **Atma Jnanam** - self knowledge. Nothing else, in Sri Ramakrishna's words it must give us only God, God realisation and nothing else. This is the real meaning of skilfulness. So this is the second condition if we wish to do Karmayoga. Then there is a third condition :-

3. *Duḥkha-saṁyoga-viyogaṁ* दुःखःसंयोग वियोगम्

Every activity, necessarily entails some amount of Dukha, or hardship, or unhappiness. If everything is pleasant, everybody will become a Karmayogi, that is not true. So we need to keep the mind, even if the gravest unhappiness or suffering surrounds us, as though it doesn't touch us.

This is the 3rd definition of Yoga according to Bhagavan Krishna. **Duḥkha-saṁyoga** - when **Duḥkha**, grief, suffering completely surrounds us. **Viyogaṁ** - as if it doesn't touch us. This also is possible only through a long time of practice, sincere practice. When we are equipped with these three conditions then two more things we need to do.

Karmayoga entails first of all, *Ishvara arpana buddhi*. That is, whatever I am doing, is in order to please the Divine Lord only and for nobody else's. Not for my benefit or for the benefit of anyone belonging to me but only for pleasing the Divine Lord. That's what Ramanuja beautifully says, *anukulyasya sankalpah*, I'll take a vow that I will only do what pleases you! I can never do what will make you unhappy - *pratikulyasya varjanam*. These are the two conditions.

So this is the first part for fulfilling Karma Yoga - what is that? I do every activity only to please the Divine Lord, so He bestows his grace upon me. And when God bestows His Grace, he can only bestow one thing because God doesn't have anything else except Himself. So when He gives us, He doesn't give anything else, except Himself, God Himself.

This is the first condition.

Karmayoga Condition 2

The second condition is, having fulfilled all these conditions, having done our job skilfully, with equanimity and with complete detachment to whatever unhappiness entails, having completed our job, we offer it to the Divine Lord. And then, whatever the Lord bestows upon us, after we complete the work, meaning whatever result He deigns to give to us, we have to accept it with the greatest joy. That is called *Ishwara Prasada Buddhi* - whatever result we get, we have to accept it as a divine prasada. If we can fulfill these two conditions, then truly we become Karmayogins, and the result of karma yoga is 3-fold :-

- First, *Chitta sudhi* - our mind becomes pure,
- Second, *Chitta ekagrata* - our mind becomes concentrated,
- Third, *Chitta vaishalyata*, the mind becomes progressively expanding until it embraces the whole universe as I am this universe, because, I am God.

Summary of Bhagavat Gita class 49

So these are the three points. To recapitulate, what I had expressed so far :-

- Arjuna was overcome with grief but he realised he cannot overcome it excepting through the grace of God, so he surrendered himself to the Divine Lord, and as a result of surrender, Bhagavan opened his mouth and said, "there is no need for you to grieve, because if you think you are a body, everybody is a body and the body's nature is to die sooner or later, at one point of time or the other. Therefore just discharge your duties as Karmayoga.
- Second, if you think there are other people. There is Dharma and Adharma, Bhishma, Drona etc to whom you are terribly attached. They are dharmic people, virtuous people and if you kill them, they will go only to heaven and therefore, you are only helping them go forward and not giving them any pain.
- But the crux of the upadeshan, instruction of Bhagavan Krishna is, that we are all Atman. You are Atman, I am Atman. Even though we do not know about it, we will have to take it with faith, with shraddha, with bhakti, and attempt to know who we really are. So, the first thing Bhagavan Krishna did, is, explain what is Atman. These are the characteristics of the Atman, he elaborated at the very beginning of the second chapter.

Then he advises Arjuna, you discharge your duties as a matter of karmayoga, then you will be in a better position to understand what I am talking about Atman, higher world etc. Then Arjuna puts a question, you

have spoken so beautifully about the Atman, how do I know it is true? Is there any person who can prove that he has really realised the Atman, is one with the Atman? Considers himself or herself as the Atman and he can authentically tell us, yes - you are the Atman, I am the Atman?

To which Bhagavan Krishna gives a beautiful description, specifically in this context, called *Sthitaprajna Lakshana*, characteristics of a mature mind, realised soul, spiritual mind. With that, the 72nd verse of Chapter 2 of the Bhagavat Gita ends.

Now starts the third chapter - what hints Bhagavan Krishna had given us? How to discharge our duties, in this context, how to fight war through Sri Krishna. And as I mentioned, life is nothing but a constant battle, we want to know who we are, but several forces are trying to pull us down. This is a constant warfare, a constant battlefield, there is no way of escaping it. Either we win, or we lose. Really speaking, nobody can lose for a long time, temporarily yes, in the long run, no. Therefore, we have to practice, start where we are, and we are in a situation where we need to purify our heart, focus our mind and expand our identity - this is what Karmayoga is going to do.

From next class onwards, I will give you a brief summary, the salient points on each chapter. That would be my methodology for future classes - then I will elaborate some of the important verses and slokas, and then you will have a correct and very clear idea of each chapter. I also want this exposition so that it should not be merely be an intellectual knowledge, but it should help us to translate it practically into our day to day lives. This is our methodology which I will start on the third chapter in our next class.

Class ends with these beautiful teachings and Slokas.
To be cont'd

**Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.**

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् । देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

With kind regards

Mamta Misra & Hari Sundaresan