

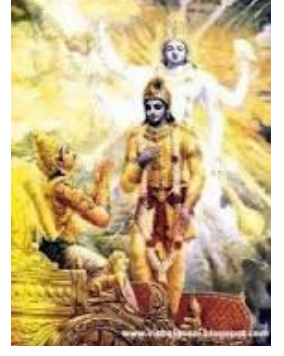
Swami Dayatmananda on Bhagavad Gita Class 63 date 03/8/19

(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 II 5



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

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 ॥

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

Recollection of Gita Class 62:-

- **Chapter 4 / Verse 1 - Shri Krishna's statement:** In our last class, we discussed about the essence of the fourth chapter. We have come to the point where, when the Lord Krishna declared that "I have taught this ancient truth to Surya / the Sun God many thousands of years back.
- **Chapter 4 / Verse 4 Arjuna's question:** Naturally after hearing this, Arjuna like any one of us had the doubt that "You are my contemporary then how could you have taught it?"
- **Chapter 4 / Verse 5 The Lord's reply:** Then in reply The Lord said "I have been born many numbers of times and you too have been born many number of times."
- Here is the secret. Shri Krishna and Arjuna were not like ordinary human beings. (Their births were very special.)
- **Karma-Janmi:** When human beings like us are born then we are born because of our past *karmas*. Hindus are firm believers in past lives. This point, I will come back to very soon to discuss this in a little more detail. I was also born, you were also born, every human being is also born but there is a subtle difference. All human beings are born because of their past life's *karmas* - the results of what we did in our past life.
- **Karan-Janma:** However, the Lord incarnates not because of any past life. He neither has a past life nor a future life. But, He is born out of His compassion, He wants to help humanity like us. That is the reason, we call this in Sanskrit **Karan-Janma** means born because of fulfilment of a certain mission in life.
- **The Lord is all-knowing:** Now, the Lord had said "Oh Arjuna, I remember all My past lives." - How many times? - The Lord was born for innumerable life times, not 1 or 10 or 100 or 1million but since creation, since the eons together in so many types of creations. How many hundreds of times, He was born as an incarnation.

- **God's Eternal Companions:** Whenever God incarnates, He also brings someone to accomplish certain particular tasks. They are called '**His Eternal Companions**'. Shri Ramakrishna used to call them *Ishwarkoti or Nityamukta*. They are ever free but at the same time they also come along with *the Avatara*.
- We are also, in a way of speaking, *an Avatara*. So, The Lord is telling us "It is not only Me but you have been born many times. I remember them all but you may not remember them."

Let us also discuss how this really applies in our day-to-day life.

Example from Shri Ramakrishna's life:

We can take the example of Shri Ramakrishna's life.

All the devotees of Shri Ramakrishna know that categorically Shri Ramakrishna declared that "**He who was born as Rama; He who was born as Krishna, is again incarnated in this life as Ramakrishna.**"

But when Swami Vivekananda came and along with him came - Swami Brahmananda, Swami Premananda, Swami Niranjananda, Swami Yogananda and Purnachandra Ghosh then Shri Ramakrishna had pointedly declared that six of my *Nityamuktas* have come along in this life.

Now, when we examine the lives of these six people then we find that they do not seem to recollect that they have also come in the past. We get only two instances: one of Swami Brahmananda and another one of Swami Vivekananda. However, that is also much later on, just before their passing away.

Actually, they (Swami Vivekananda & Swami Brahmananda) came to know about their past lives just before their passing away - they were also born to assist an incarnation of God. That is why as soon as they came to know 'who they are' - they refused to be on this Earth. That is what exactly had happened.

Maybe that is exactly what happened with Arjuna. We can only guess that as soon as Arjuna came to know 'who he is' – he probably gave up his life. However, we can only guess about Arjuna applying other people's examples.

Recommended books to understand Hinduism:

Now, before we go any further into the Gita, we should remember that Hinduism stands on four pillars. I have heard many people saying that Hinduism is a very complex and very confusing religion. Truly speaking anyone, who has read:

'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda' or anybody who had read
'The Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna' and also
'The Bhagavat Gita'

would not have any doubt about the essential points of Hinduism.

If still, in spite of these evidences, anyone declares that Hinduism is a very complex subject to understand then we can only remind him to study 'The Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna', 'The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda' and if possible 'Bhagavat Gita' as well.

Four Pillars of Hinduism

Hinduism as I have mentioned just now, stands on four pillars.

The first pillar of Hinduism is called 'Brahman'.

- There is only one reality, one truth, *ekam sat*.
- Although, God is called by many names but the truth can only be one and, 'It is One'. One name of this ultimate truth or reality is **Brahman**.
- Even speaking from a rational point of view, we say that "God created this world".
- **How many Gods could there be?**
Could there be two or more Gods? - Rationally, this is impossible because **God is eternal; God is infinite and God is one without a second.**
- If we can understand a little bit more about these three terms.

He who is infinite - there could be nothing besides that infinite.

He who is one - there cannot be any second and,

He who is eternal - is changeless.

- If we understand these three characteristics then there can be really speaking, nothing else besides God. The simple way to understand this is that besides the infinite there cannot be anything else - much less any finite thing.

Now, the curious thing is if this God is one and God has this wonderful nature - He is eternal; He is infinite and He is changeless.

If all this is true then even creation can be understood by applying the law of nature - What is this law?

- I. **First law is - The effect must be similar to the cause.** If this world is the effect as we claim that God had created this world and since there is nothing besides God. This means, God Himself must have been manifesting as this world.
- II. **Second law is if something has come out of something else then both the cause and the effect must also undergo a change.** As we know, the infinite cannot undergo a change. Therefore, this creation does not mean that producing something second or different. But, creation really means that the transformation or appearance (of God as creation) just like a rope appears to be a snake under semi-darkness or inadequate light but there is actually no snake and therefore, no actual production of a second thing has happened. This is a difficult concept.

Now, we are discussing the four pillars of Hinduism. The first pillar is Brahman; Brahman is the Supreme Reality; Brahman is the only reality; Brahman is infinite, eternal and unchanging - One reality.

If that is true then based upon that understanding - then what ever else, what we call the world and all the things in this world, living or non-living - cannot but be the same Brahman. There cannot be any doubt about it.

Power of Maya:-

We are unable to grasp this fact that we are also none other than Brahman because of the power of Maya.

This was the truth which Swami Vivekananda was declaring by stating that '**Each soul is potentially divine**' and,

Potentiality does not mean that it is something which grows like a plant. But, potentiality really means that the full truth is there but because our eyes are covered, we see little by little only.

We only perceive that eternally manifested full truth in its full glory by slowly removing these coverings.

Actually, the problem is not in Atman or in Brahman but, the problem is in the limitation of our mind. Really speaking, spiritual practice means completely getting rid of the mind.

That (completely getting rid of the mind) also happens to be the best definition of yoga.

योग:चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः *Yogah chit Vryti niridaha* (पतञ्जलि योगसूत्र Patanjali-Yogasutra):

चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः *chit Vryti niridaha* means if we completely remove the obstacle called the mind then there is nothing to separate me and God. It is only the mind which creates the problem.

This mind which makes us think that Brahman has become finite. Mind does not and cannot make infinity as finite but it makes us think that Brahman has become finite.

When this mind is totally removed with the help of spiritual practices then there is nothing which can stand up as an obstacle or as a covering. Then only, the spiritual aspirant realises that there is no 'I and Brahman' or Brahman and me or 'God and me' but whatever is, is only One and that One is called God / Brahman.

So the first pillar of Hinduism is - there is only '**One Supreme Reality called Brahman**'.

The Second pillar is Sakshatkara साक्षात्कारा or Direct Realisation:-

- We are unable to understand this truth that everything is Brahman only and infinite only.
- This non-understanding stems from the ignorance called *Avidhaya* or *Maya*.

- We have to do spiritual practice, not to obtain Brahman but try to remove this wrong notion from our mind.
- All the wrong notions disappear when we are able to completely remove this mind then we will know that besides 'Me' there is no other truth.
- So, the second pillar is - by getting rid of *Maya*, by destroying *Maya*, by removing *Maya*, we directly understand that 'I am Brahman'. This is also called in short - *Sakshatkara* साक्षात्कारा or Direct realisation that 'I am Brahman'.

Third pillar of Hinduism is the "*Ishta-Devata-Siddhanta* / Law of Chosen deity"

- Hinduism always emphasises and as Shri Ramakrishna had also emphasised many time - '*jato mat tato path*' means as many faiths so many paths; as many believes so many paths.
- Infinite are the beliefs and infinite are the paths to that one infinite reality.
- God is infinite. This does not means that God is many things. It means that God is one eternal and is unchanging reality.
- So, the law of *Ishta-Devata* means - we have a right to pray to God, to love God, to worship God, to serve God, with any type of form, any type of name, any type of quality that we think is helpful to us to move forward.
- Therefore, no sect, no religion, none should bind us to think of God in the form that we wish to think about.
- This incidentally, is the greatest contribution of Hinduism. The whole inter-faith dialogue is based upon this simple simple truth that everyone of us is God's child.
- Wherever we are; whatever language we speak; however we conceive God, it is a limitation of the mind.
- We call upon God by different names; we worship God in different forms; we serve God in various ways but all of us are moving along only towards Him through ups and downs, through happiness and un-happiness etc.
- This is the third pillar of Hinduism - where there is no sectarianism, no fanaticism, no bigotry. Everyone must be free to approach God according to his or her own understanding. There is no need to convert anybody; there is no superiority or inferiority in religions; all are inevitably evolving towards God and moving forward towards God. This is the third pillar of Hinduism.

The fourth pillar is the '*Law of Karma*'.

- Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs firmly believe that we had countless births and we are going to have many more births in the future. until we know the truth of our own real nature, this journey called rebirths will go on
- Every rebirth is a fresh opportunity to progress further in every field of life.

- Incidentally, the 'Law of Karma' also reinforces the idea that each one of us, whether we believe it or not; we proclaim it or not, we had many births.
- This present birth is the result of our past births and therefore, our future lies in our hands.
- We will have and we can have any number of future births. The purpose of every birth is not to bind us but to give us a fresh opportunity.

Purpose of Divine Incarnation:

As I mentioned earlier, the third pillar of Hinduism is 'The Law of the Chosen Deity / *Ishta-Devata-Siddhanta*' and part of this siddhanta or law is that infinite Lord appear to have taken a form according to the necessity of the times.

The Divine Lord, who is ever keeping a watch on this whole world, on his creation out of infinite love for His children (for Himself in the form of His children) - The Divine Lord takes up a special body; He incarnates as a human being and reminds us about :-

- 1) What is the truth.
- 2) What should be the goal of life and
- 3) What are the ways to attain the goal of life.

This is called as ***Tatwa, Purushartha and Heeta.***

Essence of the Fourth Chapter:

I have been taking time to expound on these truths. These wonderful truths have been categorically reinforced in the fourth chapter. That:

1. God incarnates.
2. We have many births.
3. The goal of life is to know 'who we really are' and until we reach that goal we will be given any number of opportunities.
4. There is nobody who is a born sinner.
5. Everybody is born ignorantly, endowed with ignorance.
6. That ignorance is also a great stimulator, inspirer and guide for us to move forward. Ignorance in its wake always brings dukha / suffering and no one likes suffering.
7. Therefore, Maya acts as a great stimulus and expecting from us a wonderful response. So that we can take advantage of it and move forward.

Recollection of The Lord's reply and Arjuna's question:-

Reply of Lord Shri Krishna to Arjuna:-

- In reply to Arjuna's question, The Lord is telling us that "I have been born many times. You were also born many times. You do not remember them but I remember them."
- What is sequel of this one? What is the corollary of this one?
- Why I was born? -I was born to teach that ancient truth.
- What is that truth?
- There is only one reality call Brahman. You are that Brahman but you have forgotten. So you are suffering and you want to get out of suffering.
- No other type of knowledge can free you from that suffering accepting this one truth that 'I am the divine; I am the infinite; I am the eternal; I have no birth or death and I am a person but when I will know 'who I am' then I will be eternally free - Moksha.
- That is why, Hindu scriptures called Vedas posit four goals called ***dharma, artha, kama and moksha***, really speaking there is only one goal (moksha) and other three are aid to achieve that goal. We will have opportunity to expound these in our future classes.

Arjuna's question:

Arjuna says "You are the Divine Lord then how it is possible for you to be born?"

- Let us be clear in this, really God cannot be born, infinite cannot become finite.
- As I mentioned in my last class and again emphasising - it is not possible for human beings also to be born.
- (It seems.) As if born; as if we are undergoing changes; as though we are ignorant; as though we practice spiritual discipline; as though we progress in life; as though we attain liberation.
- This is a hard truth to swallow but every upanishad with loud voice proclaims this truth.
- That is what **Swami Vivekananda** has also proclaimed, sowing the seeds of this truth in the hearts of thousands of people at 'The Parliament of Religions'. How did he do it? He declared this truth in one of his talks.

शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आ ये धामानि दिव्यानि तस्थुः॥ [Shwetashvataro upanishad 2/5]

śṛṇvantu viśve amṛtasya putrā ā ye dhāmāni divyāni tasthuḥ ||

You are the children of immortal bliss; you are not sinners. It is a blasphemy to call a man, a sinful person. The truth is, we are all children of divinity. I am sure that this great truth is slowly taking its roots and making people conscious of their glorious true nature.

Important point:

So here, The Lord is telling something most wonderful and the point which I want to emphasise is - whatever He is talking about Himself also applies to all of us.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 4, Verse 6

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्भवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ 6॥

ajo 'pi sannavyayātmā bhūtānām īśhvaro 'pi san
prakṛitiṁ svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmyātma-māyayā

Meaning: Though I am unborn and I am of imperishable nature. And though I am The Lord of all beings, yet by ruling over my own nature, I take birth by taking hold of my own Maya.

Commentary: This is a one of the most wonderful truths, not only as I said applicable to The Lord but it is applicable to us also. If we are really born then we can never be attaining liberation. Because, by definition, liberation or moksha means that it is an Eternal state.

It is ridiculous to say that 'The Eternal is a long series of temporary changes'.

- If I am not free and if I am not infinite.
- If I am finite but I become infinite in course of time then the reverse can also happen.
- Now, if I become infinite then again there is a possibility that I can also become finite.
- Because, originally if I am infinite and somehow become finite then again and again I can become the same finite even after liberation that means that is no liberation at all. That is the greatest illusion anyone can cherish.

How do we understand - what is Maya?

We can't understand Maya. We can only try to have a go at understanding by thinking and by positing an analogy of dream.

Analogy of dream:

Suppose, someone goes to bed and has a wonderful dream or a nightmarish dream.

What ever happens in a dream - happy dream or unhappy dream. As long as the person is going through that experience of dream, it all seems as if it is 100% real.

We all know this because we all have dreams everyday - may be just ordinary dreams, still a dream is a dream.

But, as soon as we wake up:-

- What is the first thing we realise? First thing which we realise is that I have not gone anywhere; I was sleeping very peacefully in my own home and on my own bed.
- Somehow, this thought (in the form of this dream), made me think that I went somewhere. I had gone through all sorts of ups and downs in my dream and also gone through happy and unhappy experiences.
- But as soon as I wake up, I know, it was all unreal, only my imagination and nothing was an absolute truth.
- One more point, we have to remember here is - the waker is one but when he goes to sleep then he creates seemingly infinite world of dreams, where everything seems to be true. But,
- As soon as his dream comes to an end then again, he realises that I am the only one; I am the creator; I am the sustainer and I am also the destroyer of my own dream. This is the only way to understand.

Even from a **dualistic point of view** and most dualists posit that:

- this creation is real;
- our birth is real;
- our spiritual struggle is also real and
- our attainment of moksha / mukti / liberation by the grace of God is also real.

These words also reveal, that when we go nearer to God, we are never again going to be going through these ups and downs. Even a dualist, has a wonderful concept of God :-

- God has no birth
- God has no change
- God has no death
- God is never unhappy
- He is everywhere
- He is infinite
- He is All-knowing

And this world is his *maya* or *leela*.

Just now, I am reminded, India is full of temples, and one of the greatest temples is called Sri Ranganatha temple – it is in South India. The name of the Lord there is called Ranganatha.

Ranga means the stage for a drama or cinema, **natha** means the director :-

- He is the script writer
- He is the player(s) in the drama
- He is the stage on which the drama is enacted
- He is the audience
- He delivers the applause
- He is the critic

- He runs the whole show

This means what? He is playing with Himself; He is dreaming Himself; He is praising Himself; He is also criticising Himself.

By the way, when somebody comes and slaps you in your dream, upon waking up, who slapped whom? If you ask that question, you have to hang your head down sheepishly and say, "I slapped myself!"

That is the truth, even from a dualistic point of view.

So, somehow, we do not understand, that somehow taking hold of our own power of wrong imagination, which is called *maya*, we come to believe we are taking birth, Hindus mean many births, thank God! We grow up, we suffer, we enjoy but ***all*** the time, we are going only towards the state of awakening, waking up from this world of dreams, which is called *maya*.

We are waking up the world of reality, and that reality is, " I am the only one that exists, I am Sat, I am Chit and I am Ananda!"

So the Lord is telling, I am Unborn, it is impossible for Me to be born. To be born means to be limited, to be finite. For the Infinite, even if it wants, it is impossible for it to become finite.

Everything in this world is perishable, it comes into being, stays for some time like a bubble, and goes back into its constituent element, so everything in this world is perishable.

The Imperishable can never become perishable, though, I am the Lord of all Beings, just as we are the Lord of all beings in our dream state.

I rule the dream world, as I am the creator of the dream world. I run it according to my wish. Even if somebody is murdering me, it is also in accordance with my wish. Really I am not murdering myself, because as soon as somebody tries to murder me, I wake up and I clap to myself and say, " What a wonderful dream you created! Sometimes you had also better create some happy dreams!"

So, ruling over my own nature, I take birth by my own *maya*.

I remind you once more, this is the truth, not only about an incarnation, but about all of us.

We are also incarnations!

I hope you remember, a beautiful movie had come, its name is Avatar. It is based upon this great vedantic truth, everybody has his own immortal double. In that movie, everybody's double is peaceful, very loving, very sweet, they want to live life in a dharmic, righteous way. But their other double, which is called Saturn, or evil, tries to fight with them and destroy, but they can never succeed because ***illusions can never destroy reality***.

It is the reality that always destroys the illusion.

So, even in the Puranas, take for example, the fight between the Kauravas and the Pandavas in the Mahabharata, is a symbolism of the eternal fight going on between the right and wrong impulses.

This beautiful theme, has been very elaborately expounded, in the 16th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, called **Daivāsura Sampad Vibhāga Yoga** – the chapter entitled as ‘The treasure of the Divine and the evil people’.

Life is a battle between good and evil thoughts and ultimately, evil thoughts cannot rule us, though they seem to be doing so for a short time.

Ultimately, **Satyameva Jayate** [सत्यमेव जयते] : Truth Alone Triumphs.

Then the Lord is reinforcing, the 3rd pillar of Hinduisim, that we can think of God in many ways, and every avatara, in the course of time, becomes an object of contemplation and meditation. For example, the devotees of Rama, adore Rama; the devotees of Krishna, adore Krishna.

Ultimately they become one with Rama and Krishna – and when they become one with their own chosen deity, it is not that Rama is a special personality, it is a doorway to the Infinite. Rama is a doorway to Infinity, so also Krishna, so also Buddha, so also Jesus Christ.

As Buddhists also say, ‘Every soul is a potential Buddha’. So we can also say, ‘Every soul is a potential Christ’, if we follow their footsteps. Where they reach, we also are sure to reach that place.

How does the Lord incarnate?

When does he incarnate?

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 4, Verse 7

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ 4.7॥

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmyaham*

[Whenever there is a decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and a rise of unrighteousness, then I manifest myself].

Here is a beautiful truth – how do we know if we are living in a proper way of life or not?

This is a question, that all of us must put to ourselves. The answer is really very simple, not at all complicated :-

- If we are not leading a righteous life, suffering will be inevitable and instantaneous!

I will give a simple analogy :-

- Every day we all walk so many miles, or we breathe, we eat.

- If we walk in a lopsided way, in an unbalanced way, the very first step we take will be very painful. Then nature takes over and tries to bring balance.
- **What is balance? We have to walk in the proper way.**

Similarly, when we eat something wrong, our stomach informs us that it is wrong food, not suitable. Either at that time or later, we have to correct ourselves. So, whatever we do, that which promotes peace, serenity, happiness – that is called righteous life. Whatever is its opposite, that is unrighteous life. This is an example, in our ordinary matters.

Every human being, according to Hinduism, according to every “ism”, consists of three faculties :-

- Physical
- Mental and,
- Spiritual.

All of us are aware of the mental and physical planes – psycho-somatic complex – body-mind complex (BMC). But we are not really consciously aware that we have a spiritual nature, so we are liable to neglect it many times.

It is like exercising when we only use a few limbs – the result will be lopsided development. So also, if we do not simultaneously evolve physically, mentally, morally and spiritually, we won't develop properly.

How do we know this?

Immediately, instantaneously, there follows dissatisfaction, suffering, restlessness and unhappiness. As soon as we understand, we become aware, we think back, why am I suffering? Why am I unhappy?

We reflect :-

- ⇒ this is a wonderful life,
- ⇒ to be born as a human being is a great privilege,
- ⇒ amongst billions and billions and billions of creatures we have been given this most marvellous opportunity,
- ⇒ am I doing something to avail this opportunity?

The moment we take note of it, instantaneously the result will be that we discover, that we are not living in accordance to our own dictates of the conscience. The scriptures also make it clear, what is a righteous life, what should be done, how it should be done, and what we should do about it.

When, a large segment of humanity fails to take notice, is going in the wrong way - there is only one wrong way, and that is going away from God.

Going away from God means :-

- ⇒ going away from **Sat**, or goodness or purity,
- ⇒ going away from **Chit**, means going towards ignorance and not knowledge, and
- ⇒ going away from **Ananda**, going towards more suffering.

When we take note of these, we should take immediate steps to turn our back and resume our progress or evolution towards our Divine Lord. That is where lies the majority of our goal, I would say the only goal of life – to be what we really are.

This is the teaching of all the Upanishads etc.

So the Lord says, 'When a large segment of humanity forgets the Truth, the goal of life, and the ways to attain it', for there are many ways, the Lord, out of compassion, He assumes a human body, that is called an **avatara**.

So through this verse, the Lord is reinforcing the Hindu idea that God incarnates as many times as necessary, whenever necessary, wherever necessary, in an appropriate form, and an incarnation stands for the highest ideal of humanity for that particular age. This is because though Truth is One, changing circumstances need a special, practical application of the same Truth appropriate for the circumstances at that time.

That's where Revered Ranganathaji Maharaj books focus on "Eternal Values for a Changing Society". Values are eternal, they don't change, but society changes. Therefore the Truth must be kept ablaze and in front of everybody, but the means have to be kept appropriate according to the changed circumstances.

That is what is called **Dharma Sthapana**.

Now, the next verse tells us, what is the purpose of an incarnation of God.

So, I embody myself, but for what purpose? Here is the reply :-

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 4, Verse 8

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ 4.8॥

*paritrāṇāya sādūnām vināśhāya cha duṣhkṛitām
dharma-sansthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

[For the protection of the Good, for the destruction of the Wicked, and for the establishment of Righteousness, I am born in every age].

This is a most wonderful verse, outlining the goal, the mission, the purpose of an incarnation of God, wherever He may be born. This applies equally to Buddhists, to Christians, to Muslims and of course to Hindus as well, for the protection of the good.

1. The Lord wants to protect good people, encourage them, bless them, inspire them, remove their obstacles – that's one purpose. Who are the good people? Not 'goody-goody' people, but those that are sincerely striving to further their evolution – that means going towards God.
2. The next purpose is **विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्** [*vināśhāya cha duṣhkṛitām*] – for the subduing of the wicked. Here, destruction means, we have to understand, that even God cannot destroy anybody, as we are really the Pure Atman. So, soul is nothing

but another name for God. In other words, God can never destroy Himself. No-one can destroy himself. The Indestructible, The Imperishable, can never be destroyed.

And what does this mean?

If you are travelling in a car, and the car is destroyed without any hope of recovery, what do you do? You buy, or rent or ride in a different car. This body and mind are nothing but vehicles, instruments for only one purpose, which is to reach God.

Therefore, the Lord is telling, everybody, even wicked people, they cannot be destroyed, but they can be corrected.

So what does the Lord do? If possible, He will change their character – through suffering, through blessings, through advice, through encouragement. If it is not possible, He will destroy that particular instrument and give him a new instrument so that he can move forward in life. This is the second purpose.

Who are the wicked people? Those who seem to be going away from God.

It's a beautiful thought – we all start our journey in God, journey or travel in God and ultimately end up in God. There is no way we can go out of God. So, some people seem to be ignorant, and the Lord's incarnation is to be great to them, because they are none other than His own Self.

So the second purpose is to make evil people turn back and move forward.

3. The 3rd purpose is धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय [dharma-sansthāpanārthāya] – “for the establishment of Dharma”.

Dharma means good conduct in life, which makes us move towards God. Swami Vivekananda has given a most wonderful definition of what is Dharma and what is Adharma :-

- Dharma is that way of life which takes us towards God,
- Adharma is that way of life which increases the distance between me and God.

So the Lord once again comes – but what does He actually do?

In the past, I have mentioned what happens when God incarnates Himself (4 key signs) :-

1.	His name becomes a Maha Mantra [nama]	This enables people to move towards God very fast. Why? The rationale of this is - whenever we recollect somebody's name, we also recollect the whole person. So whenever we remember the name of God, we also recall all the details of the incarnation, and so we are reminded once more of our goal in life, of the Highest Truth, how to make progress, what paths are suitable for us and move forward towards the rediscovery of our own true nature.
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2.	<p>His body or form becomes an object of meditation</p> <p>[roopa]</p>	<p>God may be incarnating in any particular form - as a Hindu, an Israelite, a Mohammedan, a Buddhist - it doesn't matter. But His very human body is unlike any other body. Of course, if you cut up his body and check his blood etc, it will seem normal in a laboratory. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that an incarnation's body is pure sattwa, 99% sattwa, 1% rajas and tamas, to keep that body functional.</p> <p>Sri Ramakrishna gives an illustration - there are sweets. Outside they appear exactly the same, but the filling inside can be very different. Some sweets have got pure cheese, some have hard lentils, but outside they appear to be the same.</p> <p>From the external point of view, our bodies and an Incarnation's body appear to be the same, but in reality, their bodies are divine bodies - they exude tremendous power, great spiritual vibrations.</p> <p>That's why some people meditated upon Jesus and actually felt their identity with Him. So also many people, for example the Gopis, through their deep meditation and contemplation on Krishna, felt they were Krishnas.</p> <p>So also, there are so many devotees of Sri Ramakrishna, they felt they are none other than Sri Ramakrishna.</p> <p>So also the devotees of Buddha also felt, I am the Buddha : the Awakened, the Enlightened, the Illumined Soul.</p> <p>So the very form of the human body of an incarnation, becomes an object of meditation. That's why we keep photographs, we keep images of Sri Ramakrishna and other incarnations - the purpose is, by meditating upon that form, we also can further our spiritual progress.</p>
3.	<p>Their lives and their Teachings inspire us.</p>	<p>The lives of great souls are there as beacon lights to inspire us. Their Teachings are there to guide us.</p> <p>This is the difference between their Life and their Teachings - life is meant for inspiration and teachings are meant for right guidance.</p>

4. Organisations are created in their names.	<p>Whether it is the Jesuit Order, or Buddhistic Order, or Ramayat denomination or Krishnayath denomination, these organisations' function is to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - propagate the purpose of the incarnation - to preserve His Teachings - to interpret them properly.
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But in the course of time, as we discussed at the start of this chapter, degeneration (meaning wrong interpretation) takes place and that misleads people into undesirable pathways. Man loses sight of the goal and is confused. After a long time, God reincarnates and clarifies the same Truths again.

Of these 4 events, the first three are the most important for us.

That means you repeat the name of any great incarnation, you meditate upon the form of any incarnation, and you take the life and teachings of any incarnation as your guidelines, and you can progress in spiritual life.

So this is how the Lord establishes Dharma, His name becomes a mantra, His form becomes an object of meditation, His Life and Teachings are the only suitable Teachings for that particular age, until a new necessity arises when circumstances change again.

Through this path, also popularly called the path of Bhakti, or devotion, out of His Grace, He can liberate millions of people, and that is one of the functions of an incarnation.

How do we know that this statement is true?

That is what the next verse is telling us :-

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 4, Verse 9

**जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ 4.9॥**

*janma karma cha me divyam evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

[O Arjuna, he who does know, in true light, My divine birth and action, having abandoned the body, he is not born again, he comes to Me, O Arjuna!]

The Lord categorically is emphasising that every sincere spiritual seeker, by taking My Name, by meditating upon My Form, by following My Teachings, (because they are the most suitable for that particular time and age), he is sure to progress in spiritual life. Ultimately he will reach Me, and once this human body falls, death occurs, he is not to be born again, emphasising he is already liberated by my Grace.

So, these are some of the traits. Anybody who knows how the Lord incarnates, and what are the mysteries of His Divine activities – His birth is divine, His actions are divine, His

purpose is also divine. Once he understands that there is no obstacle that can stop him progressing further, he is sure to attain liberation and he need not be reborn again.

In other words, he becomes completely liberated.

Naturally, the question that comes is – what is the proof? This is what is covered in the next few slokas, which we discuss in our next class.

Class ends with these beautiful teachings and Slokas.

To be contd...

Om

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

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् । देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Sri Ramakrishna bless us all.

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With kind regards

Mamta Misra & Hari Sundaresan.