

Swami Dayatmananda on Bhagavad Gita Class 55 date 09/02/19
(Lecture is delivered online from Mysore 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 ॥
Sarvaopanishadho gaavo dogdhaa Gopala Nandana,
Parthoo vathsa sudheer bhokthaa dugdam Geetamritham mahath ॥ 4 ॥

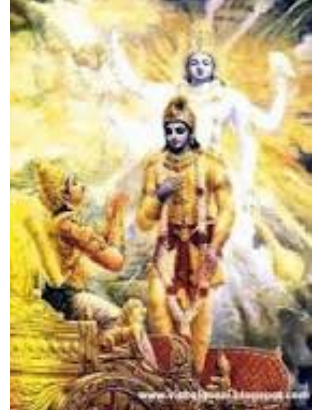
मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥ 8 ॥
Mookam karothi vaachalam, pankhum lankayathe girim,
Yath krupa thaham vandhe Paramananda madhavam. ॥ 8 ॥

Recapitulation of previous classes on Bhagavat Gita Chapter 3

We are studying the third chapter of the Bhagavat Gita called Karma-Yoga

What did we discuss so far?

- **Karma-Yoga**: So, far we have covered that Karma-Yoga is the art of how to live in this world. The Lord has beautifully explained the concept of interconnected-ness. The whole world is interconnected.
- **Interconnected-ness**: The Jiva, the Jagat and Ishwara all of us are totally interconnected. So, if we disturb any of this interconnected-ness then we will be doing the greatest harm to ourselves. Sometimes we will also be doing a great harm to others. So, the Lord brings up the beautiful subject called yagna.
- **Yagna**: what is yagna? Yagna is to live in such a way that we also progress in spiritual life and in this process, we also help the world.
- **Ramakrishna-Mission**: This was the main motive behind Swami Vivekananda's concept of this Ramakrishna Order - *Atmano Mokshayartham Jagat Hitaya Cha* आत्मनो मोक्षाय, जगत हिताय च this means, for one's own salvation, liberation and to attain that liberation, we also need to serve the Lord, looking upon the world, as a manifestation of God.
- **Yagna**: We have also discussed the concept of yagna that to remember gratefully, offer our thanks and also contribute to the welfare of the world, in that process we have also covered, according to Hinduism, five beings which we are indebted to.
- **Pancha-Mahayajna**: We are indebted to 1) *Rishis*- knowledge givers 2) *Devas*- gods & goddesses 3) *Pitrus* or ancestors: we are also indebted to our pitrus or ancestors. We are what we are, because of them. 4) Human beings; we are indebted to every other human being. 5) We are indebted to everything else in this world-living as well as non-living. This means, this whole universe is an integral whole, of which we form



a part, so if we can discharge our life in such a way, that it helps us to contribute to the overall interconnectedness of the whole world, then we will be blessed and in this process we can also render some service to the world. This was the concept called yagna.

- **The Lord advises Arjuna**, means every person, who wants to be happy whether he believes in God or not, the law of Interconnected-ness called rihittum, converted into satyam, transformed into rihittum, and to be attained through the discharge of our duties with an equanimous mind and as an offering to the divine Lord. If we can live such a life, everybody will be blessed, we can be happy in this world, we can be happy in the other world and we can also finally progress in our spiritual life and attain God. This was what we have discussed so far.
- **Ishawara-prasada**; The Lord advises every one of us that convert your life into a yajna and after converting our life into a sacred service called yagna, whatever is left to us by God, we must enjoy it as Ishawara-prasada or divine-Prasada. Those who do that are the blessed people. So, let us convert our life into a yagna.
- **Scientific concept vs Vedic concept**: Now we come to a concept, scientifically explained, that how, not only are we the part of this whole universe, but without the blessings of Ishawra in the form of gods and goddesses, without their blessings and without our worshipping and offering the dues meant for these gods and goddesses, life will be a disharmonious life, leading to overall suffering and conflict. So, modern scientists may not accept the existence of devas, various gods and goddesses, but what they call natural forces, the sun, the moon, the rivers, the mountains, the forests, the air, fire, the space, respecting them, keeping them pure and clean and trying to contribute to the overall purity of the whole world. That is called converting our life into yagna.
- As I have mentioned just now the Lord is trying to explain how rationally we are connected. Next few verses are emphasising on this, we will explore that idea.
recording 7 minutes.

Chapter 3 Verse 14

Let me recite the 14th verse of the third chapter of the Bhagavat Gita.

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः |
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः || 14||

annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍ anna-sambhavaḥ
yajñāḍ bhavati parjanyo yajñāḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ

Meaning: From food come forth all beings and from rain food is produced. Rain comes from sacrifices or yagnas and sacrifice is born of action.

What is meant by food?

Let me put it in simple words. We are all coming from food. Our parents eat food. We are born to them. Our birth is because of food. Our sustenance in this world is because of food. Ultimately, we merge in food.

So externally speaking, from the body point of view, our body is nothing but food. This word "food" can be interpreted in two ways.

1. Food means, that which other creatures can eat. Mosquitoes can drink our blood, animals can eat our flesh, we can eat other animals, this is a very external crude idea.
2. But, whatever (objects) we enjoy through the five sense organs that is also called food for the five sense organs. When we speak that is food, other people's noses can enjoy various chemicals which we emit from our bodies, the warmth which we exude is also a matter of enjoyment for others. Thus every part of our body is made up of the five elements and expressed in the form of five sense organs, it is all food. We are food, we enjoy other people's food and other people also enjoy, here mainly we are talking about physical food from which our body has come and without which our body cannot be sustained.

How does food grow?

It grows only when there is water. That is why, when we are searching for extra-terrestrial planets then first thing which we are looking for is water. No food grows without water. So, अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि annād bhavanti bhūtāni, all creatures are born of food. From where does this अन्ना anna come? It comes when there is rain.

How does rain come?

If we ask the scientists. They will say "Rain comes because of nature".
Hindu rishis / sages tell us that No! You have to worship the gods (and goddesses).

Who are these gods & goddesses?

Gods and goddesses are various powers of nature. So, if we can keep our environment, our air, our space, our water, our fire etc pure then they (gods and goddesses) will lead us to a harmonious sustenance and growth for every creature in this world.

Today, we are in a better position to understand that we are creating this ecological havoc because we have misused nature by polluting rivers, by dissipating forests and whatever we are touching is becoming polluted. There is a light pollution, there is a sound pollution, there is dust pollution, there is a dirt pollution, so many varieties of pollution as I mentioned in my last talk.

Now, the goal is, how to reduce this wastage and make this environment eco-friendly. That is what the scripture is teaching us. If we can look upon these powers of nature,

these elements of nature, as manifestations of God and. If we develop reverence (for them) and keep them pure. That keeping them pure is called yagna or real worship. No point in offering some flowers and polluting everything surrounding us. So, if we can do that then we will contribute towards our own happiness plus all the things which we are interconnected harmoniously.

So (to summarise), where does rain come from?

According to our vedic concept, (rain) comes from devas. What are all these physical elements? They are manifestations of gods and goddesses. But, to our impure external sensual eyes, they appear as lifeless objects. But, they are throbbing with life and with consciousness.

Everything is permeated by the divine

Example of Sun-Worship or Surya-Puja

Simple example: A *Brahmana* ब्रह्मणा, faces the sun early in the morning.

From a scientific view point, the sun is just a mass of burning gases but the fact is, this (sun) is sustaining all the life on this earth; without the sun there could be no life on this earth.

But, for us behind that burning mass of gases called the sun, there is a manifestation of the divine power called *Savita/savitri*. So, our rishis found out that if we want to understand, the divinity behind everything in this world then our inside has to be purified. As we become purer by living a spiritual life, our vision also becomes deeper and then only we can understand that everything is permeated by the divine.

So, we have to do sacrifices or yagna. Let us not forget, sacrifice or yagna is trying to convert our life into an integrated harmonious whole. Yagna is trying to keep ourselves pure, keep our environment pure and looking upon the whole universe with reverence as a manifestation of God. We must be grateful (to the world) because the entire world is sustaining us and that is our part.

Then, where from the yagna concept has come?

That comes from *brahma* ब्रह्मा. Here, *brahma* ब्रह्मा means - not परब्रह्मा *parbrahma*, not ब्रह्माजी *brahmaji* but here, *brahma* means vedas. According to Hinduism vedas are the main power from which the whole universe has come. So, vedas prescribe to us certain ways of living and that is called karma.

Now, where have the vedas come from?

That is the point we are going to discuss now - that कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि karma brahmodbhavaṁ viddhi (C3/ V 15) the direction that how to live our life comes from *brahma* means from vedic knowledge.

Why do we need vedas? -Because, vedas know what is invisible and what is not understandable by us, because we can only have a limited understanding as our knowledge is circumscribed by our five sense organs. (*There are three questions*):

1. Is there divinity?
2. Is there another life after so called death of the body?
3. Is there another world where people go to enjoy or suffer?

To answer these three questions...only those who have gone beyond the five sense organs can assuredly tell us because they could see beyond the five sense organs through direct experience. That is called *pratyaksha* प्रत्यक्षा, that is also called पराज्ञानम् parajyanam or supreme knowledge. This supreme knowledge is called vedas. These vedas are born of अक्षरसमुद्भवम् ākṣhara-samudbhavam (C3/ V15).

Vedas are अपौरुषेया apaurasheya:

According to Hinduism, vedas are not the creations of human beings, they are not the creation of the limited human mind. First of all, they (vedas) are called eternal. They are directly manifesting from the power called brahman. That is the truth and that is our faith. So the verse (C3/ V15) tells us

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् |
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् | 15||

karma brahmodbhavam viddhi brahmākṣhara-samudbhavam
tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि:

- know that the direction- how to live the life, comes from the vedas.
- These vedas are the manifestation of ākṣhara - the divine invisible divinity.
- Therefore, this divinity, where is it?
Not in *vaikuntha*, we don't say- not in *vaikuntha* but we say "not only in *vaikuntha*, not only in *kailasa*, not only in *goloka*, not only in *deviloka* but it is there, it is here and it is everywhere. It is ananta, infinite and it is eternal."
- Therefore vedas are also sanatana/ eternal. Whatever is eternal- is not created, that is why vedas are called अपौरुषेया *apaurasheya* means not human made but divinely manifested.
- This Brahman can only be realised only through these vedas. Vedas can only be understood by proper discharge of our duties as directed (by vedas). and
- God, as it were, lives in the drawing room called vedas.
- Vedas means which direct us to live a particular type of life and if we do that then we live in God and God also lives in us.

- That is so beautifully expressed here तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam, this brahman is established in our hearts, and we in our turn are established in brahman. **Recording time 18 minutes.**

This beautiful concept has been explained to us in the Bhagvatam.

Lord Krishna shows the universal form in his mouth:

Mother Yashoda was peering into the very mouth of Shri Krishna. She saw another world in the mouth of Krishna. She saw that there is also this earth, there is also this gokula, there is also another Yashoda and this another Yashoda is also peering again into the mouth of her Krishna. She saw infinite Krishna and infinite worlds.

This means, we are in God and God is within us. There is no difference between God and us.

So, this is the wheel of dharma and the wheel of life as set and propagated by the vedas.

Results of obeying or dis-obeying this eternal law called rihittum

C3 / Verse 16

So the Lord is telling:

He who lives in unison with this wheel of action is contributing to the harmony of life. So, what happens to him who obeys this law, this means who lives in accordance with the law and what happens to the person who tries to break this eternal law called rihittum, that is being expressed here in the next verse.

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः |

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति || C3 /16||

evaṁ pravartitaṁ chakraṁ nānuvartayatīha yaḥ

aghāyur indriyārāmo moghaṁ pārtha sa jīvati

Meaning: If a person follows this eternal law, converts his life into a yagna, really speaking it is a sanctified life, that is the nearest English translation for yagna. then he is happy in this world, he will also become liberated at the end of this life.

But, he who breaks (this eternal law) and he who disturbs this wheel, such a person lives a sinful life. Sin means, (as we have discussed this earlier) he lives a life of suffering and he cannot develop what should be developed, he rots and he might even degenerate in course of time.

This is beautifully explained here. He who does not follow this wheel, set revolving by the divine Lord Himself, is leading a life of sinful actions and the result is, he rejoices in the senses, he cannot look beyond his five sense organs, just like an animal. Such a person lives in vain, O'Son of *Partha*.

Conclusion; So, it is our bounded duty to be happy ourselves and to contribute also to the happiness of other people. This is the only way, we should lead this life.

But, how long should we go on obeying this law. Is there any relief? Is there any end? Is there any indication?

That's where the Lord is telling "The purpose of every action is to lead us to inaction."

What is meant by inaction?

Inaction means, not sitting as a lazy person but to get rid of all desires, to become a little more whole and to become a little more progressive in life, enjoy life in a much better way both quantitatively and qualitatively. And,

If we go on living this kind of life then such a person will understand 'who he is'.

What is meant by the phrase 'who is he?'

Who is he... Means: I am not the body, I am not the mind but I am the Atman. I am the deathless self. I am not born. I do not undergo any changes. I do not die. No weapon can destroy me, neither do I destroy anything else. I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer and neither the reaper of the results of the karma. Why?

Because, I am perfect. I am whole. I am paripurna परिपूर्णा.

Perhaps, we can remember the sloka ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यत पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते॥ means, I am that infinite, this universe has come from that infinite and this universe is nothing but infinite. I am in this universe, therefore I am also infinite.

When I realise that, then the purpose of this evolutionary cycle comes to an end. Such a person is free from any type of action, either prescribed or non-prescribed. He is free from the effects of both worldly transactions, as well as spiritual transactions. Not only that he becomes one of the greatest blessings any world can have.

This is a beautiful concept. So, what is the goal of life? --> Goal of life is to become free.

How to attain that perfection? --> through the proper discharge of yagna.

Such a person, when he knows that he is the atman then idea of the world disappears and such a person alone is beyond the law of this wheel of karma.

This is a beautiful idea and Lord is expressing in the following verse:

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः |
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते || C3 V17||

yas tvātma-ratir eva syād ātma-trīptaśh cha mānavaḥ
ātmanyeva cha santuṣṭas tasya kāryam na vidyate

Meaning: That man who rejoices only in the self, who is perfectly content with the self, who is satisfied in the self alone, for him verily there is no more work, nothing more to be done, nothing left undone, he is God himself. This is the goal of all of us.

So, two points we need to understand here:

1. Goal of everyone's life, whether they believe in God or not, is to know who they are.
2. Vedanta crystal clearly tells us that we are the atman. This body-mind is given to us, not as an obstruction but as an aid. So that, this body-mind can be purified, can be refined, can be made like a proper instrument and with the help of this instrument, we get out of our ownership and our identity with body and mind.

Why do we need this body-mind?

Someone raised a doubt, that if we need to get rid of this identity with body-mind then why not, we get rid of this body-mind?

Why do we need this instrumentality of body-mind?

The answer is like, **pole vaulting**. When a person wants to go beyond the set line of height then he takes the help of the pole. He vaults high but, he doesn't carry the pole to the other side, he uses it just as an instrument to achieve his goal.

So also, it is impossible for us to get rid of this idea that I am the body-mind (*without the help of body-mind*), for that the body itself and the mind itself are the instruments but we have to make them the right and proper fit instruments.

Summary of C3/V17:

So, here is a person, who doesn't need to do anything and there are no instruments to do anything either. There is no un-fulfilled desire, without any desire, there is no action required, he is perfectly happy... not for a short time but for eternity. He is an infinitely happy person.

But, such a person, you may ask, is he a happy person or is he like a piece of stone. The Lord is telling that he gets supreme joy in his own self, he is completely content with his own-self and he is supremely satisfied with the self alone. For him, verily there is nothing more to be done.

How these self-realised souls see and interact with the world?

Naturally, we will ask, there are some people like Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and direct disciples, who have attained this self-knowledge even while living. So, do they not perceive this world? Do they not interact with other people? Yes!

But, their way of looking at the world is very different.

We identify our-selves with our body and mind. So, we have got no choice than to look upon the world as body and mind.

However, they look upon themselves as the 'Self'. Therefore, they are helpless and they look upon everything living or non-living as the manifestation of their own-self.

Analogy of reflections of 'Self' in the infinite number of mirrors:

But, let us not commit the mistake by thinking that they are looking at the infinite numbers of selves? No! They are only looking at 'One' and 'One' only but as if in front of them there are infinite number of mirrors and they are only looking at their own reflections through those numberless mirrors. Now,

We need to understand that every mirror is not exactly the same. Some mirrors are very clean, some are 50% clean, some are 10% clean, therefore this self realised soul, even though he knows, they are all reflections and therefore, he will not react, he will not fear, but he will watch the whole thing as if it is his reflection. (He will say) Oh' in this object my reflection is very dull, in this object I am able to perceive myself better, but, here is one object in whom there is perfect reflection and whatever he looks at is only the one unchanging atman. That idea is always there.

Then, the idea that they are all reflections, certainly none of us are frightened of our own reflections, if anybody is frightened then that is animal tendency and they are like animals, it is said that when a dog looks at its reflection in a mirror then it starts to trying to hide, fight, bark loudly and quarrel.

Recording time 29.00 minutes approx.

But here is a divinely enlightened person, he has no choice but to look upon every reflection as nothing but pure Atman. So he is very happy, he knows that he is not only the Atman, he knows that everything, not only living creatures but even non-living creatures are also pure Atman. That vision is far away from us – that is where Sri Ramakrishna comes to our aid and He says, “ So long as we are here, then how should we look upon this world? *Shiva jnane jiva seva*” – look upon a human being as God Himself manifesting through the 3 gunas.

Some people satva is more, in some *rajas* and in some *tamas*. In animals, the reflection is very poor.

But for a realised soul, there is no difference between a non-living thing and a dog, a cow, an elephant, an eater of a dog and a pure learned Brahmin. This beautiful verse is there :-

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि |
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः || 5.18|| Gita
vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śhuni chaiva śhva-pāke cha paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ

Equal vision – Premarpana samadarshinaha प्रेमार्पणा समदर्शिना

- Sri Ramakrishna looks upon everything through the eyes of Prema,
- Prema comes because of Jnana,
- Jnana means knowledge,
- Knowledge means the whole universe is nothing but pure Brahman.

That's why, everyday we sing :-

Jnan-anjana vimala-nayana vikshane moha-jai.

So, O Arjuna, such people's lives become a blessing to everybody. But he, who is self-mired, selfish, only thinks he is the body, not even mind, not even ideas – he tries to be very selfish. In the process, he tries to trample down upon everybody for his own happiness. Such a person, is the greatest curse to the whole world. Therefore, have this discriminative knowledge, convert your life, slowly, albeit surely, so that in the end, we also can attain that blessed Atman.

This is the goal, and such a person is beyond the 3 gunas, therefore he is beyond every desire, beyond any action. Such a person alone is fit, even if he sits, he is doing tremendous work.

Let me deal with that subject.

There is Sri Ramakrishna, and He doesn't need to do anything but He seems to be doing things. But really, is Sri Ramakrishna doing anything? No !

Who is doing? His body and mind are doing, but body and mind cannot work unless there is the enlivening, enlightening presence of the Self as a sakshi. So whoever is being talked with, dealt with, by people like Sri Ramakrishna, as an example, it is all done by the Divine Mother in the form of Prakriti.

So, if you ask Sri Ramakrishna, "Sir, thank you very much, you have helped me very much!"

His usual response would be, " I don't know anything sir, it is my Divine Mother who is manifesting like that", and that is called complete surrender to the Divine Mother. Also, even though they do not need action, in fact they *cannot* do any action, they *need* not do any action, but their very breath is for the blessings of the entire world.

Pranarpana jagata-tarana Krintana kali-dor

And such a person, if he seems to be performing any action, is he doing it for the benefit of himself? That's being explained beautifully in the next verse :-

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ 3.18॥

*naiva tasya kṛitenārtho nākṛiteneha kaśhchana
na chāsya sarva-bhūteṣhu kaśhchid artha-vyapāśhrayaḥ*

For Him, there is here, on this earth, no interest whatsoever in whatever is done or what is not done. He doesn't gain anything, he doesn't lose anything, because he is infinite. In infinity, there is nothing to gain, nothing to lose. He doesn't depend upon any being for any object.

Whereas, we are in that condition where we have to depend. Because we have to depend, we also have to be dependable. That is where the concept of converting our life into a *yagna*, that is useful for us.

So, the Lord is telling, "O Arjuna, that is your goal".

Arjuna, let us remember, is every spiritual aspirant, aspiring to improve his life. You have not attained to the right knowledge, that you are the Atman. But you are sincerely seeking, you are not attained to that all-pervading, therefore there is something you need to do. That is your bounden duty. This is expressed in the next verse :-

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर |
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः || 3.19||
tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samāchara
asakto hyācharan karma param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ

"Therefore, O Arjuna, always perform your duties, whatever you need to do without any attachment. For, by performing actions, alone without attachment, man attains the Supreme".

What is the Supreme?

To know that I am the Atman, to know that the whole universe is nothing but the Atman. Besides this Atman or Brahman, there is no other reality.

And when a person has that knowledge :-

- if he closes his eyes, that is Brahman, that is God;
- if he opens his eyes, that is also God;
- God, without activity and God with name and form, for the sake of activity.

He sees nothing but Brahman everywhere, that is the supreme goal.

"You have not attained, but you need to set it as your goal and you have to perform your duties." How ? Without any attachment.

A question comes here : "if I do not have any attachment, will I have the motive?"

Yes! What is the motive? The motive is not the immediate result of the action, but to progress towards that supreme divine knowledge, to manifest that inherent divinity which **Swami Vivekananda** has put so beautifully to us :

"The goal is to manifest the divinity within by controlling nature, both external and internal. This control of the nature, external and internal, can be done through the 4

pathways of Karmayoga, Bhaktiyoga, Rajayoga and Jnanayoga – by one yoga, by many yogas or by all of them combined judiciously together to become Free. That is the whole of religion."

Now, let us reflect – we are creatures of food. Food comes from rain, rain comes from yagna, yagna is described in the vedas, vedas come from God and God is pervading the whole universe. That is where we have stopped.

Attainment of Supreme Divinity by Karma-Yoga

Now – a new concept. Naturally the question comes, "O Krishna, O Lord, you are advising me to convert my life into a yagna". Yagna means discharging our duties, looking upon the whole universe as a manifestation of God – everybody as a Siva, as Sri Ramakrishna puts it.

"Can I have some examples where people have really followed Karmayoga and then attained to this state of supreme divinity?"

This is a natural question to arise for 2 reasons :-

1. We have been brainwashed into thinking that Karma is only a preliminary step – it doesn't take us to the ultimate goal.
2. The second reason is, Karma is limited. Therefore the result of Karma is also limited.

Therefore a limited result, obtained through a limited action, cannot take us to the Divine, which is unlimited. So the Lord is answering with not just one, but with plenty of examples, here is one in the 20th verse :-

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः |
लोकसंग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि || 3.20||

*karmaṇaiva hi sansiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ
loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampaśhyaṅ kartum arhasi*

"O Arjuna, there are many people, but I am only giving you one example. *Janakādayaḥ* जनकादयः, ādayaḥ means etc etc etc. Janaka, and many others, attained perfection verily by practicing Karmayoga. Therefore you can also follow – since they attained perfection, you can also attain perfection".

Here is a beautiful scientific law which Swami Vivekananda has espoused – what is science? If one man had done an experiment, and he had attained certain very desirable results, then any person, who follows the same steps must obtain the same result. If anybody claims that only *I* can get that result, or if you follow all the steps and you cannot get the same result, then that is not science.

The Lord is telling, if Janaka had attained, then forget about many others. If one person had attained perfection following the steps of Karmayoga, then anybody who

follows such a person's footsteps can also attain to the same result – which is called perfection, manifestation of the divinity within.

So, *karmaṇaiva hi sansiddhim*, कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिम् through practising Karmayoga, people like Janaka etc etc, many others have attained – but this is a very old example, but about more recent examples? Sri Ramakrishna was an example, Swami Vivekananda was an example, Holy Mother is a living example, all the direct disciples. Even today, hundreds, thousands of people, inspired by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda are rendering service, even going through many, many hardships. If you open your eyes, you can see hundreds of such people.

But how did they do it? Let me take an example from Sri Ramakrishna's life.

He started his spiritual life, so to speak, through external ritualistic worship. Day by day, he was progressing towards that manifestation of the divinity. That means He was able to see He was divine, He was able to see that the image in front of him was divine, but He did not stop there. One day, as we all know, a cat entered into the shrine room and Sri Ramakrishna looked at it. What did he see?

“O Mother, today you desired to receive my worship in this particular form! Here Mother, you please accept it”.

And we also know, He did not feed the cat, which was a form of the Divine Mother as a cat. A day came, when He looked upon Himself as the Divine Mother. Then He could say with so called impunity, through our eyes, “O Mother! You want Me to eat first, and then You will eat? Here, I am eating.”

And when Sri Ramakrishna says I am eating, He doesn't mean like us, we are eating. He meant the Divine Mother who is within His body and mind, and who is moving, not only His body and mind, but the bodies and minds and every object in this whole cosmos – the sun, the stars, the galaxies. Everything is moved by Shakti, what is called energy, what Vedanta calls and what Sri Ramakrishna calls Brahman and Brahmashakti.

And that Divine Mother, he started seeing everywhere. As we know, one day He went out to collect flowers, immediately He saw, every plant is already worshipping the *virat*, the universal aspect of the Divine.

So he said, “Where is the need for me to pluck the flowers and bring them inside, and again offer them? Already the trees are offering their divine worship”.

Here is a wonderful truth – not only the rivers, not only the trees, not only the mountains, not only the forests, not only all animals, even we in fact, are only worshipping the inner divinity, albeit ignorantly.

Let me explain it very simply : when I am eating food, my hands are gathering the food, my hands are putting into the mouth, my mouth is chewing and sending it down, my stomach digests it and all this for whose sake? It is for the *antharatma*, inner dweller

who is within each one of us. But we bring our egotism and say, “It is me who is doing, it is me who is eating, it is me who is enjoying – no!”

It is the Lord, in the form of Prakriti or nature, manifested in the form of our bodies and minds, and including in the form of our so-called ignorant I, it is He who is doing from beginning to end, this beautiful action. When we understand this truth, we become free and we become beautiful instruments in the hands of God. And that is how we have to convert our life into an act of divine worship by converting your life into a yagna or sacrifice, means converting our life as manifestation of the inherent divinity already within us.

It is going on but we have to acknowledge it – that is the goal of our life.

Then, the second part of the verse also tells, “ O Arjuna, maybe you have reached the goal, but don’t stop the actions, because as you are looking for examples like Janaka, many people are also looking to your example.”

You manifest the divinity and how do you do that? People look at some characteristics in you – they find you are also living life like others :-

- you are also eating like others,
- you are also living like others, you are also sleeping like others.
- but you are always happy and you don’t know what is called enmity or hatred.
- You love everybody as your own self.
- You do not make the slightest distinction between friends or enemies or living or non-living objects,
- You look upon everything with the greatest love that is possible to express by any human being, and
- You are ready to offer, to lay down your life as a *Bali*, as a sacrifice, even for the sake of the lowest animal.

When you see these 4 characteristics in a person :-

1. Always very happy, joyful.
2. Full of love – looking upon the whole world including oneself with love.
3. Treating everybody with equanimity, with the same sight – *Samadarishini*, and
4. The same spirit of self-sacrifice towards anybody.

When you find such a characteristic in anybody, know that He is a perfect person, He has reached perfection – a realised soul.

So even if you happen to be perfect, people see the same characteristics within you and then all that they want is the exactly the same thing. “If this man has attained the same goal that I am striving to attain”, they become inspired.

The Lord says :

loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampāśhyan लोकसंग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्

[looking at the welfare of the world, even from that point of view] :-

Karma kartum arhasi

[you should not give up the activities].

What Sri Ramakrishna calls, *Shiva Jnane Jiva Seva*, or *Karmaniye Karma* etc, that you will have to spend your life in this way so long as your *pranavayu*, your life air remains within you, so long as you are alive.

There is a wonderful fact, we gain knowledge, not by reading books, but by looking at the examples of other people. In *Taittiriyaupanishad*, we get this beautiful idea :-

<i>satyam vada</i>	Speak the truth
<i>dharmam chara</i>	Live a life of righteousness
<i>matridevo bhava</i>	Worship your mother as God
<i>pitridevo bhava</i>	Worship your father as God
<i>acharyadevo bhava</i>	Worship your teacher as God
<i>atithidevo bhava</i>	Worship everything else, everybody else as God

This is not merely looking upon, you are acting and reacting, seeing the divinity in them.

Start with the mother, expand it with father, increase it with the teacher, and then expand it and apply it to everybody else.

If a person can look upon everything as divinity in this progressive manner, then he will have to look upon himself also as divine, “ I am the Divine, I am not the body-mind, but I am having a body-mind etc”, and that is a life of yagna or sanctification. Now if other people look at you, they feel like imitating you and that is what the Lord is leading us to in the next verse :-

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ 3.21॥
*yad yad ācharati śhreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janah
sa yat pramaṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

[Whatever a great man does, that other men also imitate; whatever he sets up as the standard, that, the people in the world or even aspirants follow.]

That is what the Lord is trying to tell us now. We are all people, we have a tendency, it is called mimicry. Mimicry is not making fun of other people – but we are like monkeys, we are like parrots, whatever we hear, we would like to repeat; whatever we see, we would like to imitate. There is a beautiful book called *The Imitation of Christ*, I'm sure all of you are aware. Christ is a role model, Sri Ramakrishna is a role model.

Holy Mother - Role model

Holy Mother is a role model especially for 2 groups of people – for those in power and for all womankind. Every lady, should look upon everybody, including their husbands, (only in one respect are they their husbands), in every respect they are their children. Holy Mother looked upon Sri Ramakrishna, not as a husband but as someone divine, but also as her child. She used to feed him like a loving mother feeding a sick child. So that is why Sri Ramakrishna has left the divine motherhood ideal in front of us – but that is another topic!

What we are here trying to decide is, if one person lives a proper life as outlined and instructed in the scriptures, then we have a role model to imitate. In fact, we are all imitators. If our leaders are wicked people, then we try to imitate them; so many people as we know, they imitate cinema stars, sportsmen, rock stars even the style of their hair etc, their horrible appearances. They have their unimaginably abhorrent behaviour – drunkards, drug addicts, suicides, quarrelsome people, unsteady people. Naturally if we imitate them, we also reap the same result.

But what the Lord is telling, not only for your own good, but to set an example and not thinking I am going to set an example, the Lord will make you an example and for that purpose also, you should continue to do the same. I will stop this talk with one beautiful example and we will explore these ideas in our next class.

Shri Ramakrishna - Role model

Sri Ramakrishna had perfected himself in all sadhanas – he had obtained the ultimate advaitic goal by entering into *nirvikalpa* samadhi. Was there any need for him to go to the temple, leave the shoes outside, very reverentially like an ordinary person, climb up to the temple and then prostrate himself, fan the Divine Mother, sing to Her beautiful hymns, and receive her prasada with the greatest reverence? In every way, like an ordinary aspirant – was there any need? There was no need!

So somebody asked him – “Sir, why do you need to do all this?”

Egoless as Sri Ramakrishna was, he replied :-

“ First of all, I am not doing, Divine Mother is making me do that. Secondly, if I do one thing 100%, there is a slight chance that others might do one hundredth of it”, of course he said 1/16th of it!

This is one example. Second example I can give you is that when he used to talk to the devotees, he used to clear all their doubts. But when asked who was clearing their doubts, he said :-

“I’m a child. I only know how to eat and drink. There is the Divine Mother who is removing your doubts, who is inspiring you and I also enjoy.”

There are wonderful scenes where He is scolding the Divine Mother, “I want to enjoy the singing, I want to converse about You to the devotees and You are standing as an obstruction – get in Heaven out of here!”

Why was He doing this – because He was a role model for all of us. We need such role models. If we are elders, we need to be role models to our juniors, if we are not, then we are *drohis*, not only *adhyatmika drohis*, we are also abusing or corrupt people because other people are more likely to imitate our bad actions.

So even for the sake of the ideal, parents, teachers, leaders, religious leaders, we all need to be, as far as possible, (I’m not saying we need to be perfect!), to observe certain practices even if we do not need them. This is a beautiful idea, how the whole world, is either improving or going in some ways bad, all because we have developed a tendency to take role models of people. They may on side be very good and very knowledgeable, and on the other side very abominable.

We will expand on this topic in our next class in more detail.

To be cont'd,

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमदर्नम् । देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swamiji bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

With kind regards

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