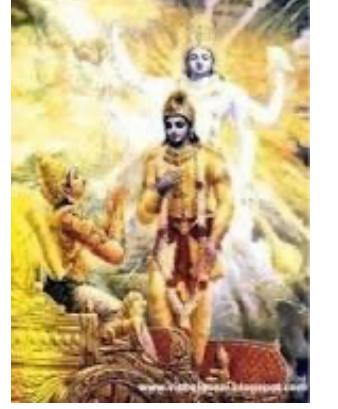


Bhagavad Gita Chapter 12, Part 9, dated 03_01_2021 by Swami Dayatmanada (Lecture delivered online from India.)

Subjects: C12, V16 and 17. *Shiva-Mahima-Stotram* by Pushpadanta: Manduko-Upanishad: *Atmarathi Atmakridaha*. Isha Upanishad Verse 1 & 5 तदेजति तन्नैजति तद् दूरे तद्वन्तिके। Purandara Dasa - Song of Navagrahas/Nine Celestial Deities. Success requires at least three qualities.



Illustrations: Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna - Do not allow others to cheat you. *Bhakta hole, bona hobi keno*. Why did Pandavas suffer? Why did Shri Ramakrishna not call Maa Sharada Devi to come to the Dakshineswar Temple? Swami Brahmanandaji and Swami Prabhavanandji: Story of a Prospective Bridegroom: Quotes of Rabiya al Basri: Sufi Lady Saint. Story of a Maharastrian Woman and Lord Pandarinath: Examples from the Life of Shri Ramakrishna: Bhagwan Shri Krishna, Arjun and the Divine Chariot: Illustration of A Child and Formula 1 Car: Illustration of a Hungry Man and Cinema:

Om Jananim Saaradam deviim, Raama-krishnam jagad-gurum

Paada-padme tayoh sriitvaa, prana-maami muhur-muhuh

ॐ वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम्। देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

Vasudeva sutham devam, Kamsa Chanura mardanam,

Devaki paramanandam, Krishnam vande jagat gurum

I worship Lord Krishna, who is the spiritual master of the universe, who is the son of Vasudeva, who is the Lord, who killed Kansa and Chanura, and who is the bliss of Devaki.

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

Sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdha gopala nandanahal

parthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitamrutam mahat I

All the Upanishads are like cows. The milker is Krishna, the son of Nanda. Partha (Arjuna) is like a calf, while the drinkers are the wise ones. The nectar of Gita is the milk.

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिं। यत्कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

Mookam karoti vachalam pangum langhayate girim I

Yat-krupa tamaham vande paramananda madhavam II

*I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls.
His mercy turns dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.*

Recollection: We have been studying the 12th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. In our last class, we discussed certain spiritual qualities. A spiritual aspirant (who would like to become dearer and nearer to Bhagwan.) should develop these qualities. These qualities are beautifully explained in this beautiful 12th chapter. (Please refer to the transcript of Gita Chapter 12, Part 8.)

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 16.

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ 16॥

***anapekṣhaḥ śhuchir dakṣha udāsīno gata-vyathaḥ
sarvārambha-parityāgī yo mad-bhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ***

anapekṣhaḥ—indifferent to worldly gain; ***śhuchiḥ***—pure; ***dakṣhaḥ***—skilful; ***udāsīnaḥ***—without cares; ***gata-vyathaḥ***—untroubled; ***sarva-ārambha***—of all undertakings; ***parityāgī***—renouncer; ***saḥ***—who; ***mad-bhaktaḥ***—my devotees; ***saḥ***—he; ***me***—to Me; ***priyaḥ***—very dear

[Those who are indifferent to worldly gains, externally and internally pure, skilful, without cares, untroubled, and free from selfishness in all undertakings, such devotees of Mine are very dear to Me.]

The Lord enumerate a few more qualities of a Bhakta here. He who is free from dependence, who is pure and prompt, unconcerned, untroubled, and who has renounced all voluntary undertakings, such a devotee is dear to Me. He is the devotee who is really devoted to Me.

1) ***anapekṣhaḥ***—indifferent to worldly gain: A person who does not expect. It is interesting. ***Apekṣah*** means expecting something. And this expectation is of two types. Yesterday we discussed. I mentioned two types of expectations. One is realistic and the other is unrealistic. If we have done something and are expecting it, it is a realistic expectation. Without doing anything, we hope something will fall from the sky. That is unrealistic. Usually, people will be disappointed. A devotee gives up both. Why? Because he totally surrendered

himself to God, he says, "Whatever God ordains in my life, I am happy. God knows better than me what's good for me, what's not good for me, whatever comes, happiness or unhappiness, I totally depend upon Him." This is called free from dependence on all worldly things. Total dependence/surrender upon God is called *Anapekshaha*.

2) śhuchih—purity. What does **Shuchih** mean? It does not mean to be clean *inside and outside*. A devotee should think of only the divine Lord *inside and outside* is purity. Cleanliness belongs to the external world and purity belongs to the spiritual world.

3) dakṣhaḥ—extremely skilful: Then there is a word **Dakshah**. What is **Dakshah**? Extremely skilful. What does it mean? The Bhagavad Gita describes yoga as **Yogaha karmasu kaushalam**. That is dexterity, skilfulness in yoga is **Dakshah**. A person who is dull, unintelligent/*manda-buddhi*, can never become a really spiritual person. That's why Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj used to tell something quite important. A person who is unsuccessful in this world can never be successful in the spiritual world. Only one who is very successful in worldly affairs has a chance to become successful in spiritual life too. Why?

Success requires at least three qualities.

- 1.** First, there should be a strong desire, I only want this goal and nothing else.
- 2.** Second, he needs absolute attention or concentration.
- 3.** Third, he requires what is called complete self-control.

When we study the life of a Great person and the cause of his success. What do we find? We invariably find these three characteristics, a fixed goal, concentration, the ability to focus and self-discipline, which is called the 'powers of the will'. That means both concentrating and eliminating any distractions. That is what is said. *Viveka* means fixing a goal. *Vairagya* means controlling the mind so that it will not go towards what we want to give up and do not desire but go only towards what we ardently desire. Such a person is called **Dakshah**.

Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna - Do not allow others to cheat you. *Bhakta hole, bona hobi keno.*

Not only that, Ramakrishna's life gives us wonderful practical hints. Once, one of his close devotees, Antaraṅga, Swami Yogananda, went to buy a pot and the shopkeeper cheated him by giving him a very holy pot, which was not holy at all. When Sri Ramakrishna came to know, he issued one of the greatest guidelines to

us. *Bhakta hole, boka hobi keno*. If you are a devotee, why should you be a fool on that account? In fact, a true devotee has developed this power of discrimination to the umpteenth degree and is the first person to learn. Sri Ramakrishna's wise teaching is: Before you buy something, you visit four or five shops. Find out the best quality and the price of the object. And where you can get the best quality and the most reasonable price, buy it from that shop. Sri Ramakrishna never wasted energy in his life on even the smallest thing like striking a matchstick against a matchbox. So many lessons we have to learn from Sri Ramakrishna.

Coming back to **Dakshah**, ordinary worldly people have two kinds of attitudes. One is terrible hard-heartedness. I don't care. Let people suffer. Of course, as Swami Vivekananda says, "They become like a wall. A wall doesn't feel neither happiness nor unhappiness. But it doesn't also become anything else excepting a lifeless inert wall." A devotee must have very strong will. At the same time, as discussed yesterday it is good to have a strong heart like a thunderbolt, and our hearts should be softer than flowers. When should we apply this?

वज्रादपि कठोराणि Vajradhapi kathorani: When we are going through hard times, our heart should be strong like a rock/Indra's Vajra. So that nothing could touch us.

मृदूनि कुसुमादपि। Murudhuni Kusumathi: When we see other people suffering, our hearts should be softer than the softest flowers.

A devotee should have strong willpower.

He should be able to override any ups and downs. He is always even-minded and his mind is in balance. He has absolute emotional control. At the same time, he is very sympathetic and his heart weeps. That is the nature of a great soul. A worldly person can be hard-hearted in everything including God. Or on the contrary, there are some people, they are like jellyfish, what Sri Ramakrishna used to call like melted butter. That means, not in a good sense, they have no grit. They have no willpower. They weep easily and are cheated all around, left, right and centre. Such a thing also has to be avoided. The practice of Vedanta means one should not allow oneself to be exploited by others. That is what Sri Ramakrishna says *Bhakta hole, bona hobi keno*.

Why did Pandavas suffer?

I like to bring up this subject. Why did the Pandavas suffer? We are brainwashed. We think Pandavas are good and dharmic people and that whatever the reason, good people always suffer. I can never tolerate this kind of stupid interpretation. The Pandavas suffered not because of their goodness, but because of this jellyfish attitude.



Who asked Yudhishtira to play a game of gambling? Was he not aware that gambling is one form of “sin”? Whether he was a Kshatriya or not, gambling among friends without losing anything for entertainment for a short time is okay, like listening to nice devotional songs, etc. is absolutely fine. But he was seriously jeopardising the lives of everybody, including himself. He dragged the entire family into it, including Draupadi. She was not only his wife but the wife of all five Pandavas. She was an innocent lady. Her only misfortune was being married to all five Pandavas. What am I talking about? Pandavas suffered not because of their dharma, but because of their stupidity, especially one person's stupidity. He could have avoided gambling. He did not learn any lesson after losing everything. Okay, first time he lost. Dhritarashtra was forced to give back everything he'd lost. What lesson did he learn? None. Again, Dhritarashtra invited him to play a second time. This time instead of running away, again he came, fell into the trap and suffered.

Why are spiritual aspirants successful in various businesses?

This is what Sri Ramakrishna meant. If you are a devotee, it doesn't mean you behave like a fool. Be an intelligent person, in fact, a devotee should be more intelligent than anyone else. That's why if a devotee starts a business, he should be more successful than anybody else. Why? Because first of all, he does a good job. Secondly, he is very alert. Thirdly, he depends upon God. And fourthly, he practises discrimination at every moment. Therefore, he is successful. And when other worldly people, who have doubts about God, look at this devotee's success, they get inspiration to start believing in God and think - these devotees are prosperous because they believe in God. And if I believe in God, I will also become successful. All these ideas are implied in this word, **Dakshaha**. That is important for us to understand.

A devotee's first quality is Ahimsa. The Lord says, “He is not afraid of anybody and the world also is never afraid of him.” (Verse 15) Yesterday, I gave you an example. A timid, cowardly, grown-up person is also fearless in the presence of a baby. Why?

Because baby means fearlessness. Baby will not cause any injury. That should be the characteristic of a true devotee. [He by whom the world is not afflicted and whom the world cannot afflict.]

4) udāsīnaḥ—without much excitement: We have to understand it all the time. Despite all our efforts, some tragedies will happen, not because of our faults. Why? Because, firstly it is God's play and secondly, it is *Prakruti*, which is called *Adhibhautika* and *Adhidaivika*. They are not under our control. When such things happen, we must become *Udasinah*. When enemies of Jesus Christ, because of ignorance, made him go through this crucifixion, his last prayer was, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” That is what we have to understand in order to be *Udasinah*.

5) **gata-vyathaḥ**—untroubled: Means this devotee will not look back and say, “Why such and such negative and unhappy things happened in my life or maybe some things like that are soon going to happen in future.” For example, Ksudhiram, as soon as he refused to bear false witness, he knew that disaster was awaiting him. He knew that he was going to lose everything soon. Was he worried? Absolutely not! Why? Because he was totally dependent upon Rama, upon God. He believed, ‘Let anything come. My Lord is looking after me. I have nothing to worry.’ Just as a baby never worries about the next second. He knows my mother is there. That's all. I am in the presence of my mother.

6) **sarva-ārambha**—of all undertakings; **parityāgi**—renouncer: All his desires are completely fulfilled only in God. By thinking of God, by singing, hearing, praying to God, by meditating upon God, by visiting holy places, this person derives the greatest joy in these activities which is a bore for most people if it is continued for a long time. You ask any of our devotees. They say, “Yes, Kashi is a wonderful place.” Why don't you go? “Yes, yes, yes, I will go.” For how long? “Maybe three days, maybe ten days”, but after that this hook is pulling them back to their respective places. “Can you stay here forever?” “Oh no, Swamiji, I wish but I cannot.” What a terrible lame excuse it is. If you are a true devotee and such an opportunity comes, (I don't say everybody will get the opportunity). We should jump up and say my life will not change whether I live here or in a holy place. Why? Because here God is looking after me. And there, God is also going to look after me. So wherever I go, it doesn't make the least difference to me. **Sarva Arambha Parityagi**. He will never do anything of his own will, he depends totally upon God's will.

Why did Shri Ramakrishna not call Maa Sharada Devi to come to the Dakshineswar Temple?

In this context, I discussed yesterday about the life of the Holy Mother, especially some incidents in her life. I mentioned once that Sri Ramakrishna never called her to be with him, even though he was not unaware of it. He was fully aware that my wife must have grown up. She was 17 or 18 years old. We should not forget that Sri Ramakrishna's memory was marvellous except in Samadhi. He was not in Samadhi all the time. He would definitely remember Holy Mother. But as I mentioned, he would never do anything without express commandment that directly comes to him from the divine mother.

Swami Brahmanandaji and Swami Prabhavanandji:

Another incident comes to my mind that I have repeated many times. Swami Prabhavanandaji and Swami Brahmanandaji were living in Madras. Swami Prabhavanandaji made many programs to visit Mysore and some other places with Swami Brahmanandaji. He used to say, "Yes, you fix a good day, look into an almanack." But when the time came, he would invariably find an excuse and say, "Today I am not feeling well." So one day Prabhavanandaji became annoyed and said, "You ask us to fix a date. On the fixed date you invariably find an excuse and refuse to go." Then Maharaj said, "My child, you do not understand. I do not do anything of my own. I fixed the date for your satisfaction. Then why do I refuse? Because the commandment from Sri Ramakrishna has not come to me." "Do you mean to say, Maharaj, every time Sri Ramakrishna comes and commands you in every respect?" Maharaj quietly said, "Yes. Until I receive a direct command, I do not lift a small finger. Everything I do." In that context only, Prabhavanandaji, went to Mahapurush Maharaj. He was freer with Mahapurush Maharaj.

Mahapurush Maharaj was very close to Swami Brahmanandaji. Whatever Swami Brahmanandaji would say, he used to say, "Yes Maharaj, yes Maharaj." So one day Swami Prabhavanandaji caught hold of Mahapurush Maharaj and asked, "You have become a 'yes man' to Maharaj." Mahapurushji understood, laughed and explained, "Avani, (Avani was the name of Swami Prabhavanandaji before Sanayasa), you do not understand Brahmanandaji Maharaj. He is nothing but outside Maharaj, inside Sri Ramakrishna. Whatever comes out of the mouth of Brahmanandaji is directly coming out of the mouth of Sri Ramakrishna. Therefore, if Sri Ramakrishna says something, will you say yes or no? You have no option but to

say yes and agree. That's all. So that is what I do. If I say something to you, then you use your rationality, find out whether it is right or wrong, good or not so good, and then you act accordingly. But if it comes from the mouth of Maharaj, then you close your eyes, ears, mind and do what he asks you to do." This is the attitude of a true devotee of God.

Sarva Arambha Parityagi - a true devotee will not do or undertake anything. We are in the beginner's stage. So what do we need to do? Pray, "O Lord, this is what I am thinking of doing after a lot of thinking and discriminating. If it is Thy will, let it be successful. If it is not Thy will, let it not be successful at all.

What is God's will and what is our will?

Now this topic brings another doubt to some of us. What is the doubt? Many devotees have raised this topic in front of me. How do I know that my will is God's will or my own will? And the answer I could give after prayer is: God doesn't come to us like He came to Swami Brahmananda and to Meerabai. He will only manifest through your will. So you pray like this, "O Lord, I do not know whether it is right or wrong or good or bad but this is what I think is the best way to do and I will do it." Pray like this and say, if it is not right, please make it happen some other way. Then magic happens. What is that magic? Whatever we do wholeheartedly after praying and surrendering to God, the outcome of whatever we do will be only good because the Divine Lord converts. Even if it is bad, He will change it into good because we prayed and we are trying to surrender ourselves to Him and God takes charge and He will turn it into *Shubha*.

Every *Ashubha/inauspicious* turns into only *Shubha/auspicious*.

That is why Divine Mother is called *Sarva Mangala Mangalye*. She is the root cause of all *Mangalas*. Is there no *Amangala*? Yes. Divine Mother is also *Mithya Jagat Adhistatri Muktida Muktirupini*. Without dualities, this world does not function. If there is something called *Mangala/auspiciousness*, there will be its opposite which is *Amangala/ inauspiciousness* but if a person takes refuge in God, every inauspiciousness turns inevitably to auspiciousness.

***Shiva-Mahima-Stotram* by Pushpadanta:**

This idea is expressed in the Shiva Mahimana Stotram by the greatest devotee Pushpadanta. He says, "O, Lord You live in smashanas

(cremation grounds) and all these inauspicious things like snakes, *Bhuta*, *Preta*, *Pishacha* (ghosts) are your *Sahacharas*/companions and yet what a strange thing it is, what an incomprehensible truth it is, whoever takes Your name, everything turns out to be the greatest, most auspicious thing in the world.” So when we are doing *Strotram* of the Divine Mother *Sarva Mangala Mangalye*, what it should mean is - Mother, I am your child. So You convert even the most inauspicious thing that I do out of sheer ignorance into the most auspicious thing. So this is one of the spiritual qualities we have to develop.

Now we move on to the 17th shloka.

This verse describes five further spiritual qualities. These qualities should be developed by every sadhaka/spiritual aspirant wanting to progress. There is no choice. As I mentioned earlier, one good quality brings in its turn every other good quality. They are all like a gang and a huge creeper. They are all entwined together. But the bad qualities also, one bad quality will attract and bring a whole bunch of other bad qualities.

Story of a Prospective Bridegroom:

There is a funny story. There was a prospective bridegroom. His prospective father-in-law went to interview him. He did not ask directly because everyone says good things about their children. The father-in-law asked the mother of that boy, “Does your son tell lies? Does he drink? Does he smoke? Does he eat meat? Does he steal? For every question, Mother replied, “No, no, no, he is a good boy.” Father-in-law said, “Do you mean to say there is no bad quality? “Yes, there is only one bad quality, he tells lies” mother replied. That means what? He was a drunkard, a thief, a meat-eater and had other bad qualities. He was a terrible liar and lied about everything. So bad qualities come together. You have one bad quality, all his bad companions and friends come together in one group. Also, all the good qualities come together in one group.

Bhagavad Gita: Chapter 12, Verse 17.

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ 17॥

***yo na hṛīṣhyati na dveṣṭī na śhochati na kāṅkṣati
śhubhāśhubha-parityāgī bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyaḥ***

yaḥ—who; ***na***—neither; ***hṛīṣhyati***—rejoice; ***na***—nor; ***dveṣṭī***—hate; ***na***—neither; ***śhochati***—lament/grieve; ***na***—nor; ***kāṅkṣati***—hanker for gain; ***śhubha-aśhubha-parityāgī***—who renounce both good and evil deeds; ***bhakti-mān***—full of devotion; ***yaḥ***—who; ***saḥ***—that person; ***me***—to Me; ***priyaḥ***—very dear.

1) He doesn't rejoice. 2) He doesn't hate. 3) He doesn't grieve. He doesn't regret. 4) ***na***—nor; ***kāṅkṣati***—hanker for gain. He doesn't desire anything. 5) And last, fifth quality is ***śhubha-aśhubha-parityāgī***—who renounce both good and evil deeds. He is indifferent to both what is auspicious or inauspicious or favourable and unfavourable. Such a person, such a *sadhaka* who is trying to develop these qualities, he will definitely get more and more devotion towards Me. How?

Because when these qualities are developed, the mind becomes like a clean mirror. And just as when we stand in front of a clean mirror, our whole image is reflected (as it is) without distortion. So also, the Divine Lord who is inside, outside, stands in front of the mirror of our purified heart. We will be able to get a true picture of Him. This is called the right knowledge about God. And when a person has the right knowledge, his devotion to Him increases. Why does the devotion of *Bhakta* increase? Because of that knowledge. What is that knowledge? He whom I am thinking is someone else, is none other than me. He is the soul of my soul. So I am only externalising my own Self (with a capital S) and I am worshipping myself until I have the capacity, I acquire that skilfulness to perceive the same God as me, as my own Self. So really speaking, when somebody says, “I don't believe in God.” He is denying himself. When somebody says, “I believe in God.” He is only making a statement that, the God whom I imagine having such and such quality is none other than potential me. I in my नीजस्वरूपा *nijaswarupa*/real form, am nothing but God. But because of ignorance, I somehow come to feel that I am not that God. This is the effect of *avidya*, covering.

yaḥ—who; ***na***—neither; ***hṛīṣhyati***—rejoice: The Lord says, “A devotee, should not rejoice.” What type of quality is that? Do you mean to say a devotee should become an embodiment of grief, unhappiness, despondency, an inferiority complex, and a depressed personality? No, sir. What does it mean when this kind of devotee develops certain qualities?

Manduko-Upanishad: *Atmarathi Atmakridaha*.

We discussed this in the Manduko-Upanishad: *Atmarathi Atmakridaha*. He turns his eyes inward and sees Sachidananda. He turns his sight/drishti outside and sees only *Atmakridaha*. Outside is a manifestation of God. Inside is God; only God is manifesting as his mind, *buddhi*, *prana*, his *anandamaya kosha*, and as everything. Outside the *anamaya kosha* is God, inside all the other four *koshas* is the same Brahman. Therefore, he is only happy all the time. He becomes what is called, *Atmarathi*, *Atmakridaha*. *Kridha* means a play. So what is the difference between *Atmarathi* and *Atmakridha*? This is beautifully explained earlier. One closes the eyes, focuses upon the most inward consciousness and revels in that *anandamaya sagara*. That is called *Atmarathi*, complete absorption in the ananda/bliss aspect of one's own self. That was what Hari Maharaj told Shri Ramakrishna: No, no, you are not suffering, you are swimming in the ocean of bliss. *Ananda Sagare*. There is no inside or outside. Everything is Brahman only.

[Ishavashya Upanishad Verse 5]

तदेजति तन्नैजति तद् दूरे तद्वन्तिके।

तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥

Transliteration

tadejati tannaijati tad dūre tadvantike |
tadantarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyāsyā bāhyataḥ ||

Meaning

Meaning: That moves and That moves not; That is far and the same is near; That is within all this and That also is outside all this.

He is Ananta. He is everywhere, there is nothing else excepting God.

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धनम् ॥ १ ॥

Īśāvāsyamidam sarvaṁ yatkiñca jagatyāṁ jagat |
tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasya sviddhanam || 1 ||

[Meaning: All this—whatsoever move on the earth—should be covered by the Lord. That renounced, enjoy. Covet not anybody's wealth.]

Everything is nothing but God. When Shri Ramakrishna turns his sight inside, then he sees nothing but the Divine Mother. And when he turns the same sight outside,

he sees nothing but the Divine Mother. The only difference is in the different names and forms. We have to keep this in mind. So a devotee is supremely joyful.

If you go to a billionaire and say, "I am giving you one rupee, this will make you whatever you had plus one." Do you think that the billionaire is likely to be impressed by you? Of course, he will appreciate your goodwill, but it makes no difference to him. Because he knows - he has more than what most people can have. And one rupee is not going to make any difference.

yah—who; **na**—neither; **hriṣhyati**—rejoice: Such a devotee is not excessively rejoicing if things are favourable. Also his serenity, his happiness within is not disturbed in the least if some unfavourable circumstance comes. Shri Ramakrishna illustrates it through the story of the devout weaver. राम की ईक्छा *Rame-ikcha*, everything is the 'Will of Rama'. A devotee should not become exceedingly happy when some favourable things happen. Neither should he become depressed or desolate when any unexpected, negative, experience comes.

na—nor; **dveṣṭi**—hate: A true devotee does not hate anyone. When a person does something good and favourable for us, we get happy and start loving them. On the contrary, when someone obstructs our way, we start hating them. A true devotee says, "It is God who gives, it is God who takes away. Not only that God who is near me and taking care of me. I am in his lap and therefore there is nothing to worry about. All happens with the will of God. Somebody abuses me, who is abusing? God is abusing me. Somebody criticises me, God is criticising me. Somebody finds fault with me, God is finding fault with me. Why? For my own good. Therefore, this idea of *dvesha*, that is hating somebody, never arises in the mind of a true devotee.

Quotes of Rabiya al Basri: Sufi Lady Saint.

There was a wonderful saint called Rabiya. Once some of her followers reported to her that some mullahs were verbally abusing you and would like to destroy you. They expected Rabiya to react in fear, hate, or to curse the mullahs. She had the power to curse and also to bless. God's power was working through her. But she said, "I am immensely absorbed in my beloved God. I have no time for anything else. I do not have time to pay attention to those who praise me. Because I get all my happiness from God than anything else. I don't lose anything if people criticise me. God has filled my heart with bliss. There is no place for any hate either."

Rabia al Basri expressed a most beautiful prayer.

She said, "O Allah, (Your hope in my heart is the rarest treasure. Your name on my tongue is the sweetest word.) If I pray to You out of fear of hell and desire to escape from hell, then voluntarily You throw me and burn me in hell!! If I love you, adore You out of desire for Paradise, the kingdom of heaven, then exclude me from heaven, do not allow me, and put me in hell. But if I pray to You, adore You for Yourself only without any expectation, fear or favour, then do not exclude me from Yourself. Do not deny me Your eternal beauty."

Ramakrishna says, "All jackals howl in the same way." Whether it is Rabiya, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Pavela, or Meerabai, we know the most famous bhajan of Meerabai - विष का प्याला राणा ने भेजा, पीवत मीरा हांसी रे *Visha Ka Piyala Rana Ne Bheja Peevat, Meera, Haansi Re* - I don't care because someone is taking care of me.

Story of a Maharastrian Woman and Lord Pandarinath:

There was one Maharashtrian woman devotee. One day at the instigation of his own mother, the husband started beating his wife black and blue without any justifiable reason. There is no reason to beat or hurt a human being whether it is a wife, a servant or anybody. It is completely unjustified. Now this lady knew nothing except to call Lord Pandarinath. She went on repeating Pandarinath, Pandarinath meaning Bhagavan Krishna, Narayana. The priests were bathing the image of Pandarinath in the temple. Suddenly blood started flowing, oozing out from the back of Bhagavan Pandarinath. They were astounded. They were shocked. How can this image made up of stone ooze out this blood? Then they came to know a bhakta was being injured. The lady did not feel pain. The Divine Lord took all her burden.

Examples from the Life of Shri Ramakrishna:

We should remember this story from the life of Shri Ramakrishna. This is a true story. It's not a cock and bull story. Once Shri Ramakrishna watched from the bank of the Ganga at Dakshineswar - as one boatman gave a blow to another weaker boatman. Shri Ramakrishna felt intense pain as if he himself had the blow. Why? Because he identified himself with the boatman who got the blow. He was shocked that such a thing could happen to any human being. There are so many

examples. Once a rough man was walking with rough shoes on newly grown Durva grass and Shri Ramakrishna felt as if that man was walking on his own chest.

Coming back to our Verse 17:

This *Sarvatma Bhava* सर्वात्मा भाव is indicated here. The five qualities are:

1) *yaḥ*—who; *na*—neither; *hṛīṣhyati*—rejoice: He rejoices in God. Therefore, he doesn't depend upon anything external to rejoice.

2) *na*—nor; *dveṣṭi*—hate: He does not hate anyone. Why? Because everybody is nothing but God.

3) *na*—neither; *śhochati*—lament/grieve: He does not grieve. Why? Because everything will turn out to be the most auspicious thing.

4) *na*—nor; *kāṅkṣati*—hanker for gain: He has no unfulfilled desire because he has God himself. When a person gets infinity, there is nothing more to desire for him. This aspirant has achieved it and has reached that state where he can see the divine Lord everywhere. Such a person is called immortal. He will be rejoicing all the time, but he will be saying like *Bhagwat Leela*/Divine Play. That is what is called *Nithya* and *Leela*. Upon realisation, live in the state of *Leela*.

5) *śhubha-aśhubha-parityāgī*—Who renounces both good and evil deeds: He renounces both auspicious and inauspicious. There is nothing auspicious or inauspicious for him.

Purandara Dasa - Song of Navagrahas/Nine Celestial Deities:

There is a beautiful song by Purandara Dasa. Lord Narayana, Purandara created the *Navagraha*. The Nine *Navagrahas* are:

1. **Surya (Sun)**: The Sun God.
2. **Chandra (Moon)**: The Moon God.
3. **Mangala (Mars)**: The God of Mars.
4. **Budha (Mercury)**: The God of Mercury.
5. **Brihaspati (Jupiter)**: The God of Jupiter.
6. **Shukra (Venus)**: The God of Venus.

7. **Shani (Saturn):** The God of Saturn.
8. **Rahu:** The North Lunar Node.
9. **Ketu:** The South Lunar Node.

Some superstitious people are always under the sway of astrologers. Astrologers say, “Oh, this *Graha* is dominating. You will have to suffer. That *Graha* is coming. You will be freed from all this and much more.” But Purandara Dasa says, “I am not frightened of any *Graha*. Why? Because the creator and controller of all these *Navagrahas* is none other than my Narayana. At his bidding, only these *Grahas* carry out their jobs. It also depends on our *Karma-Phala*. So what can they do to me? I don't care for them. I am not scared of them because my Narayana is much more powerful. He is the father and mother of all these *Navagrahas*.”

Every good devotee must feel the same. God is my mother, father, protector, *Mata, Pita, Pitamaha, Bandhu, Sakha*. Everything is God. When a person gets this right understanding and realises it, he doesn't need to do anything voluntarily. On the contrary, whatever he does turns out to be the most beneficial and auspicious not only for himself but for everybody else. So a devotee should not say, “This is a good day, this is a good तिथि *tithi/day*, this is a *tithi/day* that should be avoided. **Shubha, Ashubha, Parityagi**. He becomes indifferent. We should never misunderstand him. We should not think that this devotee does not care, and is heartless, or that he will do whatever he likes. He says, “So Lord, You sit in my heart. You run my life for me. Nothing can go wrong if You drive my chariot.”

Bhagwan Shri Krishna, Arjun and the Divine Chariot:

We all know the divine scene of Shri Krishna driving the chariot of Arjuna at the Kurukshetra war - a war between the Pandavas and Kauravas. The chariot is divine. The horses are divine. Whosoever sits there, has no control. Who is controlling? The Divine Lord is the controller. This symbolises - Shri Krishna is God Himself. Arjuna surrenders. *Dhyo Yonaha Prachodayat*. Shri Krishna takes control and guides Arjuna's life.



यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिधुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ C18, V78॥

***yatra yogeśhvaraḥ kṛiṣṇo yatra pāṛtho dhanur-dharaḥ
tatra śhrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama***

[Wherever there is Shri Krishna, the Lord of all Yoga, and wherever there is Arjun, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be unending opulence, victory, prosperity, and righteousness. Of this, I am certain.]

This victory is sure to come where a devotee completely surrenders himself. The following verse is the essence of all Bhagavad Gita messages.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ C18, V 66॥

***sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ***

Give up dependence upon everything, on which you depended earlier. Take only complete refuge in Me and Me alone. I will guide your life. You will be happy in this world, and happier in the other world. You will be free from all ignorance. You will attain to the highest felicity anybody can do. Those ideas are being a little more explicitly manifested and expressed in this chapter..

The devotee must develop the above mentioned five qualities.

- **He should rejoice only in God.** If he does that, no external worldly enjoyment can ever make him a slave, but he will rejoice. The whole life of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother teaches us this. I'll tell you something about Swamiji. Swami Vivekananda used to enjoy chocolate ice cream. But if anybody thinks he was a slave to this chocolate ice cream, I pity that person from the bottom of my heart. Why? Seeing Swamiji enjoying the ice cream, friends and devotees used to feel happy. Swamiji seemed to be rejoicing in ice cream but at the same time, he knew - happiness coming from outside is insignificant. The inside happiness that I directly experience through God is everything for me.
- **The devotee should not hate anybody.** Every person is a manifestation of his *Ishta-Devata* in that particular form.
- **The devotee should not worry or grieve** - A true devotee knows - God is everything. God is there. God is infinite, I am infinite also. Supposing somebody steals something from me and the stolen object goes to the thief. The thief and I are manifestations of God only. We are both the same. I have stolen from myself. That is what happens in a dream. We are not talking about what is called errant

nonsense. We are not talking about unrealistic imaginations. Our dream seems to be absolutely real while the experience lasts. We see somebody comes and takes away my money, property, my beloved objects and upon waking up, do I laugh or do I grieve? I enjoy that dream. When does that enjoyment come? Only upon waking up. Keep that example in mind. We have this true knowledge, when we awake to the fact that it is a Brahma-Leela. Then who are you going to hate? It is all a beautiful, enjoyable, delectable play, Nataka/cinema of the Divine Lord. So, a true devotee doesn't grieve because he lost something.

- A true devotee is absolutely free from any desire. Here is another hint. What is the sequence of events? We have a desire, we work hard and fulfil our desire by getting the desired object. If we lose what we have after hard work, then only regret comes, unhappiness comes, grief comes. When we do not have a desire. Somebody gives us something which is totally useless to us. I will not grieve if I lose it.

Illustration of A Child and Formula 1 Car:

One simple example to explain this point. A wealthy father or uncle presents the child with a Formula 1 car. The father/uncle should not expect the child to be bubbling with joy. "Oh, my daddy/uncle, I love you. I cannot live without you. I am so grateful. I know you love me. That's why you presented me." Is the baby going to say all this? In fact, for the baby, this is a terrible burden. Where am I going to keep it? Who is going to look after it? So, if somebody comes and takes it away from the child, it will be the most wonderful thing in the world for him. A devotee is not under the sway of either happiness or unhappiness. A true devotee has no enemies, no friends, and he doesn't grieve whether something comes or something goes, and he doesn't have any desire. Why? Because desire means I lack something. A true devotee does not lack anything.

Illustration of a Hungry Man and Cinema:

A hungry man gets some food. He feels satisfied for some time. But hunger will come back and the same cycle will start again. A devotee is with God. He is in God. He can never be separated from God. Therefore, there is nothing auspicious or inauspicious for him. We enjoy everything in a drama. Somebody kills somebody in a drama that is neither an auspicious thing for the killer nor an inauspicious thing for the killed. Similarly, Everything is Brahma Leela/divine play.

Coming to our Verse:

“He who rejoices not, hates not, grieves not and desires not. And who has renounced both good and evil. He is full of devotion, *Bhaktimaan*, he is dear and near to Me. He will be in Me.”

These are a few hints given to us. We should pray, “O Lord, give me devotion.” We all pray for that. Every day, I also pray at the end of the class. I say Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swamiji, grant us bhakti. We need to understand that God is already giving us bhakti. But to receive that bhakti, we have to be fit. And that fitness can be acquired only by developing these qualities slowly, gradually, but surely. Until we become fit, we will not be able to receive the grace. And even if we receive it for a short time, we won't be able to retain it for a long time. These are the most wonderful ideas and another three verses are there which we will complete in our next class.

May Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all with bhakti. I wish the newcomers who have joined this Bhagavad Gita class a very spiritual new year. May Sri Ramakrishna help us, guide us and fill us with spiritual knowledge.

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

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कंसचाणूरमर्दनम् ।

देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥

May Shri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda bless us all.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti

Kind regards

(Mamta Misra)