

Swami Dayatmananda on Bhagavad Gita Class 53 date 12/01/19
(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 ॥ 5

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः । पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥ 4 ॥
Sarvaopnishadho gaavo dogdhaa Gopala Nandana,
Parthoo vathsa sudheer bhokthaa dugdam Geetamritham mahath ॥ 4 ॥

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥ 8 ॥
Mookam karothi vaachaalam, pankhum lankayathe girim,
Yath krupa thaham vandhe Paramananda madhavam. ॥ 8 ॥

Recapitulation of Bhagavat Gita Class No. 52

We have been discussing the third chapter of Divine Bhagavat Gita.

What did we discuss so far?

Confusion of Arjuna:

Arjuna seemed to be confused (*he thought*) that Lord is propounding two pathways to realise the Self. One path is the path of Knowledge and the other path is the path of Karma-Yoga. So, he was not sure. Especially he (Arjuna) was in a battle field and to do karma in the battle field is one of the toughest things in this world because a warrior has to fight all day long killing, injuring and also getting injured.

Surrender of Arjuna:

So, Arjuna gave the responsibility to the Lord Shri Krishna and said that "You decide for me. Because, you know me better than anybody else. You choose for me the best path so that I can get out of the bondage of karma."

Reply of Lord Shri Krishna:

So, the Lord has been replying that there is not just one path but there are many paths. That does not mean that we can choose any path we want, it is for the teacher to choose which particular path is most suitable and by treading the path on which the disciple can progress towards the Lord by the fastest way.

Jato Mat Tato Path जतो मत ततो पथः

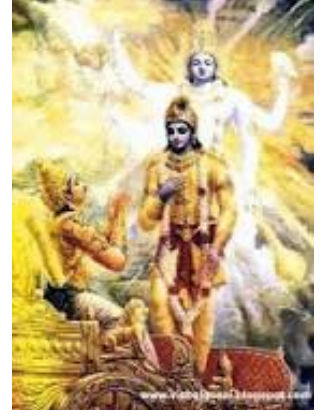
This is the fundamental teaching of Hinduism or Vedanta. Shri Ramakrishna has reconfirmed this and re-emphasised this particular theory in his own exactable language - "Jato Mat Tato Path जतो मत ततो पथ As many faiths so many paths.

Yogic way of doing karma:

Then, the Lord also further confirmed that without performing actions, one cannot go to the state of action-less-ness. So, the goal is very clear here, karma is not the goal, but by taking the help of karma and doing it in a yogic way. This means we have to fulfil three conditions.

Three conditions of Karma-Yoga:

First, remain calm serene and unaffected by the outcome whatever be the circumstances.
Second, he must do it with concentration, complete skilfulness and Intelligence.



Thirdly, he should offer it to the Lord and accept whatever result comes.

That is called Karma-Yoga. If a person performs Karma-Yoga in that way then karma very soon will liberate him from karma.

Karma can bind us and karma can liberate us:

Action can bind us or liberate us depending upon, how we perform the karma. We are helplessly bound in this world.

So long as we are alive, breathing, living and performing actions are not in our control. This is what the Lord is explaining to us. It is impossible for any body or for any living creature to remain without action. Nature will force us very soon to perform actions whether we are aware of this fact or not. The body and mind cannot keep quite without performing some kind of action.

What is hypocrisy?

The Lord has also condemned that there are some people who seem to, not engage their sense organs in their respective fields but inside their minds they are cherishing tremendous desires. Lord Krishna has named it as hypocrisy. So:

What is hypocrisy? Hypocrisy is appearing outside as if not desiring any fruits (*of actions*) but inside brooding on them all the time. So, Lord says "It is much better for any person that he should control his mind and engage all his sense organs in (*their respective different*) actions in the right way and this way his progress will be much better.

man mukh ek karo मन मुख एक करो:

Shri Ramakrishna used to define सत्त्वा *Satva*. *Satva* सत्त्वा is actually the opposite of hypocrisy. In Bengali, Shri Ramakrishna used to say very sweetly "*man mukh ek karo* मन मुख एक करो" that means what our mind is thinking, our thoughts, our speech and our actions if they are all one and they are all aligned then that is called truthfulness.

Hypocrisy is, thinking one thing, speaking something else and doing something entirely different. One has to perform karma in a yogic way (*please see above*).

Ishawara Arpana Buddhi & Ishawara Prasada Buddhi:

Two points have been noted down (*and discussed*) many times. One point is, whatever we do, we offer it to the Lord and we do it only for the pleasure of the Lord. The other point is, after completing any action, then whatever be the result, we have to accept it joyfully and gladly as we accept any prasada which has been offered to God. The first part is called *Ishawara Arpana Buddhi* and the second part is called *Ishawara Prasada Buddhi*.

Goal of Karma:

We have already discussed it many times but as many of us tend to forget. I am recompiling (*this again*). What is the goal of any karma? The ultimate goal of course is to make us know ' who we are' and then we go beyond all karma.

Karma springs from desires. Desires spring from a sense of what is called dissatisfaction or un-fulfilment. When a person reaches God - he attains to the highest fulfilment and he enjoys eternal, infinite, unbroken bliss called Ananda. Therefore, there is no need for him to do karma. In fact, he will not have body-mind (consciousness) and at that stage it is not possible to do any work and for him a thought of karma is impossible. Let us take few examples,

First example is of Katha-Upanishad:

We know the popular story of *Kathaupanishad*. *Nachiketa* नचिकेता was a sincere aspirant.

Nachiketa's father was a ritualist and had tremendous faith in God. He aspired to go to heaven and enjoy heavenly enjoyment. But, at the same time he was clinging to his earthly things. (Please note, earthly things are useful only on this earth). Heavenly things do not correspond to our earthly things. Although he wanted to go to heaven he was not performing the scriptural

ordained karma. However, in due course of time he was possessed with श्रद्धा *Shradha*. He realised his mistake and became detached from every karma.

(Point to be noted) He did not give up karma but he became detached from karma. Soon after this, he attained "Self Realisation" in the form of his son called *Nachiketa*.

Second example is of *Bhairavi Brahmani*:

Second example that comes to my mind is of *Bhairavi Brahmani*. She attained a very high degree of spirituality and yet there were some defects in her such as jealousy. By the grace of God and by the grace of her own sincerity or *Shradha*, she soon realised and rectified her defects and became perfect.

Third example is of *Totapuri*:

So also you should not be surprised if I mention the example of *Totapuri*. When he used to plunge into deep meditation or Dhayana, he was able to concentrate perfectly but he could not bring out the inner knowledge and (*could not*) look upon everything in this world as another form of Brahman - means Brahman with *nama & rupa / name & form*. But, by the grace of the Divine Mother, he also realised his mistake, surrendered to Her and She removed his ignorance totally and make him see the same Brahman everywhere - *Sarvam khalv idam brahma सर्व खल्विदं ब्रह्म*. This is the real goal of any karma and we all will be forced to travel the path of karma until automatically the bondage of karma falls down.

Mature personality and *Sadhana Chatustaya Sampanna*:

We have also discussed that the immediate purpose of karma is to become a mature person. If we do not become a mature person then we will be called an immature person. In Shri Ramakrishna's words - immature person is called (a person with) *kaacha-ami कच्चा आमी or unripe ego*.

What are the consequences if we remain immature persons?

So, if we do not become mature persons then (*there is a great possibility that*) we would become mentally sick. It is said that 40% of the population in the West suffer from some form of mental sickness. They may appear to be stronger and healthier than other people, especially when compared to the people of third world countries.

Therefore, all our life must be a journey towards becoming what we call a mature personality. That is what is called in spiritual language *Sadhana Chatustaya Sampanna साधन चाटुष्टया सम्पन्ना*.

Three steps of Karma-yoga

This journey of Karma-Yoga takes place through two steps and ultimately culminating in the third step.

First step is *Sakama Karma Yoga*.

Second step is *Atma Kama Karma-Yoga* and

Third step is *Nishkama Karma -Yoga*. So, that is the purpose of Karma-Yoga. Our life must be converted into Yagna यज्ञ or sacrifice.

Rhritum ऋतम् or Cosmic Law or Cosmic Dharma or Holistic attitude

In our Vedas, our Rishis have discovered a most wonderful truth. They called it ऋता *Rhitha*, means Cosmic-Law or Cosmic-Dharma and that means, the whole life is inter-connected.

Nowadays modern scientists call it holistic attitude. No part of this world could be extinguished because every part aids, cooperates and makes life smooth in some way or other even though we may not know it.

What is Sacrifice or Yagna?

Yagna is to know that every single thing in this world is helping everything else and also helping itself. This divine vision is called Sacrifice or Yagna.

We have also defined earlier that Yagna or sacrifice is a travel from a lower state of consciousness to a higher state of consciousness.

To put it in other words, it is a travel towards more सत् Sat, more चित् Chit and more आनन्द Ananda and (*this means*) to be more un-selfish, to be wiser and to move towards more ananda or bliss.

Karma-Yoga of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was the best commentator on karma and karma-yoga, (of course) not only on Karma-yoga but on all yoga.

So, in the first place Swami Vivekananda is talking about (an important point) that karma must makes a man -> a man of character.

What does Swami Vivekananda mean about a man of character?

He himself has brought this point in the first chapter of the most wonderful, spiritual classic on Karma-Yoga. The very first chapter is titled as "Karma and its effect on character".

This means, first of all, karma must make us a man of character.

How do we know (who is a man of character)?

He (*a man of character*) has five elements. Therefore,

First: We must become a man of love, possessing love, manifesting love, loving and loved.

Second: We become a man of truth, in modern psychological language it is called living a life of authenticity.

Third: We must develop un-selfishness because as Swami Vivekananda says "Selfishness means separating oneself from others and morality means to feel our unique identity to everything else in this world.

Fourthly: We must develop complete mind control, also called self-restraint and,

Lastly: We must become chaste. Swamiji defines chastity as purity.

These are the five important points: love, truth, unselfishness, self-restraint, chastity or purity. Function of karma is to fasten us into a man of character. Then a question might arise here,

How do we know what is the character of a person?

Recording time 15.11 minutes.

Swamiji gives us a beautiful example. He says, I quote "If you really want to judge the real character of a man then look not at his great performance on the platform in the public eye, everybody behaves most exemplary (*when in the public eye*) but watch a man doing his most common actions, those are indeed the things which will tell you the real character of a great man."

Definition of religion and education by Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda has given a unique definition of both religion and education.

He says "**Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man.**"

What is education " **Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man.**"

So, here Swamiji briefly says "The goal of mankind is knowledge." This is the one ideal placed before us by the eastern philosophy.

Why did Swamiji need to define in this way? Because, our idea of karma or action is (*to get*) pleasure. We work only to become happier.

Categorically, Swamiji says "Pleasure is not the goal of man but knowledge." A question may arise here.

Is then pleasure and knowledge two different things?

No! pleasure is broken happiness, knowledge is un-broken happiness.

Knowledge is a state of mind. Once we acquire the real state of knowledge then the happiness or bliss can never be separated from anyone of us and then, Swamiji says " **This knowledge is already within each one of us.**"

Knowledge is not to be gained from outside.

Education or any other actions which we perform in our life are meant only to manifest this inherent potentiality of both knowledge and bliss which are already within all of us.

Therefore, Swami Vivekananda says "Knowledge is not to be gained from outside, it is a discovery, it is un-covering (*of our inherent knowledge*)."

Who is an Aadarsh-Purusha आदर्श पुरुषा or an Ideal-Man?

Next, one of the functions of karma is to make a man, a thoughtful man. A man who can think deeply, can think rationally and can act also rationally. Function of karma is also to fasten man into a man of will. So, we have to look for an ideal-man. An ideal-man is one who uncovers the (*inherent*) knowledge, who develops character, who also becomes the man of tremendous will. Such a person is called, according to Swamiji an Aadarsha-Purusha or an Ideal-Man.

How do we know or recognise (*an Aadarsha-Purusha or an Ideal-Man*)?

Swami Vivekananda himself explains.

That ideal man has read the secret of restraint and he has controlled himself.

He goes to the streets of big city with all its traffic but his mind is as calm as if he were in a cave where not a sound could reach and he is also intensely working (*mentally*) all the time.

That is the ideal of the Karma-Yoga. If you have attained to that ideal, you have really learned the secret of work.

But, if you haven't (*attained to the above ideal*) then you have not learned the secret of karma.

This means, you are bound, you feel unfulfilled, you suffer and you become miserable. Then Swamiji also says "You are responsible for yourselves and also life is nothing but karma. The purpose of karma is (*to give us*) an opportunity to become gradually good."

No one can get anything unless he earns it.

Swami Vivekananda refers to one wonderful law of life.

He says "No one can get anything unless he earns it." This is an eternal law.

He says "A fool may buy all books in the world and these books will be in his library but he will be able to read only those that he deserves to read." And, this deserving is produced by his karma.

Finally, he says "Our karma determines what we deserve and what we can accumulate."

What he did not add, I am adding here that life gives us enumerable opportunities to make us people of responsibility and people who can deserve, not only worldly goods but the highest good which is self knowledge or which is God. So,

How to work?

Swami Vivekananda has given us the gist of work expounding on the verse of Shri Krishna

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन / *karmaṇy-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana*

Swamiji translates, we have the right to work but not the fruits thereafter. We have to begin from beginning to take up the work as they come to us and slowly make ourselves more unselfish every day. We must do the work and find out the motive of ours that prompts us to work, and almost without exception in the first few years, we shall find that our motives are always selfish.

Meaning, as we progress in life, we become more and more un-selfish. Sooner or later, God forces us to purify ourselves through our ups and downs and to acquire more unselfishness, more wisdom, and more bliss.

This is what we have briefly discussed in our past classes. **Recording 22 minutes.**

Now, we are going to briefly discuss a few of these verses because back ground and foundation (of Karma-Yoga) has already been put very firmly (in our previous lectures). If you will remember (what we have discussed) then it will be very easy to understand these verses.

Chapter 3 / Verse 8

The 8th Verse says, I will chant.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्धोदकर्मणः ॥ ८॥

niyataṁ kuru karma tvaṁ karma jyāyo hya karmaṇaḥ
śharīra-yātrāpi cha te na prasiddhyed akarmaṇa

Meaning: Do your allotted duty, action is superior to inaction, and even the bare maintenance of your body will not be possible if you remain inactive.

Explanation: Living is nothing but activity. According to science also, not even a dead thing remains inactive. If you examine a particle of dust. (You will find) It is nothing but made up of atoms and energy, these atoms are moving in time and space with a mind boggling speed and that's an activity. So long as, we are alive it is not possible (to remain inactive). So what should I do?

Lord is advising.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं niyataṁ kuru karma tvaṁ means you perform your duties in the spirit of karma-yoga as we have mentioned earlier.

कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः karma jyāyo hyakarmaṇaḥ means action is superior to inaction. Really speaking here Lord means by inaction, not activity-less-ness but unintelligent action. So, an action done intelligently with concentration and with the motive of pleasing the Lord is far superior to an action done with a selfish motive.

The distinction between selfish and unselfish action is, whether an action binds us (*selfish action binds us*) or an action completely helps us to break the bondage and also makes us slowly move towards (*un-selfish action breaks the bondage*) what we call *Nishkama* karma or action-less-ness.

It is also wrong to suppose that every action leads to bondage and therefore, action should not be performed. People like us, who are like Arjuna might have a doubt that may be every action binds us therefore, it is better not to get into bondage... what is the way... just to sit quietly.

It has been made abundantly clear that it is not possible to sit quiet. We will be forced sooner or later to do what we really need to do because evolution does not allow us to remain ideal (*and sit quietly.*)

If we will not cooperate by stretching our hands, it (*nature/prakruti*) will give us smaller or bigger blows and pulls us towards perfection.

We are standing as I mentioned many times on a beautiful escalator which is taking us to our home which (*our home*) is none other than God. **Recording 25 minutes.**

So the Lord is introducing here a beautiful concept which we have discussed in the past

C3/Verse9

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः | तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर || C3.V9||

yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yam karma-bandhanaḥ
tad-artham karma kaunteya mukta-saṅgaḥ samāchara

Meaning: Lord is advising us that the world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of sacrifice. Therefore, O'Son of Kunti perform your actions only for the sake of Yajna alone - free from all attachments.

लोकोऽयं means in this world, (*this means*) not mountains or rivers but every self-conscious and self-aware human being. Whatever actions he (*a self-conscious human being*) does but if he does not convert it into the action of divine offering then such an action will only strengthen the bondage and bondage always means sufferings only.

Therefore, if a person does not transform his life into a sacrifice or yajna then such a person will suffer. But, even such a person has hope because, as I mentioned earlier prakruti or nature will inevitably take him to his ultimate goal.

Therefore, Lord says, O' Arjuna कौन्तेय, means every spiritual aspirant, तदर्थं tad-artham means for the sake of converting every action of ours into yajna, कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः karma kaunteya mukta-saṅgaḥ means without any attachment, perform it wonderfully well as ordained by the scriptures समाचर samāchara then your whole life will be transformed into a beautiful offering or yajna.

Point to be noted: One of the ideas we need to keep in mind here is, normally Hindus and others also go to the temple or to a church or to a mosque and they offer prayers but when it comes to offer anything else such as property, money, service etc then most of the people do not offer these. That is not right or ideal.

The main idea here is: Me with my limited body and mind...what we call my personality, should slowly be converted into a sacred holy offering to the divine Lord.

My mind will think of You, my speech will praise You and every one of my actions will be an offering to You. This is called transforming our lives into a **yagna**.

So the Lord is abundantly clear, that no action will bind, or no action will take us forward. Action is energy, but it is the attitude by which we perform the action, that makes all the difference in the world.

Recording time 29 minutes

Example from the life of Shri Ramakrishna

I am tempted to give you a beautiful example from the life of Sri Ramakrishna :-

‘ There was a woman devotee, who was bringing up her nephew and she really loved and was attached to her nephew. At the same time, she was also a great devotee of Bala Krishna [child Krishna] and her true desire was to think of the child Krishna all the time. But her mind was inevitably drawn towards her nephew who she was looking after from morning to evening. So she was in a kind of confusion like Arjuna and she came to Sri Ramakrishna.

Like a Satguru, he gave a simple solution :-

“Transform your every action into a **yagna**. How – when you are feeding, bathing, caressing, looking after your nephew, do not think of your nephew as your nephew, but think of him as Krishna Himself. Imagine Krishna has taken the form of your nephew and is bestowing His Grace in front of you. If he smiles, Krishna is smiling; if he is sleeping, Krishna is sleeping; if he demands food and is crying, Krishna is crying. That was exactly what Mother Yashoda did, that is what Kousalya Devi did and also Chandramani Devi did – it is what all the mothers of every great soul had done. It was with the knowledge that this is not my child but this is God Himself. So bring up your nephew that way!”

As she was a true disciple (a disciple is one who has tremendous *shraddha*). She accepted Sri Ramakrishna’s words and started practicing from that very moment and with in few months, she started seeing Krishna everywhere. It is not recorded, but it is my guess that she was able to look upon not only her nephew alone as Krishna, but every grown up man was a baby and every baby is Krishna, so every grown up woman or man is a grown up Krishna. An old man or woman is an aged Krishna. I’m sure she attained self-knowledge looking upon the whole world as a manifestation of Krishna.

This has been even more dramatically illustrated by the life of **Gopal Iyer Ma**, who also had come into contact with Sri Ramakrishna. The life story, which is so marvellous, of Gopal Iyer Ma, has been depicted so graphically in Sri Ramakrishna : The Great Master. It is worth going through it again.

So, perform every action as a sacred puja – offering to the Divine Lord. Then, the potential divinity within us, will slowly come out.

What happens to a person who does *not* carry out his actions according to the Scriptures?

Now, the question needs to be asked, what happens to a person who does *not* carry out his actions according to the Scriptures? First of all, he will remain a worldly person; it will take a long time for him to evolve and evolution always means growth is **Sat, Chit and Ananda** – goodness, unselfishness, truthfulness and wisdom.

So the Lord is telling here, there is a law. In the next 4 verses, the Lord is mentioning this beautiful law, that we have already read from the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. What is this law? Let me put it in 2 ways :-

1. **We do not get, and even if we get we cannot enjoy, anything we do not deserve.**
 - that means we must deserve it really, through our Karma, and if we do it properly, we will get the result.
2. **Life is nothing but, manifesting the law of give and take.**
 - constantly we are taking in and so constantly we must give up.

Swamiji gives a beautiful example – suppose a man is in his room and he doesn't want any fresh air to come into his room and he shuts all the doors and windows – what would be the result? After a few days, he will die of the poisonous air!

So we have to take advantage of what the world gives, and the world gives only through the world. It is really God who is giving us. And what we receive, let us enjoy life, but let us also contribute to the world.

One of the reasons why Swami Vivekananda went to the West.....

Very beautifully, he divided the whole world into two – East and West (not in a political sense but in a way of spirituality) :-

- the East is a repository of spirituality
- the West is a repository of scientific knowledge – science and arts is the domain of the West.

Its not that spirituality isn't present in the West, there are thousands of saints, but we do not know why God has divided it as such – people in the East to develop and propagate spirituality and those in the West to discover the truth in this world and you must enjoy and you must distribute.

What you have, you give to others; what you don't have, borrow it from the others.

So Swamiji said, “The Divine Lord had sent me to the West to give the marvellous spiritual truths which are freely available in this place and in return, the West must give us what contributes to real growth in life – in scientific knowledge, psychological knowledge, arts and above all, the knowledge of an organisation.” So this is what Swami Vivekananda concluded and that's one of the reasons why he visited the West.

Now, there is another misnomer that the East is the East and the West is the West and they can never become united. Swami Vivekananda broke that concept and said “No! Every person is one in the whole world and every person is also an individual, completely separate from the world. Let each one of us grow, in our own way, taking what we need and offering what we can to others.”

Yagna is called vritthum ऋतम् .

We need to realise that it is exactly proportional – we receive what we give, we have to give what we alone receive. This is the concept of the Yagna and this beautiful Yagna is called vritthum ऋतम्. Briefly, I will mention how this concept of vritthum ऋतम् is translated into Yagna :-

Our Vedic rishis, had the greatest privilege of discovery of this marvellous law of the universe that everything in this universe is interconnected. This idea has been beautifully depicted in the form of 3 concepts.

We are all familiar with the idea that when we chant something, we utter the word Shanti three times. Some people may be aware, but most people may not be aware, why we have to utter it 3 times? There is a scientific reason for that.

Each one of us, we suffer from 3 causes – all the suffering in the world can be divided into 3 parts :-

आध्यात्मिक	AdhyAtmika	Our own body & mind
आधिभौतिक	Adhibhautika	Whatever we are dealing with in the external world
अधिदैविक	Adhidaivika	There are the powers of God, invisible to us. This was imagined in the Vedas, like Varuna, Vinayakumara, Vishnu etc. These Gods are not many Gods but different powers of the same Lord.

When the Lord created this universe, he created :-

- the individual soul called *Jiva*,
- He created the external world, through which He can interact through the instrumentality of body & mind,
- He also created the necessary light, the medium through which man can interact.

Without that medium, it is impossible for man to experience anything – he will soon wither away.

Let me first give an illustration.

“I”	World	Sun	Outcome
			I am here, the world is here and the sun is here – I can experience it.
	x		I am here, the world is not there – I cannot experience anything.
		x	I am here, the world is here but the sun is not here – I cannot experience anything.

The sun is only an example of physical form – the sun, the moon etc – the 5 deities associated with the 5 sense organs. And as we all know, all our concept of the world is called *prapancha* प्रपंचा, because only through our 5 sense organs do we interact with the entire universe, which consists of the 5 elements :

- sounds (sabda),
- touch (sparsa),
- form (rupa),
- the taste (rasa),
- the smell (gandha).

The whole world is nothing but a manifestation of these five elements. Let's take a specific example – the eye can see a form, or even better the colour. There is a colourful flower here, my eye is perfectly healthy and functional, I am also fully aware of it, but there is no sun – meaning it is pitch dark. So we cannot experience anything.

The sun is there, I am here, my sense organs are fine but the world is not there – then also I cannot experience anything.

The sun is there, the world is there but “I”, the awareness, is not there – then also the world cannot be experienced.

So it's a beautiful triangular concept – the sun, the forms and the individual's “I”.

Eye is the instrument to experience forms or colours – that's why the presiding deity of the eye is Surya Bhagavan – because if there is no light, the eye is practically useless.

So, here is God manifesting in the form of light, through the sun and moon etc. Here is God manifesting in all the forms of the world – which we call *prapancha*, made up of the 5 elements, and here is “me”, the individual consciousness, awareness with body and mind, with perfect sense organs.

Awareness lends its power of perceiving, experiencing and knowing, through the mind. The mind, in its turn, grants this power to the sense organs, and the sense organs act as receivers of this knowledge.

So this beautiful triangular concept – God is manifesting as *shrishti* सृष्टि in the form of these 3 – light, the experienceable object and me the experiencer.

That means, I am the part of the world, the world is the part of God in the form of Sun etc, and all these so called deities, and the world, and me, meaning every individual in this world, including animals, insects, whatever has life, and the external world, and the Divine world – this triangular relationship is nothing but God manifesting as *saguna brahma* सगुण ब्रह्मा . This beautiful idea, that if we are selfish, then the world will reject us and God in the form of sun etc will also reject us. Therefore it is our duty to enjoy this world, be grateful to the Gods, and again, we have to receive and then we have to give whatever we can give.

This is the law that is called *ritam* – *ritam* is a fact, *ritam* is harmony, *ritam* is the law manifest within us as give and take.

In the course of time, Vedic Rishis once understood this fact of *ritam*, wanted to give something back to the Lord, and that concept materialised in the form of what we call sacrifices, but better described in Sanskrit as *yagna*. What is यज्ञा *yagna*?

- First of all, it is to be aware that we are receivers so we need to be grateful.
- Secondly, whatever we receive, use it as much as we can, and return it to God only, in the forms of these various deities etc.

Later on, this concept of yagna, also extended itself to not only put something in the fire, but to serve the world, to serve human beings, to serve also non-human beings, and to live in accordance with Dharma.

So the concept of yagna is now converted to the idea of Dharma.

What is Dharma? – that if we do the right actions, we enjoy the life and move forward. If we do something unrighteous, then we only go back. We suffer also but at some point in time, we have to move forward. This is why the first part of the Vedas, goes by the popular name of **Karmakandas कर्मकांडा** but its proper name should be **Dharmakanda धर्मकांडा** !

Dharmakanda helps us to develop ourselves into yagna and yagna further pushes us into the realm of ritam, and ritam ultimately unveils the face of the Divine Lord. This is so beautifully described in the Ishavasya Upanishad :-

A) An aspirant worshipping and following the law of ritam, in the form of yagna, in the form of Dharma. He prays :-

हिरण्मयेन पात्रेन सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।

तत् त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥ १५ ॥

hiraNmayEna pAtrEna satyasyApihitaM mukham |

tat tvaM pUShannapAvRuNu satyadharmAya dRuShTayE || 15 ||

Meaning: “O Lord – your face is covered with a golden disc, an attractive disc, which is nothing but this so called shiny, deceiving world. Unless I remove it, I won’t be able to know who You are. The Divine Lord, hearing the sincere prayer, obviously removed the disc (and only He can remove it), and then the man becomes enlightened naturally. That purusha who is within you, *soham asmi*, “I am that Purusha”.

Analogy of a police man by Shri Ramakrishna

Sri Ramakrishna, comments by giving a beautiful analogy, to this mantra we find in the Ishavasya Upanishad :-

‘ The Inspector of Police, goes round at night, watching so that the citizens should not suffer from thieves and robbers and such like. He carries a torchlight, he can see everybody’s face, but none can see his face. But if we ask, “ Sir, I would like to see you, you are rendering so much of service, I would like to see your sweet face.” Then out of his boundless grace, the sergeant will turn the light upon his own face and then the person will be able to perceive.’

This is a beautiful illustration. Ultimately we have to surrender. Surrender means other words. The Lord, out of love for us, because He knows we are none other than He, He turns the light of knowledge upon Himself. Now, what would be the result of that? That we know :-

“अहं ब्रह्मास्मि : aham brahmasmi – [I am Thou!].

There is no difference between You and Me. This beautiful concept of ritam, transformed in a practical way into performing yagna, and this yagna in the course of time evolved into what Sri Ramakrishna says “ *Shiva Jnane Jeeva Seva*”. Serving the Divine Lord, the man looking upon him as the Divinity itself, and that is called **Dharma**, and Dharma ultimately led to what we call in Hinduism as **Karmayoga – Karma, Karma Siddhantha**.

Summary: If we live rightly, then we enjoy life. Otherwise we suffer. In either case, nobody can permanently, forever, keep us in darkness through suffering. And that is the Gift of God, as the Holy Mother says – the Lord will take us into Karma, into Dharma; Dharma into Karmayoga and that is called yagna.

Yagna transforms itself into ritam and ritam opens the face of the Divine Lord and then we will know who we are and that will be the ultimate goal.

Chapter 3 Verse 10, 11, 12, 13

This beautiful concept, in these 4 verses I will mention now, the Lord is enumerating to Arjuna, meaning each one of us [Gita 3.10 to 3.13] :-

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः |
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् || 10||
saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovācha prajāpatiḥ
anena prasaviṣhyadhvam eṣha vo 'stviṣṭa-kāma-dhuk

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः |
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ || 11||
devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ śhreyaḥ param avāpsyatha

इष्टान्भोगान् हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः |
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः || 12||
iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo yo bhunkte stena eva saḥ

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः |
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् || 13||
yajña-śhiṣṭāśhinaḥ santo muchyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tvaghaṁ pāpā ye pachantyātma-kāraṇāt

The essence of this, which I have already mentioned :-

- The law of life is give & take,
- We have to be grateful to the Divine Lord, because the world is created by Him and ultimately He wants us all to go towards Him.

And that is possible only by living a life of yagna.

Meaning of Verse 10: So what is the Lord telling, that the Prajapati [प्रजापति], having in the beginning of creation, not in the middle, not as an afterthought, but along with the creation, together he also created sacrifices. And then he declared, “By this, shall you prosper. Let this be the milch of your desires – in other words, every act of sacrifice will become a **kamadhenu** कामधेनु, a **kalpataru** कल्पतरु – a wish fulfilling tree by which all of our desires are fulfilled.

And all of our desires, every wise thinking human being’s desires, are classified by our scriptures into 4 fruits :-

1. Dharma
2. Artha
3. Kama
4. Moksha

Meaning of Verse 11: Further, the Divine Lord is telling, “That with this, you do nourish the Gods, and may those Gods nourish you. Thus, you nourish the Gods, the Gods in their turn nourish you, nourishing one another, you shall attain to the highest good.

Meaning of verse 12: He is also telling, the Gods, the Devas are nourished by sacrifice. How do we nourish the Gods, by performing yagnas, in modern terminology pujas. Nourished by the sacrifice, the devas will give you all the desired objects that you need and you deserve.

Indeed, there are some people, he who enjoys objects given by the devas, without showing any gratitude, without offering it to Them, is verily a thief!”

And then finally, the Lord is telling :-

Meaning of verse 13: “ The righteous [performers of yagnas], who partake the remnants of the sacrifices, nowadays called prasada, are freed from all sins. But those sinful ones, who cook food in order to enjoy their lives, only for their sakes, without offering to the Gods, verily eat but sin!” That means they will have to suffer more.

Divine words of Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religion

But let us remember, we are all children of God, which the Rishi, categorically declared that in the earlier part of the Vedas, thousands of years back [Svetasvatara Upanisad Ch. 2.5 & 3.8] :-

शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आ ये धामानि दिव्यानि तस्थुः ॥2.5

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णं तमसो परस्तात् तमेव विदित्वा मृत्युमत्येतिनान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय ॥3.8

*Shrinwantu vishwe amritasya putra
Arya dhamani divyani thasthu 2.5*

*Vedam ayetam purusham mahantam aditya varanam tamasa parasthath
Tvameva vidhithva atimrityu methi, nanyah pantha vidyathe ayanaya 3.8
(This is also a verse of Yajurveda Chapter 31 / Verse 18)*

This beautiful utterance, once more **Swami Vivekananda** uttered, when he went to America, injecting, initiating people into their potential divinehood, “**You are children of Immortal Bliss. To call man a sinner is blasphemy! But your divinity is potentially there – life is an opportunity to manifest it”**.

He also gave us the directions in how to manifest it – that is, do this either through work, worship, psychic control, philosophy, by one or all of these, and be Free!

Summary:

This is the whole of religion and come together in these beautiful ideas :-

1. We are dependent upon Gods,
2. Gods bestow their grace to all in the form of fulfilling our desires, and
3. We should be grateful to God who is manifesting through these various powers which are called Gods etc, and thus,

4. Mutually helping each other, we finally reach the ultimate goal of life which is God Realisation.

Briefly, we will discuss these points in our next class.

Class ends with chanting. 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**

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