

What Bhagawad Geeta Teaches?



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I

“What Bhagawad – Geeta Teaches?” Shri Krishna and the Importance of Geeta

‘Shrimad Bhagwad Geeta’ is the advice offered by Lord Krishna Himself, the eighth Incarnation of Bhagawan Vishnu! The – Advice offered by Him is Geeta; its exact name ‘Geeta – Upanishad’!! Bhagawan Shri Krishna is ‘the form of Parmatman’, the Supreme Soul, Yoga Yogeshwar, the Supreme Yogi! Thus He, Bhagawan Yogeshwar Krishna and his song known globally, Bhagwad Geeta are both one and thoroughly united in spirit, a supreme example of spiritual Unity, a symbol of Non-duality; exactly and entirely the same as Union of Lord Shiva and His Shakti – Feminine Principle. We can say that this is the supreme illustration of Non-Duality!

Dearest and nearest to the heart of all of us, Bhagawan Krishna, Yogeshwara, Lord of Yoga and Yugandhar, The Support of the Epoch – What is He in Reality? Exactly, we can say that He is the founder and Support of TRUTH, the Universal Being. He represents SATVA, the best of the three Universal qualities. HE is Yuga Pravartaka, the initiator of a New Epoch, Pinnacle of Personality, dispenser of Strength and Prosperity. He is the embodiment of Dutifulness. He is the emperor, devoid of any need for Himself! A beautiful combination of Abhyudaya, sustenance needs of society, and the needs for Nishreyas, transcendence! Thus He is the total embodiment, Purnaavatara of the Universal Dharma, Duties and Responsibilities enjoined by the Bharatiya Culture. He Himself is Purushottama, Best among Men, a perfect Person, described in the Geeta, loved by people.

Basically our Bharatiya Sanskrit is a threefold culture like a three petaled Bilva leaf, Rishi sanskruti, also it is an agriculture based, Krushi Sanskriti; also based on Faith,

Shraddha. Important fact is that Bhagawan Shri Krishna is the embodiment of this threefold Sanskriti. Thus we note that Bhagawan Shri Krishna himself has taught the whole country, the Yoga of Knowledge, Gnana Yoga of Rushi Sanskriti; Karma yoga of the Krushi sankriti and the Faith based Bhakti Yoga. The most important fact we can see is that he himself is the embodiment of the philosophy of the Threefold Yoga, which he has presented in the Geeta!

It is for this reason that in our sacred, beloved Motherland, Bharat, for the last five millennia Bhagawan Shri Krishna has earned a loving throne in the minds of the people, both Men and women. On the one hand He is the central Character of the Maha Bharat written by Vyas Muni, and He is also the Supreme guide for making Bharat, a Great Nation for the today's citizens. In order to achieve this goal of Great and Strong Bharat, all of us have to keep in our minds the ideal of Bhagawan Shri Krishna; philosophy is of equipoise – supreme yoga which all of us have to internalize in our mind and heart and have to put in practice in our lives this Yoga, as our supreme duty of our lives, actualize it. This is why it has to be our great guiding Principle of our lives!

It is the great luck of our life that we have inherited the Geeta, the supreme song by Bhagawan Shri Krishna. This is the Geeta, the scriptural embodiment of Bhagawan. As Shri Gyneshwar Maharaj has said, “Know that the Geeta is the embodiment of Lord Krishna Himself”. Each Shloka – verse of the Geeta unfolds Shri Krishna's form! It is our further good fortune that Bhagwad Geeta is His own biography, unfolding the philosophy of the Geeta by his own example. It should be noted that we cannot understand the Geeta without really understanding the Geeta and vice versa. Both, Life of Shri Krishna and Bhagawad Geeta, are the roads to take the human society from ‘Vishada’ – depression to a blessed state. This process is going on for generations of people of Bharat to the whole Humanity.

We can observe a few specific points in the internal and external aspects of the Bhagwad Geeta. It is obvious that Bhagwad Geeta is a part of The Mahabharata. But where exactly the Geeta happens to be placed? According to the well-researched edition of Mahabharata published by the Bhandarkar Institute of Oriental Research – Pune, the chapters 23 to 40 of the Bhishma Parva of Mahabharat have become the teachings of the Geeta. Further according to the index of subjects given in Adi parva of Mahabharata, there is a mention of the Geeta. In other parvas also there is a clear mention of the Geeta at seven different places. Similarly entire Shanti parva and Anugeeta in the Ashwa Medh Parva seem to be written according to the content of Bhagawad Geeta. In the forty first chapter of Bhishma Parva (i.e. after conclusion of the eighteenth chapter of the Bhagawat Geeta) there is clear mention that war cries were resumed once again.

Let us see who initiates the dialogue in different chapters of the Geeta. The first Adhyaya starts with ‘Dhritarashtra Uwacha’ – (i.e. Dhritarashtra said). The second chapter starts with ‘Sanjay Uwacha’, while chapters, 3,5, 8, 11, 12, 17 and 18 open with ‘Arjuna Uwacha’. Rest all the chapters 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, a total of nine chapters open with Shri Bhagawan Uwach’.

Similarly among the entire 700 shlokas of the Geeta, 575 shlokas are of Bhagawan, 84 of Arjuna, and one shloka is of Dhritashtra. Similarly the chapters 1 to 9, the first half-Purvardha – of the Geeta contain 372 shlokas, and the second half – Uttarakadha – contains 328 shlokas. Thus Bhagawad Geeta is made of 700 shlokas.

The Bhagawad Geeta has given the precious gift of the invaluable knowledge of the SELF, knowledge of the ‘Brahma’ (the primordial Stuff of this Universe). In truth, this Elixir of

the Bhagawad Geeta is matchless. This the Lord's benediction, Prasaad, (Divine gift) to Mankind.

A Traditional shloka in this context goes thus,

‘पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयम् ।
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्येमहाभारतम् ।
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीम् अष्टादशाध्यायिनीम् ।
अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्-गीते भवद्वेषिणीम् ॥’

“Parthaya Pratibodhitam, Bhagawataa, Naraayanen Swayam |
Vyasena grathitaam, Puraana Muniaa, Madhye Maha Bharatam |
Advaitaamrutvarshinim Bhagawatim, Ashtaadashaadhyayinim |
Amba Twamanusandadhaami Bhagwad-Geeta, Bhavadweshinim |

In this traditional stanza, there is also a slight variation prevailing: In the fourth line the word Bhava-dweshinim is altered as Bhava – dweshinim, which also makes sense as – ‘destroying Fear’.

The meaning of this shloka is:

“O Mother Bhagawad Geeta ! Lord Narayana (Shrikrishna) Himself, advised his dearest devotee Arjuna, which in the days of old, Sage Vyaasa, included you in the Epic – Maharabharat ! You shower the elixir of Advaita philosophy on Mankind; You are the destroyer of the chain of birth and death, as well as of the danger of duality, and attachments in human life! At all times, I always focus on your teachings in the eighteen chapters, by reading and focusing on their meaning.”

It can be noted that in 23 – Shlokas of Shri Varah Purana, Bhagawan himself, emphasizing Bhagawad Geeta's greatness, has said in Shloka – 8, ‘Geeta is the highest knowledge, Brahma itself’.

On the occasion of the beautiful narration in this shloka, Goddess Pruthvi, inquiries (Dharovacha) and Lord Shri Vishnu narrates (Shri Vishnuruvascha), assuring Earth – Mother of Humanity, emphatically that :

‘॥यत्र गीताविचारश्च पठनं पाठनं श्रुतम् ।
तत्राऽहं निश्चितं पृथ्वि निवसामि सदैव हि॥’

“Wherever the ideas propounded in the Bhagawad Geeta are read of discussed, there i, myself reside forever.”
– Vishnu Puran (Shloka No.6)

Thus Bhagawan Shri Krishna himself assures the entire Human race on this point. There is no doubt about this.

Further in the Mahabharata itself, in first shloka of Adhyaya 43 of Bhishma Parva, the Importance of the Bhagawad Geeta, is described excellently in these words:

‘गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या किमन्यैः शास्त्रसंग्रहैः ।
या स्वयं पद्मनाभस्य मुखपदमात् विनिःसृता॥’

“Geeta suggeta kartavya kimayaehi shsaastrasangrahaihee |
Yaa swayam Padmanabhasya mukhapadmaat vinisrutaa ||”

Which means –

“When the Geeta, narrated by Bhagwan Vishnu, - Padma Nabha – himself is there to guide our actions – what need is left for us to seek other shastras?”

What is necessary for us is to remember to behave according to Geeta’s teachings in our own life and actions. And to be able to do this we have to study the Geeta’s teaching in depth and understand the underlying purpose behind the

teaching, not just limit to the simple meanings of the words. The knowledge and guidance given in the Geeta is the pinnacle of all shastras; the result of the churning by countless thinkers of Bharat; Geeta is the repository, of the life's philosophy, and its well and exactly expressed consensus among the thinkers and leaders of Dharma.

That this uniqueness of the Teachings of the Geeta is expressed by Lord Krishna Himself is mentioned in the Mahabharata. This occurs at the beginning of Anugetaa, which is worth noting.

At the conclusion of the Mahabharat war, Yudhisthira has been crowned Emperor; thereafter when Arjuna and Shri Krishna were chatting, Shri Krishna told Arjuna that he now wishes to return to his home, Dwaraka as it is no longer necessary for him to stay on. Arjuna, very dear friend of Lord Shri Krishna, then said to Shri Krishna: "Lord, I have an important request; at the start of the last war, you had instructed me in detail our duty in human life. Now I do not remember the detailed advice regarding how we should lead our life. Hence I humbly request you to please repeat the same to me."

Shri Krishna accepted his request and before going to Dwarka, once again instructed him as to the duties of human beings, how they should behave so that the individual and social life will be fulfilled. This instruction itself is known as Anugeeta in the Mahabharat. While repeating the advice in the Anugeeta, Shri Krishna has said: "O Arjuna, before the start of the Mahabharata war, I had given you the details of how one should behave in this human life. It is indeed your misfortune that you have not clearly remembered the same. Even for me it is not possible to remember the same in detail correctly, in the same way. (i.e. in the inspired state of my Mind). Hence, in its place, I shall tell you some other aspects of how human beings should behave."

We should ponder over this dialogue. We should carefully note what Bhawan Krishna has said at the beginning of Anugeeta, about the reason why Bhagawad Geeta was born and the utmost importance of the knowledge contained in it for human society. Its exact meaning is that the divine moment of inspired instruction is of utmost importance. In such an highly inspired – the moment of Amrut Yoga, what takes birth, cannot be guaranteed to come down in the same divine flow of thoughts after the moment and the state has passed.

Kavishreshtha, the best of poets, Keshavsuta says:

“If it was possible for me to hold this divine moment,
O Mother, I would, as soon transform this world into Heaven !!”

We can, therefore, that Kweshavasuta’s words help us to decipher the inspired divine words of Keshava, Shri Krishna. These can surely indicate to us the royal road to this understanding.

Thus we can understand importance of the gift of the eternal and unique Bhagwad Geeta, to us by Lord Shri Krishna Himself.

II

“Taara – Tamya: The Unique Philosophy”

So what is the unique and most important feature of Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta?

That the Bhagawad Geeta propounds the understanding. The questions of ‘Tara’ and ‘Tama’: The better and the Best – of each dimension in the philosophy of ‘Life in this world’.

However, we have to understand the correct interpretation of these Sanskrit words ‘Tara’ and ‘Tama’.

It often happens that, from the social point of view, we take these to mean some kind of compromise. Here this interpretation is entirely inappropriate, out of the question. On the contrary, to discuss the philosophy of ‘Tara tamya’, we have to take the original meaning of these words – Tara and Tama.

The statement ‘Bhagawad Geeta is the science of Tara Tamya’ means that ‘Bhagwad Geeta’ expect us to serve our fellow beings and all life by treating them with correct understanding of taratamya attitude in our everyday life. It tries to invoke in all to behave with others with proper understanding of good and bad. Thus, the Geeta imparts to each of us, the society, faultless and basic understanding.

In our Human life, whenever we face a difficult situation involving choice of direction, our study and correct understanding of Bhagawad Geeta enables us to make the proper choice. This itself is the exceptional and most precious gift to us from Bhagawan Shri Krishna Who has given us the benefit of the divine knowledge in the teachings of Bhagawad

Geeta. This teaching is also visible every moment of his life on this earth, just as in the Geeta's Teachings. In a sense, the Kurukshetra war may be said to be an easier than the 'War in Our Human Mind' for which help is bestowed by Bhagawan in the form of The Geeta.

If in Human life, the duality or fight that man encounters are such that there is clearly and fully Good on one side and Bad on the other, with a clear cut division, then it will be easy for one to understand and deal with such a situation. Unluckily however, if there is a conflict between two clearly good or clearly bad contenders then it is difficult even to understand and also difficult to deal with it successfully. In such a situation, comparative estimate in terms of what is greater – 'Tar' and what is highest - 'Tama', should be understood. There should be perfect clarity in this respect. This is what Geeta emphasizes.

This exactly the strength of the Geeta, that clarifies and teaches. Therein, we find the advice and clarification by Yogeshwar Shri Krishna. That is true Satva Dharama of purity, which is also Sukshma dharm, the subtlest duty of man. This itself is what the Geeta terms as 'Nishkama Karmayoga' – action without desire for the fruit of action, without attachment to results. This is what is alternatively termed, Yoga based on one's own Dharma –duty, Jeevan Yoga; or Samtva Yoga or Samashti – sharana Yoga. Here we may recall section 69 of Karna Parva of Mahabharata.

Arjuna, the best and courageous among men, had at one time taken a strong serious vow: "If anyone, at any time, insults me by telling me to throw away my formidable bow – 'Gandiva', or that you give your bow to someone else because you are weak, I, Arjuna will instantly kill such an offender."

Later during the Mahabharata war (in the Karna Parva) it so happens that Karna, a great fighter defeats the eldest

Pandava brother, Yudhisthira in battle. Down hearted Yudhisthira returns to his camp. On the other hand, Arjuna, worried on not seeing Yudhisthira on the battle field, also returned to their camp.

Seeing Arjuna returning from the battle field, assuming that he had been victorious, everyone rejoicing prepared to give him a hero's welcome. Arjuna, then clarified the situation. Hearing this all were downcast; Yudhisthira, in this confusion, in a moment of disappointment, happened to tell him "Arjuna, Of what use to us is your mighty bow Gandiva, throw it away."

Then a greater calamity appeared. As per his earlier vow, Arjuna, took up his sword and was ready to kill Yudhisthira. As if the sky was falling ! Instead of meting out punishment to Karna, there was an internal feud among the Pandava brothers. However, by good fortune Shri Krishina was present on the scene who came forward to advise Arjuna of his real duty.

"O Arjuna, what are you doing? STOP !

Do not behave like a mad man. Can you realize your true Dharma- duty, under this situation? What is 'Rita' 'Dharma, Truth, what is Samashti – sharanata, your Comprehensive duty? Do you have, even this much understanding? Before taking any action, first understand what exactly the True Dharma is ! Understand this clearly, with true underlying principle. Truly, you are a fool. You don't understand the secret of *Ritadharmā*. You should first get this understanding by respectful inquiry from your Elders and Teachers. 'न वृद्धाः सेविताः त्वया ।' No Vriddhas sevitastayaa'. It is a pity, you have not done this. 'You have shut yourself in the personal prison. But this leading you to commit a terrible sin of killing your elder brother. What about that?

In addition, another vow you have taken, “I will finish off the evil Kauravas” which is in the wider interest benefitting the entire human society. What about that vow? Then between your personal vow and the vow benefitting the whole society, which one is the best? Which one is more important? Understand this clearly. What does the term ‘Dharma’ refer to? What is ‘Satya’ – True Dharma? Understand this also clearly. Only then proceed to fulfill your vow. What is ‘Tara’ – better and what is ‘Tama’ – the best. Use your ‘Vivekabuddhi’ and take the correct action.” Thus Shri Krishna told Arjuna, on that occasion of making a difficult choice. Arjuna, having clearly understood his duty, humbly accepted Shri Krishna’s advice. Thus the possibility of brother killing his own elder brother was avoided.

(Mahabharat – Karna Parva. 69)

In this way the ‘Rita Anruta – Vivek’ i.e. Truth and its essence, explained by Bhagawan in Mahabharata especially in the Geeta, is of utmost importance. Shri Krishna himself is the knower of the meaning of Tara and Tama, relative importance thus described, in the Geeta, his teaching is of utmost importance. In Bharat, our ancient country, it has been held as the most sacred science of behavior, of life. Therefore it seems that again at end of the epic, grandfather Bhishma has advocated this to Yudhishtira. At that time the Mahabharata war was over and Yudhishtira, the senior most Pandava brother was to be anointed as the Emperor. In the Shanti parva of Mahabharata these details have been stated.

The detailed discussion of the message of Mahabharata of Vyasa, the true Tara-Tamya Dharma, we should take note of. Only then we shall be in a position to understand how to decide our own course of action correctly when such an occasion of taking a right decision arises in our life. This the important lesson for us as the benediction of Geeta.

In this context we can mention a couple of other such occasions in the Mahabharata. There also Shri Krishna has explained in his inimitable manner to Arjuna, his true dharma. At the same time, He himself also, has followed his own true Satyadharma.

In the first of instance – on the very first day of the Mahabharat war, had Bhishmacharya wreaked havoc on the Pandava army. Seeing this Pandavas were highly agitated. Next day when the war started again the Pandava army gave a fitting reply and in turn decimated the Kaurava army which was demoralized. Duryodhan, the eldest Kaurava, angrily confronted Bhishma, and taunted him, “You are not fighting with your full might because you have soft corner for the Pandavas”.

Bhishma, hearing this admonition from his nephew, angrily retorted, “I am now an old man, yet today I shall do my best.” Then followed a terrible war between Bhishma and Arjuna. The Pandava army also suffered large scale havoc. None could contain Bhishma in his terrible mood. Seeing this, best warrior Satyaki also came to the help of Arjuna. Yet Bhishma’s onslaught continued. Shri Krishna Himself became angry. He said to himself, “The present situation is not good augury. Now I myself will have to take the life of Bhishma.”

However, before the war began, Krishna had declared his decision that he himself will not bear weapons, only He will give guidance whenever needed. In spite of this, He remembered his famous formidable weapon, ‘Sudarshan Chakra’ – (a serrated steel disk, flung at the enemy, will sever his throat and return to his finger, appeared on his finger). Immediately He got down from the chariot and angrily confronted Bhishma, ready to use the Chakra. Bhishmacharya was also surprised to see him thus. He stopped the battle, came down from his chariot and folding his hands, said ‘Madhava, You have come! I offer my salutations to you. If I am slayed by

your divine hands, then my life here on earth and beyond, will both be fulfilled. While all this was going on, luckily Arjuna regained consciousness, came and tried to stop Shri Krishna saying, ‘Shri Krishna, please contain your anger. Please do not break your decision. I am here, strong enough to fulfill my pledge and shall destroy all the Kauravas. Surely I will do so; I once again pledge on the life of my brothers and sons. Please do not worry.’ Then Krishna refrained from battle.

This whole episode in Mahabharat is instructive. It expounds the ‘Tara Tamyā’ philosophy of Shri Krishna. It explains to us exactly how we should weigh the better and best action on our part when faced by a difficult situation in our life! Really the vow taken by Shri Krishna that I shall not take up weapons in my hand in the Mahabharata war was his personal pledge. But when faced with a situation in one’s life, which seriously adversely impact on the justice for whole society, then we are duty bound to follow ‘Samashti-sharana’ – Dharma. It is important for us to choose True Dharma which protects the whole society. It is clear that Shri Krishna himself has shown by this example in his life. A further point to note is seeing that Arjuna, best warrior has taken up his Gandiva bow ready to fight, Shri Krishna accepted his emphatic request and refrained from entering the war. He did not insist on ‘Me’ and ‘My Action’.

Again Shri Krishna has emphatically advised this same attitude of “Vivek-buddhi”, considering right and wrong, to Arjuna at the time of destroying the warrior Jayaratha. That episode is also instructive. What happened was that on the 10th day of the war, by Arjuna’s arrow, Bhishma was critically injured and fell from his chariot. He could no longer lead the Kaurava Army. On the eleventh day, Guru Dronacharya, became the leader of the Kaurava army. He arraigned the Kaurava army in a special ‘Chakra Vyuhā – strategic arrangement. In the Pandava army, only Arjuna knew how to destroy this **Vyuhā**, how to enter successfully and the exit from

it. But Arjuna was tied up that day as Duryodhana had sent first Susharma and thereafter Bhagadatta to fight him.

In this situation Pandavas were faced with the question, as to who can be asked to fight this battle in the absence of Arjuna, to destroy the enemy forces. In the event Abhimanyu, Arjuna's son came forward to fight as befitting a courageous young man. However he knew how to break in the fortification but did not know how to exit from it. Bhima and others helped him but they were detained outside at the entrance itself by Jayadratha. They therefore could not enter to help. Abhimanyu alone continued to give a tough fight to the enemy. As against that, Dronacharya, Karna, Dushasana, Shakuni and others together fought and killed Abhimanyu.

On this side Arjuna returned after having Killed Bhagdatta and defeating Susharma. He came to know how fraudulently they had killed his son, Abhmanu. Arjuna, in fit of extreme anger, pledged; "Tomorrow, before sunset, I shall destroy Jayadratha, failing which, I shall enter fire and end my life."

Next day the war was resumed,. Arjuna was at his best fighting the enemy. However, Kauravas were also forewarned and prepared. They had prepared two formations, one in front and another behind it; and placed Jayadratha in the later, thus providing him full protection. Hence Arjuna was getting late to break open the second formation. Yet, in the end he did it. Exactly just at that time, the Sun in the west, was covered with dark clouds. They were all misled by this and rejoiced, and Jayadratha came forward. At the moment, Krishna brought the chariot in front of Jayadratha. As the clouds disappeared, it became clear that the Sun has not yet set.

Shri Krishna immediately told Arjuna, "Look, the Sun has not yet set, and there is Jayadratha." Arjuna instantly taking the cue shot an arrow and killed Jayadratha. Pandava whole heartedly rejoiced. Arjuna's vow was fulfilled. He was

victorious. But this incident in Mahabharata, and the entire situation surrounding it demands our careful attention. Here itself, the Tara – Tama Bhaav as described by Shri Krishna neatly comes into focus once again. The reason is this: After the episode, Shri Krishna said to Arjuna, “O Arjuna, I did not say anything to you before. Your action of taking this vow, was ‘Atataayi’(inappropriate). This vow was impractical, putting your own self out on a limb. The earlier vow that I shall destroy Jayadatha was O. K. But the later part that ‘I shall kill Jayadratha tomorrow before sunset and if I fail to do so I shall enter fire and court death’, was extreme and unwise. There was no wisdom, ‘Sarasar Viveka’: no proper understanding of what is good and what is bad. No ‘Vivek – Buddhi’.

This is the ‘Tara-Tama-Bhaava’ and its clear glimpse is there in Shri Krishna’s own life and actions as much as in his sage teaching and philosophy in the Bhagawad Geeta. This ‘Tara-Tama bhaava’ means the most important ‘Santulan’, balance required in our life. It is indispensable to achieve the highest goals in human life. Bhagawad Geeta calls it ‘Vivekbuddhi’. It is the teaching of Bhagawad Geeta – the Shastra of Tara-Tamya. In fact the Bhagawad Geeta gives us the four sutras as follows: -

1. Balance in each event in our life.
2. Take into account all aspects of any event or contemplated action.
3. Extremes in any event should be avoided.
4. Taratamya Bhaav and Saaraasara Vivek should guide all our actions.

These four sutras are highly important. Where in the Geeta, these are specifically quoted? Where Taratamya is mentioned? Where is santulan? Where Samabhava? And Saaraasar? The answer is: These references are at many places in the Geeta. For example: Aahar – Vihar, Dhyan – Dharana (Meditation – concentration), Charity - hard work, Trushnaa –

Greed, Pratikaara (Response)- Vows, body and mind control, Freedom from attachment of all kinds, and finally 'Prapanch' – worldly exertions, and 'Paramartha' helping others! Similarly, Gnyana Yoga, Dhyana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga, in all four of these Yogas and in Parmarthik Saadhan Yoga also, connectedness and continuity is essential. Evenness of Mind is required. This is essentially the great teaching of the Bhagawad Geeta.

III

“Nitya Nootan Tatva Gyaan – Sara:”

In this great work on the importance of the Bhagwad Geeta – “Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta Rahasya or Karmoyoga Shastra “ – Lokmaanya Tilak has said that he wanted to write about the philosophical essence and exact meaning, which has been given in Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta.

Bhagawan Vyasa had written the Mahabharat to narrate life, character and work of the great personalities, ‘Shri Krishna and the Pandava Brothers’. He has included many subsidiary narrations like Nalopkhyaan, Ramopakhyan, and so on. But if he had also discussed the philosophical aspects in every such narration, it would have not been very appropriate, because those topics of philosophy also would have suffered devaluation to that level. Similarly, if as in the vanaparva or shantiparva, Geeta was also included then its importance would have been lost in the crowd of such subsidiary narrations.

The purpose of Lokmanya in saying this seems that in Mahabharat, after the conclusion of Udyog parva, when the Mahabharat war is about to start, at such an momentous event the Bhagawad Geeta has been narrated to discuss the Karma and Akarma, in this shastra with weighty arguments and appropriate examples. Not only that, but from the point of view of the overall effect of this great poem, its position in the entire Mahabharat, from every aspect is most appropriate. Mahabharata, such an immense collection of knowledge discussing Dharma – Adharma in detail, a fifth Upveda, without the Geeta, would have remained incomplete!

How and how much can we describe the importance of the Bhagawad Geeta! In the words of Lokmanya, “Shrimad

Bhagawad Geeta is the touchstone of the art and science of governance in the Vedic literature. Or else, Geeta is the crest jewel of the Vedic Dharma spreading spiritual light in the society”.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave has also similarly praised the Geeta. He says, in his ‘Talks on the Geeta’ (pg. 9 -10) that Bhagawan Vyasa has placed the Geeta at the highest point in the centre of Mahabharata, so as to spread the light of the lamp of Duty described there on the entire human life.

On one side are six parvas of the Mahabharat and twelve parvas on the other side, Geeta is in the centre. Similarly seven Akshauhinis strong Pandava army one side and eleven Akshauhinis of the Kaurava Army are arranged on the opposite side. Thus in such a central place the Geeta has been expounded by Shri Krishna to Arjuna. That also shows the importance of the Geeta in Human life.

We have to also note that Mahabharat and Ramayana are our ancient National Literature. The characters therein, have been deeply ingrained in our life. Shri Rama, Sita, Hanuman, Shri Krishna, Bhishma, Dharmaraj, Draupadi and other characters in Ramayana and Mahabharata, have filled our National Life with enlightenment for several Millennia!

It is to be noted that in other countries their literature does not appear to have been as deeply affecting their people to such an extent. From this viewpoint, Ramayana and Mahabharata are extraordinary books. Further, Ramayana is a lovely song, while Mahabharata is a wider ‘Samaaj Shastra’ – a social philosophy. Shri Vyasa, in a hundred thousand verses, has drawn excellent pictures of innumerable and varied characters. ‘In this world, if there is any character totally free from fault, it is only God; but then on the other hand, there is no one who is totally full of faults.’ – This point is clearly said in the Mahabharata. Here the faults of Bhishma, Yudhishtira

have also been shown just as the good points of karna, Duryodhana are also depicted.

Acharya Vinobaji goes on to say, “This means that a man’s life is like a cloth made by a cross weaving in of both white and black threads. Bhagawan Vyasa, keeping himself unattached, shows us a vast canvas of white and dark shaded view of this world. Because of Bhavgawan Vyasa’s totally honest overview of this world, free of any bias, his Mahabharata epic has become a vast Goldmine! One may examine and test any way one likes and carry away the booty! It is a special further question, whether Shri Vyasa had anything of his own to contribute? Where is his special contribution? We are faced with this important question.

As it is, in many places, there are countless philosophical gems, forests of vital discussions in the Mahabharata. But where is the summary crème of secret Jewel? Answer to this is a capital “YES!” It is in the Bhagawad-Geeta, where Bhagawan Vyasa’s main teaching, and his thoughts are elaborated”. Geeta is the depository of entire thought world and teaching of Bhagawan. For the same reason, from ancient times the Geeta has been recognized as an ‘Upanishad’. One can even say that it is the Upanishad of all the Upanishads”. It is clear that every teaching, required for the progress of mankind, is contained in the Geeta. This is why the best thinkers from all times have acclaimed it as the repository of Dharma – Gnyaan. “Knowledge of Dharma, innate duty of every human being.

We find that the Geeta’s main focus is on ‘Vedic Vishwaatma bhava’ – the feeling of being one with the whole Universe. It is the cream of the Vedic Dharma. What is Vaidic Dharma? It is the clear enunciation of duties of every human being towards mankind and the world around us from vedic times. In all the literature produced in the world so far, Vedas are known to be the oldest; the depository of human

knowledge, for the benefit of mankind. It is more precious and valuable compared to all the commandments and teachings carved on stones and brass plates by mighty kings. Even otherwise, the literature of any society is any day more precious, beneficial than their accumulated gold and silver. From this viewpoint, Veda Upanishads are the most precious gift to mankind from the Bharatiya Society!

By the good fortune of all of us, in the Bharatiya tradition, literature of the Vedas and Upanishads, and the Bhagawad Geeta are like the Kalpavruksha and its sweet fruits; a mutual integral relation!

In other words, the sages have proclaimed,

‘Sarvopanishado Gavo Dogdhaa Gopala nandnah |
Partho Vatash Sudhirbhoktaa Dugham Geetamrutam Mahat ||’

All the Upanishads are cows, Gopala-Nandan, Shri Krishna is the cowherd milking them, and then Partha, i.e. Arjuna, is the calf who is fortunate to drink this nectar.

The meaning is that all the spiritually inclined people have the benefit of this nectar of the precious teachings of the Geeta!

In this context, Gnyaandav also says, in Gnyaneshwari:

‘Taise Geetache He Dubhate | Vatsa Karuni Parthaate |
Dubhjinali Jagaapurate | Shri Krushna Gaaya || (18.1689)

OR

‘Maga Aartaacheni Vorse | Geeta Granthana Mishen |
Varshalaa Shanta Rase | To Haa Granthu ||’ (18.1761)

Generations of people of Bharat have been benefited from this nectar like teachings of the Geeta. Just like the Mahabharat, the Geeta within it is also ever new, spreading the benefit to all those who seek it. Every generation can find new meaning suited to its needs, and also post new thought-challenges as per their environment, and civilizational context. While grasping the meanings of the words, the sentences, and phrases within the shlokas of the Geeta, one has to be conscious of the underlying core of the teachings to derive benefit from this nectar.

Saint Gnyandeva in his 'Bhavaarth Deepika', Geeta-Gnyaneshwari commentary, says through Lord Shi Shankara:

'Ya Geetaarthachi thori | Swayem Shambhu Vivari |
Jeth Bhawani prashnu kari | Chamatkarouni | |
Tetha haru mhane Nenhije | Devi jaise kan swarpooa tuze | |
Teyesen se nityanutana Dekhije | Geetaa tatva | |'
(Adhayaya 1, Verse 70, 71)

(This commentary on the Geeta is by Lord Shiva Himself, in answer to Parvati's question: "it is amazing, Devi, just like your own beauty, Geeta philosophy is ever new.)

The Geeta's teaching, the wealth of the ideas contained in it, as well as the guidance it offers in a variety of ways to is ever new. In this context, Vinobaji's explanation is helpful. In the 'Geeta Pravachane', a collection of his talks, he says at the beginning of discussion (pg. 17, 18)

'In the Geeta, a word is sometimes interpreted in a different way as per the context. To improve upon the meaning of a word by transforming it into a new word is a nonviolent process of bringing about a revolution in ideas. Bhagawan Vyasa is an expert in this field. By giving a word thereby a much wider meaning Geeta has remained ever fresh. Many thinkers, thereby, have been enabled to give a different meaning

according to their particular need. All of these meanings can be appropriate in their own place and we also can, without antagonism to them, our own independent interpretation; this is my view'

Therefore we can see that as time went by, many independent interpretations are extent today and in future also will appear. We can observe in this context that Aadi Shankaracharya found pure Adwaita in the Geeta; Ramanujacharya found Vishishtadvaita; Nimbarkacharya, Dwaitadwaita or Bhedaabheda; and Vallabhacharya saw Vishuddhadwaita (or Pushti Marga) in the Geeta. Again Shridharacharya saw Pure Unism in the Geeta. While Madhavacharya found pure Dwaita in it. This last is well known as "Madhva Mata' after his name.

This is, then, our ancestral heritage! We also have precious heritage of interpretations in the middle age and in more recent times. We observe that in the same Geeta, Sant Gnyaneshwar discovers Brahmakaran based 'Chid Vilas', Play of consciousness or a latter form utility based 'Bhaktiyoga'. In the same Geeta, Waman Pandit sees Gnyana based Bhaktiyoga. Lokmaanya Tilak saw in the Geeta, Nishkaam Karma Yoga, Yoga of Action without desire for fruits of action. Mahatma Gandhi saw nonviolence based Anasaktiyoga in the Geeta. While Acharya Vinoba Bhave deciphered constructive Saamyas Yoga. Age from the same source of Geeta, Sadashive Shastri Bhide has said that 'Nishkaam Karmayoga' – working without expectation can lead to National prosperity and Shri Karandikar has clarified the same – as working without attachment.

Another reason for this is that Bhagawad Geeta is an Upanishad and in Upanishads, a phrase can be interpreted in a wider context. This is also the reason why the Geeta philosophy is always and ever new. There is a story in the Upanishads illustrating this point (Geeta Pravachane – P. 18)

On the Devas, Danavas and Men together went to their father, Prajapati Brahma Dev, seeking the benefit of his wisdom. Prajapati told them 'Da'. Only one syllable 'Da'!

The Devas, celestial Beings, thought over the same and felt that we are always seeking sensual enjoyment of plenty of riches. They felt that Prajapati has told them to learn by 'Da' – Daman, to control their senses. The Danavas, being cruel and short tempered by their nature, felt that Prajapati has told them to be more loving and give up cruelty. Manavas (mankind), who always wished to amass and enjoy more and more riches, felt that 'Da' means 'Daan' – Prajapati teaches them to give alms to the needy.

Prajapati told them that all of them were right, because the meaning they understood was according to their need of what they should learn. Thus in the Upanishads, the words and phrases are amenable to wider interpretation of their meanings and always fresh in the context of the changing environment. This is equally true about the interpretations of what the Geeta teaches in each 'yuga' – epoch, because Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta is also an Upanishad.

IV

“Brahmavidya’s Upayojit Yoga Shastra”

After every Adhyaya of Bhagawad Geeta we recite: “iti Bhagawada Geetashu Upanishadtshu Brahma Vidyaayaam Yogashastre, Shri Krinaarjuna samvaade (for example) Bhakti yoga Naam Dwadashodhyayaha I” here the important reference to ‘Brahma Vidya’ means the Knowledge of ‘Brahma’ as it is in the Bharatiya philosophical tradition. It consists of seven streams. And ‘Yogashastra’ means science of yoga, Karma Yoga or Samatva Yoga; specifically Pra-Yoga shastra – is the intended meaning here. Yoga shastra here, in the Bhagawad Geeta is science based on the seven streams, which is practically useful in one’s life, ‘Jeevan Shastra’. This Shastra referred here is called ‘Upayojit Brahma Vidya’, which means ‘Vyahaaric’ – useful in practical life.

In reference to this aspect, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, in his book ‘Valor Pravachane’ has given proper, to the point explanation. His book ‘Geeta Pravachane’ was written while he was interned in the jail in 1932 at Dhule, in Maharashtra. While the other, ‘Velour Pravachane’ is the gist of another set of speeches given in 1944, when he was imprisoned at Velour (Tamil nadu). In this book,(Pgs.5 -1 3) Vinobaji has given highly important original information, of the oldest philosophy prevalent in the time much earlier than the Bhagawad Geeta. It is very important for us to take note of this.

What are these seven streams of Brahma Vidya? These are:

1. Custom of Upasanaa, given in the Vedic literature.
2. Karma Mimansaa – explanation of karma.
3. The ‘Aatma Gnyaan’ described in the Upanishads.
4. Practical ‘Sankhya’ philosophy of Kapil Muni.
5. Dhynaana Yoga, involving control of one’s own Mind.

6. Smruti Shastra, containing the social rules
7. Chintan Shastra – knowledge of our thought processes, with three sub divisions:
 - a) Pada Mimansaa i.e. words Grammar;
 - b) Sentences – i.e. forming meanings
 - c) Pramana – Mimansaa: discussing proof, arguments, and justice.

These were the seven streams of 'Brahma Vidya' in the times prior to Mahabharata, and Bhagawad Geeta.

Now in the light of this previous knowledge, what was the position in the Bhagawad Geeta? What did Geeta teach? Actually there were shastras, rules, philosophy, knowledge etc. in ample measure, but there was no proper coordinated logical discussion for coming to an agreed conclusion, to find and apply remedial measures for the faults arising from time to time.

Geeta filled this gap. It is essential that the important basic principles need to be implemented in the practical life and thereby serve the humanity. Also the faults arising in the individual and social life have to be remedied in good time. Geeta played the important role to coordinate and bring cohesion in the prevailing thinking and coordination among the prevailing strands of social and spiritual life of the people. It placed the ideal of active and benevolent life before the people, like adding sugar to the milk.

The result was that the coordination between the worldly and spiritual requirements of the individual and social life was achieved. The principles of social behavior in this world and the spiritual side were made cohesive. The very best philosophy of Brahma Vidya was brought to bear on the traditional customs in the normal life of society. The True principles were brought in the everyday life of the people, thus clearing the way to spiritual progress. Thus it is clear that

Bhagawad Geeta has conferred plenty of blessings on the people of Bhaarat. It should be noted that Bhagawad Geeta does not condemn any new thought or principle. It makes an effort to understand and interpret the same for any truth in it, and thus enriches its teaching; only with one proviso that it does not dilute the essential principles of spiritual life, but bring out the best as the result of this process. With great skill it integrates the new with the extent to the overall benefit of the society and mankind by the resultant code of individual and social conduct – ‘Manav dharma’!

Therefore those who have studied Geeta say that Bhagawad Geeta have picked up ‘Atma Gnyan’ – knowledge of the ‘SELF’ from the Upanishad and the concept of Kartavya – Duty from the ‘Samaj Dharma Shastra’, and by blending the two established ‘The Yoga of Social Duty’, ‘Swadharmanishtha Jeevan Yoga’. Thereby Yogashastra of Brahma Vidya was transformed into a highly useful ‘Pra-Yoga Shastra’. Thus a strong foundation for ‘Jeevan Yoga’ was established! What was the specific intention of the Geeta? The answer is to remove the ‘Moha’ – confusion in the society, Manav Jati, practical social life through the example of Arjuna! This is the intention of Bhagawad Geeta.

On careful study we find that Arjuna was on the battlefield with a strong resolve to fight. As a Kshatriya, his nature was to stand firm in a fight. Again, after all the effort, fight was not avoided. Nowhere in Mahabharata, can it be noticed that Arjuna was not ready to fight. On the contrary from the times of their banishment, Arjuna had exerted himself to acquire Pashpat and other skills in wielding the bow and arrow. Similarly, in the Udyog parva of the Mahabharata, nowhere in the account of their preparations for the coming war, there is any indication of sorrow in Arjuna’s mind. Just before the actual start of the war, in a clever move to confuse them, Dhritarashtra had sent Sanjaya to negotiate a compromise, particularly describing the holocaust. Even in this

war of diplomacy had made no effect on the Pandavas and Arjuna, had challenge them with the words: Now we shall meet in the War’.

(Mahabharata: Udyog Parva, Chapter 25, 28)

Then what happened? Seeing before him, revered elders like Bhishma, Dronacharya and others, Arjuna, already soft natured, lost nerve. Victim of momentary soft heartedness, he felt downcast. A storm of feelings arose in his heart. Thus affected, he began supporting his weakness for moment by arguments. His was neither nivrutivad, desire to leave the world; nor was it disinterestedness. In fact so far he had fought many battles, vanquishing countless brave opponents. He had punished the wicked. He had faced Lord Shiva Shankara Himself. But never had he felt like this. Now at this time, seeing Grandfather Bhishma, guru Dronacharya, and other relatives before him Arjun was facing a dilemma.

He felt shivers passing through him, tears filled his eyes. He felt as if his muscles were melting, and his body was on fire. Mind was wheeling and he was unable even to stand erect. He felt unable to hold aloft his mighty bow and many such undesirable signs.

(He said to Krishna):

“सिदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।
वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ (१.२९)
गाण्डीवं स्रंसते हस्तात् त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।
न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥ (१.३०)”

“My limbs are loose, mouth is dried up, |
Body is shivering, have Roamhrsha || (1.29)

Gandiv slips from my Hands, skin is afire |
Unable to stand, as if my mind is reeling || (1.30)

Arjuna said: ‘Deva, I cannot understand, what we shall gain by killing all our own relatives? I do not, any longer, wish to win this war, and kingdom for my own happiness! If we are all alive to enjoy the kingdom, only then it is good for all, isn’t it? But those very kinsmen are arraigned here before me ready to kill and be killed! (Note: Were Kauravas, really, well-wishers of Pandavas? Or their bitter enemies? The Mahabharat chapters before this had already made it clear. But standing there on the battle field, Arjuna clean forgot all that!)

Arjuna further said “Even if the Kauravas are wrong, and mistaken in behaving that way, yet after killing all these people, what happiness shall I get? By destroying Grandfather Bhishma, Guru Dronacharya, and other relatives what do I gain? Even if I get the empire of all the three worlds, I do not want it. ‘Tell me, O Deva; has anybody, ever secured happiness by destroying one’s own kinsmen?’ Arjuna, went on arguing in this manner. But if we consider carefully his arguments, we can see clearly that Arjun is under the shadow of his attachment for his kinsmen.

Thus on the battlefield of this terrible war, Arjuna has become the victim of attachment for his kinsmen! Delusion is the result of this attachment and his sense of duty has weakened. Saint Gnyaneshwar cites the example, of how a Bumble Bee, which is capable of boring through a piece of wood, gets caught in the petals of a lotus as the night falls! Same happened here! Arjuna, the warrior fell a victim to the attachment for his kinsmen.

Arjuna, a great hero, who had come to the battlefield to teach a lesson to evil Kauravas, fell under the spell of attachment for his relatives. Therefore, he started to give reasons arguing against what his duty, required of him. Thus he started to convince Shri Krishna himself. “O Lord Krishna, what a calamity will befall us as a result of this fierce war. The

whole families on both sides will be destroyed. Adharam will reign. Licentious behavior will be rampant, affecting Kuladharmā adversely. There will be frequent famines. There will frequent natural calamities like famines, epidemics following each other. Therefore, O, Lord, such a war should be avoided at all cost.

Thus Arjuna said to Krishna, -

‘कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृस्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ (१.४०)
...अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥ (१.४५)’

On the destruction of a Kula, a family, the cannons of Dharma are
destroyed |

When Dharma is destroyed, the wider family sinks into Adharma ||
(1.40)

‘Oh, we are about to commit a great sin!
Driven by greed we are up to destroy our own ||’ (1.45)

But really speaking, here Arjun totally forgets, what Saraasara indicated , that these Kauravas had committed many atrocities, many injustices, towards the Pandavas. How they behaved an unjust and wicked manner? How selfish and cruel, they had been, not only towards them but also towards Draupadi and thereby insulated the womanhood in general? These Kaurav clan, by their irreligious and inhuman behavior were a blot on the whole world. To check and discipline them had become urgent and important. But all this Arjuna forgot did not recognize his Dharma, highest duty! The only reason was attachment for so called swajan, own people.

Therefore upon hearing all these borrowed arguments/statements of Arjuna, seemingly correct but which were wrong and rooted in Asakti-Attachment, Bhagawan Shri

Krishna said, “Arjuna, why are you saying all this, apparently intelligent, but misleading talk? You are mourning about matters which need not be mourned; and again as if, these were the last words of wisdom! Remember, ‘Atma-gnyani’, the truly ‘learned’, who have achieved ‘Atma Gnyan’ i.e. the knowledge of the “self”, know that death is to come, and never mourn on that count. They recognize the clear difference between Deha-buddhi, bodily sense and Atmabuddhi, the concept of the Soul. They also know that the soul is immortal and perpetual and the body is bound to be disposed of one day. They recognize the immortality of the Atma, and the temporary existence of the body. They also aware of the importance these principles. You are unaware of Brahma Vidya and its usefulness. And again you are exhibiting your hollow claim to knowledge? What can I say to you?

The Lord made it quite clear:

‘अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पंडिताः ॥ (२-११)’

You are lamenting what need not be so lamented,
And then you speak as if you know all |
Those who have passed on any those who have not.
The true Knowers do not mourn about || (2.11)

**“Moha Nirasan – Swadharma Smaran”
(Removing Attachment and being Aware of
Swadharama)**

Acharya Vinoba Bhave, at the beginning of his ‘Geeta Pravachane’ has written about the dual behavior of a well-known Judge. This judge was well known for his strict attitude. He had pronounced the judgment of death by hanging to many criminals of his career. One day however, he had to hear the case of an accused who was his close relative. Further his case was heard and he was found guilty. Now the time came to pronounce the final judgment. But at the crucial moment he felt hesitant to stick to his usual strict attitude. He said to himself, this inhuman practice of death by hanging needs to be revisited. It does not do credit to humanity. The possibility of reforming the accused is foreclosed. The murder may have been committed in the momentary anger. But later, in time he may realize and regret his misdeed. In the event to hang him would be shameful for humanity and a black spot on human society.

But then, if the close relation’s case had not come before that judge, then that judge would have gone on punishing such accused with death by hanging. Then would he have realized the above quoted thoughts? This clearly means that, because of the case of his near relative, he had this realization and not because of his inner realization. This clearly shows that his realization was owing to his attachment to his near relative and not from his intelligent thought process. In order to make it acceptable, he had given it a new attractive cover, but it was not a product of any truth consciousness on his part. It was only a dressing, nothing else.

Now the Arjuna was also in the same category as the judge in the story. All his arguments were not from true and proper understanding of his duty but were arising clearly from attachment for his kinsmen; he was a victim of so called Buddhivad, or Pragnyavad. In reality Arjuna was confused (sammudha) about his true duty, his kartavya; his own true Dharma. All his arguments were concocted to cover up his weakness of mind. Shri Krishna has pointed out his fault. Later on Arjuna also has confessed his mistake. What is then, the role of Bhagawad Geeta? What is its central teaching? To remove the moha – confusion, aasakti – attachment and undesirable sense of possession, of man in this world etc., to remove all these is the main function of Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta. That itself is its central teaching,

Thus here basic important question is that had not Arjuna, so far, punished the cruel and evil people? Had he not killed them? Then now when faced with cruel and sinful people who were his also own kinsmen stood before him, why this resistance, hesitation in punishing them? The reason here is the same Moha – attachment! There he is slipping from his duty! Truly speaking while carrying out his duty, he cannot behave with different standards, distinguish between kinsmen and others. Why then is this forgotten? The reason this Moha – attachment, present in every individual's mind, which is born of the love for near ones. It is this 'Moha' of Arjuna that Bhagawan Shri Krishna had to remove from his mind. And therefore, after relating the whole Geeta, Bhagawan asked Arjuna – 'O Arjuna, have you heard clearly and with full attention this Geeta –Shastra, this teaching? O Dhananjaya, (Arjuna) the Moha – attachment, confusion born out of ignorance has been uprooted?

‘कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।
कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रणष्टस्ते धनंजय ॥ (१८.७२)’

‘Having heard this shastra, with full and focused attention, |
Has your ignorance, confusion been destroyed? O Dhananjaya || (18.72)

Valient Arjuna replied, “Yes, O Shri Krishna Bhagawan! By your grace and blessing, the confusion in my mind, born out of attachment and ignorance has been fully dispelled. I have become clearly and definitely aware of my ‘Kartavya’ – duty. Now I shall perform my ‘Kartavya’, carry out my duty to fight the war, the ‘Dharmayuddha’ as per your guidance.”

‘नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ (१८.७३)’

‘My confusion has been dispelled, and memory restored by your grace |
I stand now firmly, free of any doubt, I shall carry out your instruction ||
(18.73)

“Thus observing the project and the finale together, removal of ‘Moha’ seems to be the finally achieved. The teaching of Bhagawad Geeta aims at the same result. Even the Mahabharata of which the Geeta is a part also aims at the same objective. Sage Vyasa, the author of Mahabharata, says at the very beginning: I am lighting this bright lamp ‘Jaya’ in the form of history, the ‘Mahabharata’ to remove the covering of ‘Moha’ – the confusion arising from attachment. ‘प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयप्रदीपः’ ‘Prajvilit Gnyanamay Pradeepah’. This clearly points out the exact aim of Bhagawad Geeta. Its main objective is clearly to completely remove the obstacles in the form of ‘Moha’, ‘Aasakti’ – which stand in the way of true Dharma.

Acharya Vinoba says, on this subject: ‘In the first Adhyaya of Bhagawad Geeta, ‘Arjuna was talking not only of ‘not fighting’, but also that he wished to take ‘sanyaas’, means go and live in a forest away from society). He was saying, “Oh Shri Krishna, it is better to take Sanyaas than to engage in the bloody battle. Vinoba then comments, ‘Here, don’t we have to

note the exact nature of the crisis? What was the true swadharma – duty of Arjuna? What was his feeling? What was his innate nature – ‘Swabhava’? He could have easily donned the saffron robe of a renunciant. But could he also have the nature of a renunciant and felt comfortable, and in it?

The answer is, “Suppose he, a born fighter, would have gone to live in the forest as a renunciant, there also he would have started to kill the deer freely wandering there! Built his own palace! Because this was his nature from his birth, in a fighter family.” Hence, recognizing his own innate nature of a fighter, he should engage the actions befitting his ‘dharma’ – duty, natural to him, and also just; law abiding. Therefore, Bhagawan Shri Krishna told him plainly, “O Arjuna, you are refusing to fight, but that is only your mistaken belief. Your own innate nature is of the threefold gunas, dominated by Rajas, will not let you rest without fighting. (18.60). You will have to fight. Then at least observe your ‘swa-dharma’, of destroying evil and protecting the good, which is your true duty, incumbent upon you, by your very nature!

The basic question always, is of honest intention. For example, if we accept renunciation, of our own free will, and determination, then Sanyas – renunciation is, not at all difficult. Otherwise everything turns topsy-turvy.

Suppose for example, a person, tired of the burden of tasks, obligatory in the life in a family, takes sanyaas and goes to live alone in a forest. Then what happens there? There also constructs a builds a hut for himself. Further for his protection builds a fence and a gate. As time goes on, this so called renunciant ends up building his own Sansaara – of property and its obligations! Then even if a passer-by, takes some fruit from his tree, he picks up a fight.

What is all this, if not cheating one’s own self and others? Sanyaas has to be real, accepted fully by one’s mind and

not shallow, only on the surface for show! Whatever Tatva gnyan – philosophy we profess, we have to know, fully understand and accept has to be internalized. Not based on our likes and dislikes. It seems from the Bhagawad Geeta that the sanyaas professed by Arjuna was fake, nor real! He was confused, not knowing what his Dharma, in the event was. His intellect was adulterated by ‘Moha, Aaskti. It was absolutely essential to rescue him from this state by wiping out this aasakti, felt Bhgawan Shri Krishna. Bhagawad Geeta’s discourse was essentially for this purpose.

Only by accepting our duties and obligations – our Swadharma, our Kartavya, and following our own swabhaava, we all too, have to achieve our development. Keeping this in mind Bhagawan Shri Krishna said, “Arjuna, instead of adopting the easy ‘dharma’ of others – ‘para dharma’, it is more beneficial to adopt our own natural ‘swa-Dharma’, even if it looks difficult. Action according to our ‘Swadharma’ is better, even if we have to spend all we have, than action according to Para-Dharma which is beyond to lead us to disaster”.

‘श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ (३.३५)’

One’s own dharma is better than someone else’s Dharma |
Death in one’s own Dharma is better; other’s Dharma is dangerous ||

There is an important reason behind this statement. Even if it may seem today, that our effort based on swadharma may result in failure, still it is possible that tomorrow, there may be progress from the same. However, acting as per another’s Dharma, there may be some apparent success now but it is destined to destruction in time.

Besides, the word ‘Viguna’ - is interpreted as ‘Vigata Guna’, - without merit; however it can also be interpreted as ‘Vishesh’ Guna, i.e. special merit. It can also mean that in

every living entity there is a special merit of its own. Acharya Vinoba says that my swadharma is neither smaller nor bigger. It is only befitting me. Just as my shirt is expected to be appropriate for me, my size, it supports me as well as it makes me whole, complete! This enables me like a ladder to reach Adhyatmic – spiritual heights. This Swabhav, Swadharma. Only, for all these things I need to make sincere efforts.

The questions arise, such as:

1. Whether water is of greater value or milk? Answer is milk. But a fish will live only in water. If it is placed in milk, it will spell its death.
2. Similarly, is the earth bright or the Sun? The answer is – Sun! On the contrary, staying on this earth only, we can benefit and progress in the light of the Sun.

Bhagawad Geeta clearly tells us, that I should find what my real ‘Swa’ dharma is. There are three important conditions for this.

1. My swadharma, according to my inner strengths, qualities and my nature.
2. It should also match the responsibilities assigned to me by my society, my ‘Dayitva’. To carry out the same should be my social mission.
3. Further, my swadharma should have been willingly accepted by me as my duty. ‘Kartavya’. Similarly it should be leading to my welfare. At the same time, it should serve the society.

VI

“Swadharma: its Position and Direction”

Hence all of us should know what is our exact position and direction. Acharya Vinoba has told us an important point is at the end of the first chapter of ‘Geeta Pravachane’, which is ‘All of us have to be Arjuna, if we are to clearly understand the message of the Geeta. What is the meaning of the name ‘Arjuna’? It is one whose nature is ‘ruju’ – soft is Arjuna. Actually, the dialogue in the Geeta is very special. The reason is that Arjuna, with his ‘riju swabhava’ placed before Krishna, whatever thoughts and feelings arose in his mind and heart. He did leave out anything. Finally at the end, he entirely surrendered himself to Krishna.

Really Arjuna was already dedicated to Krishna. When he chose Shri Krishna as his charioteer, he had given control of horses in the hands of Shri Krishna. Along with this, he had also made ready to surrender the control of his mind also to Krishna. All of us also need to do the same in the battle of our life. What special traits this hero of Mahabharat, Arjun who was the best among warriors and among the intelligents had? (pg. 24-26) Vinoba says in his Valor Pravachane, says just as Hanuman was a dedicated devotee of Rama, Arjuna was also well-known for his devotion to Shri Krishna. Truly Arjuna and Shri Krishna are in the same relation as Nara and Narayana, (Man and God). As it is, Mahabharat begins with salutations to Narayana and Arjuna, the best among men!

This two-some of Krishna and Arjuna is full of valour. Arjuna’s another is ‘Vijay’, meaning – Winner. Arjuna himself is ‘Krishnamaya’ – i.e. totally merged with Krishna. This is his uniqueness. There is an early reference to this quality by the name ‘Arjunaka Sampraday’ – as a sect. being totally merged with Krishna was their aim and special trait. Just as there was

Vaasudeva Sampradaya, similar to that, this Arjunak sampradaya has been mentioned by Sage 'Panini'. He has said that Haribhakti, devotion to Hari, (Karishna) is the acme of this sect. Valorous Arjuna has another great quality, supreme activity! He had full control on his senses, achieved by absorbing the true teaching of Shri Krishna, Savyasacaachi ! He is said to be Gudaakesha, having full control over the sleep! He has control over his mind, and thus he truly a veera – valorous!

Bhagwad Geeta is the teaching imparted by Shri Krishna to Arjuna on the battle field of Kurukshetra, but the teaching is also equally important for us in our life in general, which we should meticulously observe in our daily life, on the Kurukshetra of our mind, of our social life; All and every one of us are on the 'Dharmakshetra-Kurukshetra' of our swadharma, swa-kartavya. It is our good fortune that Vyasmuni, has introduced blended 'shrimad Bhagawad Geeta' appropriately in his epic Mahabharata. Rain falling on the high peak of a mountain, has to come down in the form of a river for the benefit of all of us in the society. That has happened here. Bhagawan Shrikrishna has imparted the nectar of Geeta teaching on noble hero, Arjuna! But Vyasamuni has compiled it for the benefit of people in general, like you and me, thereby he has granted a great boon on human society.

Again what is the meaning of 'Krishna' 'in the name of Bhagawan Shri Krishna? Krishna means attractive, one who attracts, wins us! Thus Bhagawan Shri Krishna also keeps the minds and senses of his devotees, on the path of devotion. He flowers our sense of discretion. For ultimately every person's knowledge itself is his Krishna, who resides in his heart! We have to make Him our supreme guide, 'The Guru'. then we have to take the highway of appropriate action shown by Him. Thus we shall be able to understand our Geeta, the supreme true Geeta of our life, for each one of us.

To this end we should understand, absorb the true meaning essence of the Bhagwad Geeta. What is this essence? It is 'understanding the knowledge of our own 'SELF' and establishing ourselves in 'Samatva Buddhi'! If we can absorb this essence of the Geeta, then we are completely freed from the feeling of depression, and it is replaced by 'Bliss', the result of this nectar in our life. It puts an end to conflict and is replaced by equanimity. Vishadyoga is transformed in Prasadyoga, the blessings of Harmony in our life. This is the magic of the teaching of Bhagawad Geeta. It is all encompassing. The main reason of this result is, Bhagwad Geeta has, along with the Brahma Vidya, but within the scope of this aatma-gnyan, given us the key to live our life in this world and society in an exemplary manner. Such is the greatness of the Geeta.

The 'Swadharma' or 'Kartavya dharma' of shrimad Bhagawad Geeta is based on the three terms outlined in it. These are:

1. The 'Atma' is immortal and whole,
2. Body is mortal and subordinate.
3. One's own 'duty' is indispensable and most important.

Of these three principles, the first two are to be learnt and to be known. The third is to be sincerely executed.

Every human being has the obligation to fulfill the first two, which are naturally with him from the birth. He does not have to search for it. The reason is that no one just drops from the sky! All of us are born in a human group or society which is already existing before. Our father and mother were there. The neighbors were there. In such a neighborhood we are born.

It is therefore incumbent upon us to serve the people in the society around us. This is our 'Swadharma'. To elaborate it means, I should serve my parents, members of my family and people of my village or town, and finally the whole humanity and the environment. This is my 'swadharma'. This is my

sacred duty. This 'swadharma' outlined in the Geeta, is born with us. Or better still, it is there even before our birth. To fulfill this obligation we have taken birth. The reason why Human birth is considered the best must be this only.

Acharya Vinobaji says, 'I consider this swadharma, our duty, described by the Geeta truly as my mother.' It is not for me to select my mother in this birth. She is there already. The same is the case with 'swadharma'. To neglect our swadharma is to turn our back on it, try to overlook our swadharma, which is deplorable. It is no less than suicide! On the other hand we enhance, enrich our life, and move forward by fulfilling our dharma. We can develop ourselves spiritually. On the contrary to neglect our swadharma is to abandon our own home! This is entirely unnatural.

In fact we should extend the field of our swadharma to the whole society and the whole mankind. Such an attitude of renunciation is the very best and appropriate in every way. In the Bharatiya tradition, action on such a basis is termed as 'Yagna', which means 'Tyagabuddhi', the attitude of giving without expectation, and is traditionally saluted. Yagna means giving up. Thus Geeta's teaching is pure Yagna attitude. Truly the human life itself is a Yagna. Chhandogya Upanishad says, 'पुरुष वावो यज्ञः ।' "Human life is itself a Yagna." (Chhandogya UP. 30). This means that the highest ideal of my life should be, this cultured ideal attitude, which Shri Krishna calls swadharma in the Bhagawad Geeta. Really we need not make this comparative, judgment of greater of lower. Such distinction arises from 'Ahankara' an attitude of worthless pride which is clearly and thoroughly disapproved by the Geeta.

Thus the 'Swadharma' prescribed by the Bhagawad Geeta, is very wide and encompassing. It is generous. Compared to it, the Family Dharma, Social Dharma, Yugadharma, of a particular era, are all limited. Swadharma of

the Geeta is in reality, Manav dharma, Human Dharma. It is the sacred duty of each and every human being. To observe it fully in our life we have to have strong commitment to it in our mind and heart. We have to be ready to make great sacrifice, if and when required. Another special aspect is that the true dharma is opposed only to adharma and none else. Further the Geeta says that swadharma contributes to our development. What does this self-development mean? If you adhere, strictly observe your swadharma, and then you can make progress in your own spiritual development. You can develop your satvaguna – the highest of the three guna, and check the lower Raja and Tama gunas. When all this takes place a human being can achieve his highest potential!

The gist of all this discussion is that our swadharma accompanies us right at our birth itself. It should be possible to put it into practice as easily as our breathing process! Yet, it does not so happen.

But why it is so? The fact is that in a human life there are many ‘Mohas’ – temptations. That is why this happens. On our path of practicing our Dharma, these six enemies (Kama, Krodha, Lobh, Moha, Mada and Matsar) continuously spread thorns in our path; these spread poison in our plates. Even so, let us see why this happens. The basic reason is our ‘Deha-buddhi’, i.e. we consider ourselves as ‘bodies’ only. It puts walls of separation, in place of unity and integrity. By stressing selfishness it wreaks havoc! It clouds our ‘Atma-buddhi’.

If we wish to put an end to it, we have to replace ‘Dehabuddhi’ with ‘Atmabuddhi’ – soul-consciousness. We have to correctly understand that our soul is eternal and whole, without any fractions. When we do realize this clearly, then our minds will have a wider vision. Acharya Vinoba Bhave in his ‘Valor Pravachane’, explains: the word ‘Atma’ comes from the root ‘At’ meaning ‘eternal’. Words ‘Atmabuddhi’, ‘Atmagnayan’, ‘Atmachintan’, these deeper aspects, tell us

incessantly, that the soul is eternal, impartial and changeless. On the other hand, body is perishable; it is only a cover.

The original source of the feeling of permanence within us, is 'Atma' – the soul. 'Indriyas', the senses are agents of action; within these senses resides the Atma. Bodies come and go, but Atma, the soul is eternal. The concept of 'Rebirth' in Indian tradition, follows from this eternal nature of Atma. This Principle of Rebirth is a science, philosophy in itself, a natural corollary of the eternal nature of 'Atma'. If we increase our Atmabuddhi and reduce Deha-buddhi, then it will not be difficult for us to implement our swadharma, our Kartavya, duty. To achieve this we have to learn to reduce the importance of our bodies and give higher importance to the eternal 'Atma'.

As it is, our human bodies are subject to change from moment to moment. We have to take note of this important fact. We are familiar with the change from childhood to youth and from youth to old age. Similarly the Atma, the soul, changes his bodies as its clothes. We should accept this as a fact of nature. Then we shall have the patience to put our swadharma into action! It is a fact that bodies come and go, but soul is never destroyed. The river is an example. The water goes on changing but the river remains unchanged. Similarly body keeps changing but the Atma is eternal. Hence we should not be attached to our body, which can be an instrument for discharging our Swadharma. We can, with our bodies, serve the human beings and the society and God, 'Parameshwara'. This is the position and action of Swadharma.

VII

“Sankhya-Yoga and Sankhya-Shastra”

The second chapter of Bhagawad Geeta is, by tradition, known as Sankhya Yoga. This Sankhya Yoga of the Geeta is highly important.

We have discussed the following three points which have been emphasized.

1. Atma is eternal and whole
2. The body is perishable and less important,
3. Swadharma is supreme and inevitable

Further we have discussed how in implementing these in our life, we need to totally remove our attachment and always remember our duty.

In the second chapter (Adhyaya) of the Geeta, the relevant shlokas are as follows: (Ch. 2)

Dehinosmin yathaa dehe, kaumaaram, Yauvanam, jara |
Tatha Dehantara Praptirdhiraha Tara Na Muhyati ||
(Shlok 13)

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ (२.१३)

Vaasaansi Jirnaani yathaa Vihaaya | Navini Grahnanti Naroparaani |
Thathaa shariraani vihaya jirnaani | Anyaani Sanyaati Navaani Dehi ||
(Shlok 22)

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान् अन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥ (२.२२)

Sukha Dukhe same krutvaa | labhaa Labhau Jayaajayau ||
Tato Yuddhaaya yujyasva | Naivam Papam Avaapsyasi ||
(Shlok 38)

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्वस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ (२.३८)

Traigunyahavishayaa Veda | Nistraigunyo Bhava Arjuna |
Nirdvando Nityasatvastho | Niryogakshema aatmavan ||
(Shlok 45)

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवाऽर्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ (२.४५)

Karmanyevadhikaraste | Maa faleshu kadaachana |
Maa karmafatheturbhu | Ma ate sngostavakarmani || (Shlok 47)

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ (२.४७)

Yogastha Kuru Karmaani | Sangam Tyaktvaa Dhananjaya |
Siddhyasiddhyoho Samo Bhutvaa | Samatvam Yoga Uchyate ||
(Shlok 48)

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ (२.४८)

Karmajam Buddhiyuktaa Hi | Falam Tyaktvaa Manishinaha |
Janmabandha Vinirmuktaa | Padam Gachhanti Anaamayam ||
(Shlok 51)

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविमिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ (२.५१)

These seven shlokas, clarify the threefold science in a most significant manner.

Geeta Vachaspati Sadashiv Shastri Bhide in his small booklet, 'Geeta Saar', containing selected small number of shlokas from the Bhagawad Geeta, has given small but significant opening notes for each adhyaaya. In the first

Adhyaaya, 'Arjun Vishad Yoga', he has said, "When Arjuna stood on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, to fight the Kauravas, he saw among those arraigned against him, many of his guru and senior relatives. When he realized that for winning the war, he will have to kill many of his senior relatives and his teacher Drona, he felt sad. He put down his Gandiva bow and arms and told Krishna that he will not fight. Hence, this Adhyaaya has been titled "Arjun Vishad – Yoga".

Similarly, introducing the second chapter, Shri Bhide says, "Sankhya yoga means the Yoga of Knowledge, yoga of philosophy. In this chapter there is the introduction of all the philosophical questions raised in the other chapters. Shri Krishna has advised Arjuna that the human body is perishable, Atma is immortal, birth and death are natural; hence he should not grieve. Then, again a bold soldier like him should observe his Kshatriya Dharma – duty of a Kshitriya, and fight against injustice. Bhagawan Shri Krishna showed him his proper duty, in this chapter. In that era of Geeta, Sankhya philosophy was well understood and accepted. This chapter is therefore titled Sankhya Yoga.

Dr. C. T. Kendhe, in his book 'Geeta: A Study', says: 'Yoga Shastra means Science of yoga. Yuj means to add, combine. This would be its simple meaning. However, a higher specific meaning is 'the union of the soul with his natural higher state.' This Yoga is expected in the Geeta. That state of mind in which the soul has combined with its own natural higher state 'Swarupa', with the Ishwara or Brahma is termed 'Samatva' Yoga. 'समत्वं योग उच्यते।' **Samatvam Yoga Uchyate**'. Further, the practices which lead to this state of Samatva, are also termed 'Yoga' in the Geeta.

Further, in this context, Dr. G. V. Devasthali, in his book 'Geeta pravesh' (p. 12) mentions 'योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः।' **Yogashchittavrutti Nirbodhaha** (Yogasutra 1.2) 'Yoga is to

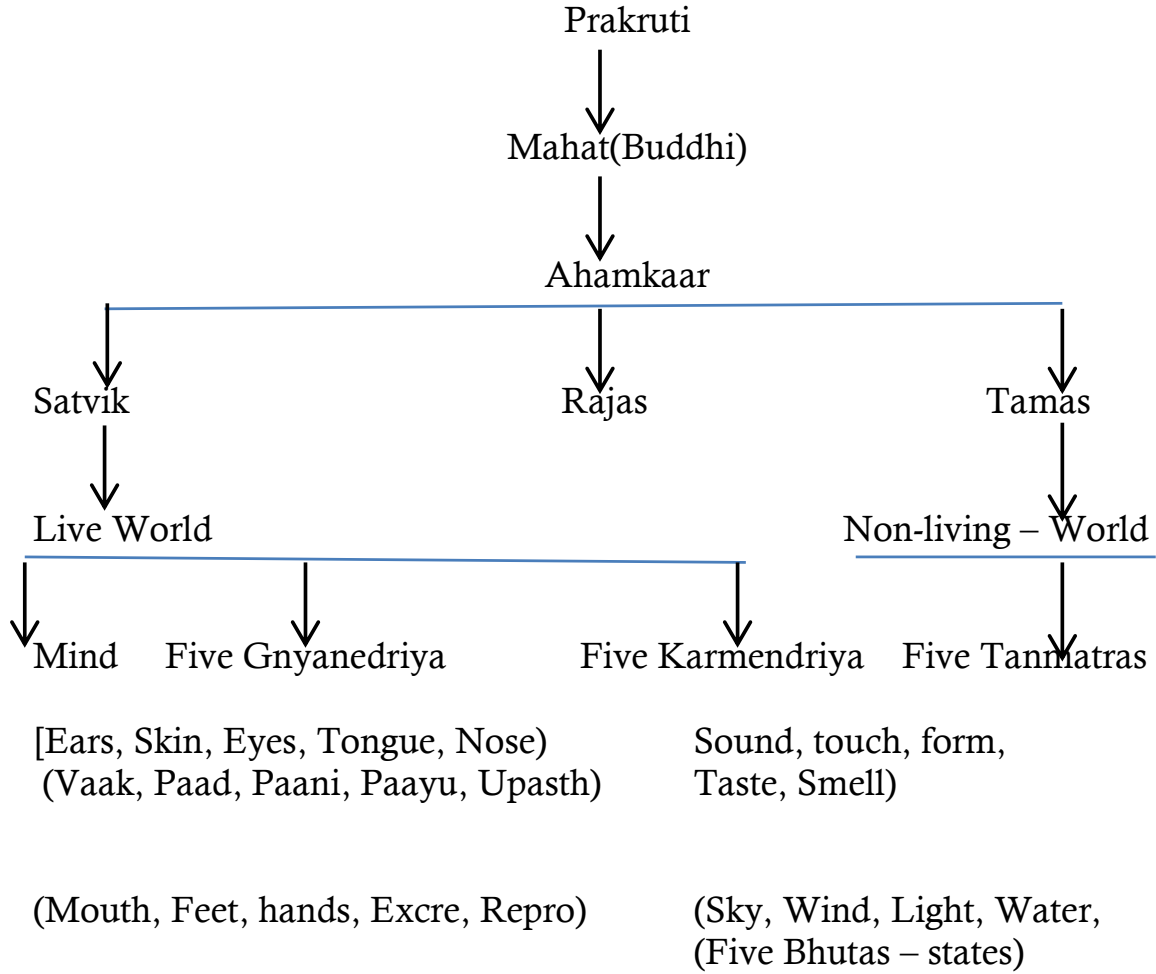
control the vrutties – (wanderings, changes) of the mind, Chitta. The effort to turn the outward looking tendencies of the mind inward is Yoga, the real starting point. From this point of view, it can be said that Yoga is again ‘Viveka’ – discretion only. But this is not the final word. The concept, the word Yoga from the verb Yuj, indicates and includes the Vedanta theory of the combination of individual soul ‘jiva’, and ‘Shiva’, the universal existence, be it in a minutest leaf. ‘तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपेऽवस्थानम् ।’ (Tadda Drashtuhu swarupe avasthanam) (Yogasutras 1.3)

Dr. Devasthali also says (Geeta Pravesh – pg. 16, 17)

“In the Bhagawad Geeta is included all the subjects, karma (Works) gnyan, (Knowledge), Bhatki (Devotion), Yagny) Yoga, Saankhya, all these subjects and all sects are discussed and also accepted.’ Yet there is no insistence on any specific path or belief as the only true one. Even after all this, in the Geeta, there is no preference or partiality as better or best path. Among all these, one may accept or adopt any one with all sincerity, it is alright. In fact the Geeta has coordinated all these various lines of thought. Further, the Geeta goes beyond all this and says, “Your path may be any one of these, it is enough if you implement the same in your life and actions without attachment or disrespect, with equal mind as your duty. This equanimity, samatva yoga attitude is the main teaching, eternal science of the Geeta. ‘

Then, whether it is science of Saankhya or its implementation, Saankhya Yoga; what is the basic thought, ‘Saankhya Tatva Chintan’? Sage Kapila is considered as the father of this philosophy. Dependable historic details of his time and life are not available. Again Ishwarkrishna’s Saankhyakaarika seems to be more widely extant. In this respect, Kapila, Aasuri, Panch Shikha and Eshwarkrishna are known to be the successive sages in this tradition.

What is the reason, significance of the name 'Saankhya' of this tradition? The Sankhya philosophy considers twenty five original elements as basic foundation of the creation. Similarly it advances five categories of ignorance, twenty eight weaknesses, nine satisfactions and eight types of 'Siddhi's. thus from the twenty five basic elements to eightfold achievements, all these aspects of this creation are described in terms of counting numbers; hence it is termed as 'Saankhya'.



(Ref. Bharatiya Tatva Gnyaan' Prof. Shrinivas Dixit)

According to 'Saankhya Philosophy' 25 basic tenets, qualities of nature are –

“मूलप्रकृतिरविकृतिमहादाद्याः प्रकृतिविकृतयः सप्त ।
षोडशकस्तु विकारो न प्रकृतिर्नविकृतिः पुरुषः ॥” (सांख्यकारिका)

At the very outset Ishwar-Krishna in his book (Sankhya Karika) says – ‘Sankhya Shastra’ is a tool, equipment to get rid of three different types of miseries, pains – 1) Adhi bhoutika, 2) Adhidavika 3) Adhyatmika

Once you realize, ‘I’ am a spirit different from this inert nature, then you will be released from cycle of life and death.

According to ‘Sankhya darshan’, there are different types of men (Sankhya karika – 18) the one who gains discriminatory Power, Knowledge of discretion, he only gets ‘moksha’ Release, he becomes one with him, atma merges in Atman, other men will be stuck in the cycle of life and death. (Sankhya) does not recognize ‘Parmatma’ etc. other than such men.

Sankhya Darshan has described the unfolding of this universe in a very special way.

1. Satva, Raja, and Tamas equally playing their role in the Mula Prakruti – the origin of this Universe.
2. From this Mula prakruti, arise ‘Mahat’, i.e. Intelligence and ego – ‘Ahamkara’; and five Tanmatras, Shabda (word), sparsh (touch), rupa (Appearance), Rasa (taste) Gandha (Smell). Thus there arose seven vikaras – varieties.
3. Further, from these vikaras arose, five Karmendriyas – faculties of work, five Gnyanendriyas – faculties of knowledge, five Mahabhutas – i.e. basic elements of nature, Pruthvi – Earth, Jala – Water, Vayu – Air, - Agni - Fire and Akash – Sky. In addition Mind, makes it sixteen variations.
4. Thus from the Mula Prakruti and from it, the other 23 i.e. total of 24 elements comprise this creation.
5. Apart from these twenty four elements, nothing else is existing in this universe.

This particular stance of Sankhya philosophy is given on page ____.

Let us now consider: What is the similarity and the difference between Sankhya and Vedant philosophy?

We notice that there is striking similarity.

It is clear that in both of them, Moksha is obtained by knowledge or discretion. If what Sankhya terms as prakruti, is considered as 'Maya' based on Chetana of Vedanta, then it perfectly reflects Vedanta philosophy only. Just like Sankhya, Vedanta also postulates that Jiva – the individual consciousness, is tied by the ropes of Maya and begins to think himself as part of Sansaara of an eternally changing nature. Having been thus misled, he forgets his own eternal nature and identifies with some other misleading state.

Vedanta refers to this situation as Adhyaasa:

‘अध्यासो नाम तस्मिंस्तदबुद्धिः ।’

Adhyaaso naama tasminstadbuddhihi |

Because of this Adhayaas we are able to notice this world, to know it. It continues to be in existence. If we desire to secure our release from it, then it is indispensable that we ‘know our real Self’. This knowledge of our own ‘Self, is the same in Vedanta as well as, with a little change Vivekbuddhi in Sankhya. The only single difference is that – in the concept of ‘Viveka’, (in the knowledge that ‘me’ is different from Prakruti), Thus it seems that this serious lacuna has been filled by Vedanta Darshan. Vedanta philosophy says, “The knowledge of the Truth is not limited to becoming aware that ‘I’ am different from the play of Maya.” It is also important to be

aware that I am of the nature of Sat (Truth), Chit (consciousness) and Ananda (Bliss). The positive statement 'Aham Brahma Asmi', that 'I am Brahma', is a great emphasis, an added gift of Vedanta philosophy.

In this context, Vedanta darshan, has clearly and authoritatively stated that Brahma alone is the sat – 'Truth', without a second. All else is Asat – untruth, and misleading, Maya, When you discard this upadhy – untruth, the union of Tat (Brahma) and tvam (jiva, individual soul) is completed.

अखंडं सच्चिदानंदं परं ब्रह्मैव लक्ष्यते ।

Akhandam Satchidanandam param Brahmaiva Lakshyate |'

The Vedanta thesis that 'The Jiva is a chip of Paramaattma' has automatically disqualified the Sankhya theory of Multiplicity of Atmaa.

What are the similarities and differences between the Sankhya and Geeta's philosophy? On detailed study, it can be said that in Bhagawad Geeta, the word Sankhya is used in the sense of Gnyaan Yoga, path of knowledge with one exception. In the eighteenth Adhyaaya, verse 13, the word 'Sankhya krutanta' is used. However, it cannot be said with certainty that it is taken from the Sankhya darshan in Ishwarkrishna's karika. But it is evident that many thoughts in Sankhya darshan are quoted in the Bhagawad Geeta, and accepted as such.

For example, the word 'Kshetra' used in the Geeta, to mean 'body', is related to the 'Prakruti' tatva, and prakruti is the mix of three Gunas – Sattva, Rajas and tamas. This is a part of Saankhya philosophy. Similarly, there is mention of Prakruti and Purusha, concepts of Sankhya in the Geeta, 7th Adhyaaya (verse nos. 4, 5 and 6) and in 9th Adhyaaya (verse Nos. 7, 8 10).

Similarly the description of Gunas in the 14th Adhyaaya of the Geeta as also the experience of happiness and unhappiness in Sansaara – world are of nature and gunas only. Again the Purusha, having nothing to do with these feelings, still undergoes these feelings is as per Sankhya philosophy. Same is the case with the proposition that Purusha becomes free of these feelings when this knowledge arises in him. Thus both in the Geeta and Sankhya ideas are similar.

As it is beyond these commonly shared ideas, Geeta goes one step further. Geeta says that ‘Purushottama’ is the master, controller of all these, and that ‘He’ is one with the individual ‘Atma’! (Adhyaaya 13, Shloka 22) ‘Paramatma’ is another name of this Purushottama. Thus by postulating the unity of these two, Bhagawat Geeta has confirmed ‘Advaita’ philosophy and has side stepped the notion of the multiplicity of the individual atmas. Not only this, but in the 13th Adhyaaya the ‘Kshetra’ and ‘Kshetragnya’ concepts and in the 15th Adhyaaya, ‘Kshara’ and ‘Akshara’ concepts also are towards the same end, ‘Advaita’ is emphasized by the Geeta. Thus the Bhagawad Geeta has successfully shown that the Sankhya philosophy logically leads to Advaita only.

To summarize, it is shown that the ‘Brahma Vidya’ discussed by the Geeta successfully brings together the ideas of Kapil Muni’s Sankhya philosophy and Advaita concepts. It is consistent with the overall approach of acceptance and unifying ‘Truth’ in whatever form it is and thereby putting an end to controversies.

VIII

“Sthita Pragnya Vrutti – the Ideal”

Sthita Pragnya is the favourite concept of the Bhagawad Geeta. The word itself seems to be first coined and used by the Geeta; in the opinion of the learned, it is not found in the literature of the Upanishads. The eighteen shlokas in 2nd Adhyaaya describes the state of Sthitpragnya as if it is the heart of the Geeta. Further reference of this state is found in the 18th Adhyaaya, in the final answer of Arjuna. ‘स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः ।’ (Sthito-asmi gata Sandehah) ‘ All my doubts are dissolved, I am enlightened by your teaching to me. (Ch. 18-73). A person attains ‘Sthita Pragnya’ state when he fully integrates the three main principles taught in the Bhagawad Geeta, re. 1. Aatma (soul), 2. Human body and (3) Swadharma. It is truly a samatva – holistic ideal; in which the practical life of Karma Yoga is aligned with the principles of Sankhya.

We can say that a Sthita Pragnya is one who lives his life according to the principles of the Geeta and has achieved a state of equanimity in his body and mind. Thus, his life is an example of the equation:

Bhagawad Geeta = Jeevan Geeta;

A majority of the signs of Sthita Pragnya are found in the following reference points:

1. Jeevan Mukta in Ch.-5
2. Gnyani Devotee in Ch.- 12
3. Trigunaateeta – Ch. 14
4. Gnyana Nishth in Ch. 18

However, ‘Sthita Pragnya’ is the only word that describes the highest, all round development of character of a human being as expected in the Geeta.

In the second Adhyaaya, Arjuna asks Krishna with great humility,

“Sthita Pragnyasya ka Bhasha, samdhisthisya Keshava? |
Sthitadhihi kim prabhasheta, kimaaseeta vrajeta kim? || (2 -1 4)

“O Krishna, Who is fit to be called ‘Sthitapragnya’? How does he speak? How does he behave? How does he be? And what does he abstain from ‘...किमासीत् ब्रजेत् किम् ॥’

There is a proverb Marathi – ‘Bole taisaa chaale’. There is no contradiction in his speech and behavior. Bhagawad Geeta has emphasized this important point, through Arjuna’s question.

We have to keep in mind that here in the shloka above, the word ‘samadhi’ does not have the same meaning as in Patanjali’s Yogasutra. Here ‘samadhi’ means the same in the shloka number 14 and 53 explained before, in the sense of having discretion and being determined. Shri Gnyaneshwar says:

‘Aani Sthirbuddhi jo Mhanije, to kaisa chinhi janije |
Jo Samadhi sukha bhunje, Akhandita || (2.288)

When we examine the sholka referring to Sthitapragnya state, we find that number 55 to 58 define the word, sthitapragnya; number 59 to 68 further describe the behavior which indicate his state, while No. 69 to 72, describe his condition in greater detail.

In this wide canvas, Bhagawan has, in the beginning, mentioned four things; absence of desire, control of mind and actions, absence of attachment and lack of involvement in actions.

In this context Bhagawan states emphatically, “one who discards all desires and is Athmanishtha – directing his mind inwards, is Sthitpragnya! Such a one is positive in his outlook

and does not fall a prey to his desires. He is always enjoying his identification with his 'Self'. Again he never falls a prey to unhappiness, nor does He desire happiness. Thus he remains beyond both happiness and unhappiness; neither feels strong attachment nor aversion does not feel strong attachment, nor aversion. Fear or anger does not touch him. This control! On his mind and feelings in all situations is marvelous.

Again such a one, remains mentally detached in all circumstances. Though feeling unity with all in his mind and heart, he is not partial to his relatives nor does feel aversion or hatred to anyone; whether his actions get him benefit or not, in good or bad circumstances, he remains equal, unaffected. Whatever degree of honour may be accorded to such a one, is not enough. That he has equanimity 'तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ।'. 'Tasya Pragnya prathsthitaa' is true in every sense in his case. Bhagawan has praised him again and again, in this very manner in shlokas 57 to 58, and 68 (Ch.2), because He thinks it is important. However we need to remember that the word Pragnya, in the context of the Geeta, is not the ordinary intelligence; pragnya here means intelligence centered in the Aatma! It is the intelligence searching inwards, centered in the Self, and recognizing the utmost importance of this Adhyatmikta – SELF orientation!

Here Bhagawan gives a significant example, that of Kurma – a tortoise! Sthitapragnya's nature is Pratyahari which means he can keep his senses fully under his control. When to let them be free to be involved – (e.g. in the worship of Bhagawan, meditation on Him etc.); and when to withdraw them (e.g. – from desires, attraction to objects of sense enjoyment etc.), and again when they need to be employed in works of service (Kartavya karma); all this a Sthitapragnya is fully aware of. For this purpose the tortoise is a perfect example, as it can deploy or withdraw all his senses (Avayavas) at will as desired; as if he is the ideal for a Sthitapragnya. And even so, in the second descent

of Bhagawan on this creation is significantly the 'Kurma-Avatar! Similarly in all temples, a little image of Kurma is set looking at the main deity! The reason is the same, that Kurma is symbol of purity and self-control.

Shri Bhagawan says:

“यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणिन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥” (२.५८)

Earlier we have discussed, in the shloka 59 to 68, of the Second Adhyaaya of Shrimad Bhagavad Geeta, as to what the characteristics of a Sthitpragnya are.

The very first characteristic is total absence of carnal desire! This means that the condition of his mind, from the bottom has become free from the desire for sex as well as all such desires for enjoyment. Really such a state is far too difficult for an ordinary human being to achieve. Yet, it is possible for a Sthitapragnya. The reason is that he has experienced the supreme joy of Brahmananda. He has had the Darshan of - has been Parabrahma “रसः एव सः ।” “Raso vai ‘Saha” – His (brahma’s) very nature is Sweetness incarnate! Once a Tapaswin – renunciant, experiences this supreme ‘Ananda’, for him all other joys retain no attraction! Otherwise human senses are so powerful that their desires drag down even the highly educated and intelligent to the depth of hell.

In the animal kingdom we see examples of some species like deer, elephant, butterfly, fish, bumble bee, each one of these is tempted to its death by the lure of only one of their senses, to its death, while the human being is lured by all his senses. Even the educated are seen to be easy prey to death brought on by all their five senses together! Sthitpragnya is, however, protected because of his strong shield of vairagya – and devotion to Ishwara – Lord.

Here the word 'Vairaagya' has double meaning. First it means aversion to the world full of cravings. As opposed to this, 'Vairagya' can also mean Vishesh Raaga, i.e. boundless love for Bhagawan. Sthitapragnya processes both types of Vairagya. Further devotion to God enables him to devote his senses fully in adoration of God! (It is not necessary for him to trade Aghori path of suppression of senses.) Shree Gnyaneshwar maharaj has said,

“Whatever karma he performs, he dedicates |
Them to 'Aadi Purush - First among men i.e. god' ||

“Then he becomes perfect |
When Gnyaana arises || (2.271)

We have to note here an important point. Arjuna had asked the basic question - 'स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा' "Sthitapragnyasya Ka Bhaashaa (Shlok 54) wherein he had inquired 'स्थितप्रज्ञः किमासीत्' Sthitapragnya Kimaaseeta?'

On this point Bhagawan replies in Shloka 61, 'युक्त आसीत् मत्परः।' 'Yukta Aseeta Matparaha'.

Gnyadev Maharaj explains it in these words:

“Jo Atmabodhyuktu | Houni ase satatu |
Jo mate brudayaan aatu | Visambena || ” (2.217)

One who is constantly aware of 'Aatma' as his own self, does not have any regret.

Similarly regarding the Sthitpragnya state, Arjuna had one more question, 'स्थितप्रज्ञः व्रजेत् किम्।' "Sthitpragnya Vrajeta kim?" (Shloka No.54). Here the root is 'Vraja', just as in shloka 64, it is

‘Chakra’; we take both these to mean ‘Walk’ or ‘move’. But it has wider meaning including to behave, treat others etc. Bhagawan has used these words in this wider context.

Clarifying this further, Bhagawan says that if protective ring provided by ‘vairagya’ and devotion to god was discarded, the result will be a series of undesirable results. Then there is no remedy to it. Then he cannot exist from the evil circuit. What happens next? Thoughts and desire for pleasure, arise leading to slavery of mind for these pleasures; if not fulfilled leads to anger, lack of discretion and finally forgetting “Who I am.” Then one loses desire and will to tread the spiritual path to the highest Sthitapragnya State. Once this happens, then man loses everything. This downward fall becomes inevitable! With absolute urgency Bhagawan tells Arjuna, (and also to all of us) –

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ (२.६३)

“Krodhat bhavati Sammoha; Sammohat smruti Vibhramaha |
Smrutibhranshat buddihnaasho, buddhinaashat pranashyati ||
(2.63)

Here we should understand the exact meaning of the word ‘Smrutibhransha’ used in the Geeta. It does not mean only lack of memory or its weakness. It means Man, forgetting ‘Swaroopa’ – his own Self – Aatma tatva. To forget that “I am a part of Paramaatma.” To forget that I am the Royal SWAN, or to forget the phrase ‘So-ham’ or ‘Hamsa’ (used to enter deep in meditation practice, ‘So-Aham’, means ‘I am He’ indicating unity of man and God. **Knowers** proclaim that ‘to know who I am, is the most important task in my life as a human being! But that I forget! I start considering the tasks of my hum drum existence in human body! Then? Losing All, is my self-inflicted misfortune. My highest task, my goal of life should be and is to know my ‘Self’. I forget it and am tied up in my family life and Sansaara. Then? My degradation is inevitable. Truly my highest duty is to

become 'Narayana' – the God from my present state of 'Nara' – Human being.

Saint Eknath has said:

From the human body | To attain the status of 'Sat-Chit-Ananda' ||
This privilege by Narayana | By His Grace, has been given to me ||
(Eknathi Bhagawat, 9.330)

Therefore, we have to remember that this is our highest duty, our Dharma at all times in our life. This is the message of Geeta's Sthitapragnya to us all.

Shri Bhagavant again says to us, from the unfortunate whirlpool of these sensual objects, all of us have to establish ourselves in the heaven of Sthitapragnya state of supreme happiness – Ananda! He who, dropping all attachment and hatred both, keeping senses in full control, goes about his life from moment to moment in this supreme state, wins permanent heavenly happiness in this world. Once he attains this stable state of mind, all his troubles vanish. But if a person does not have the desire to cultivate equanimity and get such permanent happiness, where then, can he get peace? When there is no peace of mind, how can such a person get true happiness? From where, asks Shri Bhagawan!

In the second Adhyaaya there is another example given by Bhagawan. He says, when human mind is running after his senses, which are fully lost to objects of desire, his condition is like the boat caught in a windstorm in the middle of the ocean.

“इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥” (२.६७)

Indriyanam hi charatam yanmano nuvidhiyate |
Tadasya harati pragnyaam Vayur naavamivambhasi || (2.27)

Kathopanishad uses a simile to describe the human situation thus: ‘Aatma is seated on a chariot in the form of our body, our senses are the five horses and our mind is the reign, our intelligence is the charioteer. We have to remain alert and constantly apply the reign of the Mind to bring under control our senses running after the objects of enjoyment; never allow it to be lose so as to avoid them running wild. Geeta also says that if allowed to run wild, our mind will destroy the boat of Buddhi, (intelligence) on the rock of sense pleasures. We can succeed in directing our mind properly if we sincerely try to bring our senses under our control.

If we can draw back our senses from the enjoyment of sense pleasures and from all round outer objects, then our intelligence will certainly be free and become steady; we shall be ‘Sthirabuddhi’, then we are able to attain the ideal state of our mind.

Earlier Bhagawan has, in second Adhyaaya, described extraordinary traits of Sthitapragnya state; which may seem odd from a more practical standpoint. It is given in Shlokas 69 to 72.

Bhagawan says:

“या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥” (२.६९)

‘Yaa nisha Sarvabhutaanam, Tasyam Jagarati Samyami |
Yasyaam Jagarti Bhutani Saa nisha Pashyato Munehe ||’ (2.69)

Bhagawan has described in this shloka, the state of a Sthitapragnya, in quite an ornamental language. In these words, ‘night’ and ‘stay awake’, we have to understand that they apply not to the physical, but to our mental state!

Here, Bhagawan describes the mental state of a Sthitapragnya, throughout his entire life. Not only it is entirely different from that of common man in society, but at times it seems quite in opposition to it. However, that itself is what is special about it. To put it in another way, a Sthitapragnya is not awake to indulgence in the sensual objects, but he is wide awake for inner happiness of awareness of his own Aatma. Similarly he does not have desire for the fruit of his actions, but is awake to his duty at every moment of his life.

On this subject, Sant Gnyandeo says:

Dekhe bhuta Jaat nidele | Tethachi jayaa Paahile |
Aani jiva jethe cheyile | Teth Nidrito jo || (2.355)

To describe this state of mind of a Sthitapragnya Bhagawan uses the simile of an Ocean, Udadhi of generosity.

He says,

“आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥” (२.७०)

Aapuryamaanam, achalaprathishtham |
Samudram Aapah Pravishanti yad vat ||
Tadvat kamaa yam pravishanti sarve |
Sa shantim aapnoti, na kaama kami || (2.70)

“Just as, an ocean does not overflow, even as the waters, from rivers on all sides enter it, in the same way, all the objects of enjoyment lose their attraction as they enter in his mind; he alone finds Peace absolute; not the person who is running after these objects of desire. How can a person enjoy peace if he is running here and there to get satisfaction of his desires, get peace and happiness?”

Just as the ocean absorbs the waters entering it from all sides, Sthitapragnya also absorbs and transforms the sense objects in the image of his Aatma. This is his specialty, his strength, his strength! Again the ocean is not happier by the plentiful of the waters during the monsoon season, and during the summer is not perturbed by the depleted flow. The ocean, at all times, supports the life of all types of species living within its waters. The ocean serves the creation in all manners.

The Sthitpragnya is like the ocean! And the ocean is like the Sthitapragnya! Thus Bhagawan's comparison is wholly appropriate.

With reference to this comparative illustration, Shri J. S. Karandikar says (p. 86), "The ocean maintains its own boundaries, but for this purpose it does not seek to stop the flow of these rivers coming inside, nor does it seek to go away from them; in the same way, the Sthitapragnya also, in order to keep his mind focused on his Aatma, does not seek to lose the doors of his senses; nor does he run away from the human society. He eliminates their influence on himself, simply by ignoring them in his mind. In this context, we may recall the description of the characteristics of a Sthitapragnya by Shri Gnyandeo.

"A Sthitapragnya", says Gnyandeo, "recognizes the Play of Consciousness and is constantly engaged in the worship of 'Vishwatmaka Deva' - God in the form of this world!"

"To Ahamaarate dnaduni | Sakal karma sanduni |
Vichare Vishwa houni | Vishwaamji II (2.267) and

"Aisa Aatmabodhe Toshala | Jo Paramaanande Pokhala |
Tochi Sthitapragnya Bhala | Volakha Tu || (2.366)

Naturally such a Sthitapragnya is different from the normal ordinary world. He is 'Anaasakta' – not bound by attachment, 'Nispruha' – not having any expectation,

‘nirabhimaani’ – without arrogance, and ‘Moha Mamatva shunya’ – devoid of any desire and attachment. This is the Chatusutri – fourfold description - of the state actions of a Sthitapragnya. At the end of the second chapter , - Bhagawan says, “O, Paartha, what I described so far, is the ‘Brahmi Sthiti’ – state of mind of a knower of Brahma. Once a person attains this Sthitapragnya state, then he has no bund by attachment. Not only that, but also just as during this life, even at the end of his life he enjoys total happiness of being one with Brahma ‘- brahmananda’! This is simply natural, because this brahmi state is not one, that comes and goes. It is the state which, once achieved, is always with him. In this respect, Shri Gnyandev says “oho, in the home of the sun, do you have to light a lamp? There is always light there. The same is the case in the Brahmi state.

Shri Bhagawan says:

“एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति &&” (2.72)

“Esha Brahmi Sthitih Parth, Na enam prapaya vimuhyatil |
Sthitva asyaam antakalepi, brahmnivaanam ruchhati ||”

Such a Sthitapragnya earns an everlasting experience of nectar. Where is the danger of death for the remedial medicine? What is the nature of this Brahmi Sthiti? This Brahmi state is such that, there nothing to rise above, and there no fall from it! It is literally the highest. Again this is not dhyan Samadhi, but is Gnyan Samadhi. The highest, the ultimate Samadhi. This is the waking talking unbroken, total, natural Samadhi. It may seem impossible to us, it is not so. It is the Dhruva Tara, the pole star which is always in the same position. It is the highest goal for Mankind, Vishuddha – the cleanest

position, which is described by Bhagawan in the eighteen shlokas in the second Adhyaaya. Truly the summary, shortest statement of Geeta's philosophy is the Sthitapragnya, the favourite son of Mother Geeta!

IX

“Karma Yoga – Way to Lokasangraha” (Towards Fulfillment of Humanity)

In his booklet, ‘Saarth Geeta saar’ comments about the third Adhyaaya, Shri Sadashiv Shastri Bhide says: ‘Karmayoga is the title of the third Adhyaaya. Karma does not leave alone any one. For, the nature has tied up every one with the rope of karma. Therefore, it is futile and not proper to strive to finish off karma. Everyone must continue to carry out his duly, ‘Kartavya karma’. This is to be carried out with ‘Nishkaama buddhi’, says Bhagawan in the third Adhyaaya.

‘समत्वं योग उच्यते।’ ‘Samatvam Yoga uchyate I’ Defining Yoga in this way (2.48) , in the very next shloka (2.49) , Bhagawan has said: The objective behind the ‘karma’ – work is extremely important. ‘दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म’ (Doorena hyavaram karma....) but this, Arjuna had not realized this. Really speaking, compared to ‘Samatva Bhddhiyoga’, the apparent karma is much less important. If one’s buddhi, - intellect is pure, the doer does not incur any sin, because according to the principle of ‘Karmavipaak’, whether karma binds the doer or not, depends upon the intention behind his action – whether it is selfish or of doing good to others. Hence, his intention is very important. Action itself is secondary; the intention behind it is the deciding factor. This was the teaching of Bhagawan. Arjuna, however, had not understood this. Hence Arjuna asks Bhagawan at the beginning of the Third Adhyaaya.

He asked: “O Janardana, if in your opinion, buddhi – intention is higher than Karma, why then, are you pushing me to fight this terrible war? By this ambiguous advice, I feel highly confused and do not know what the right action for me is! So please tell me, clearly what course of action I should take.”

Bhagawan replied:

‘लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयाऽनघ ।
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेण योगिनाम् ॥’ (३.३)

Lokesmin dvividha Nishthaa, pura prokta Mayaa-anagha |
Gnyaanygena Sankhyaanam, Karma yogena Yoginaam || (3.3)

“O Arjuna, You expect to earn Nishtryasa – spiritual attainment. For this objective, the tradition has indicated two paths. One is pure Gnyaan marg, ‘path of knowledge’. The other is that of ‘Action without attachment’. Even if there are two courses, remember that the goal is the same: Paramaarth to realize the ‘Self’. Never forget that Karma – Action, is our swadharma. You do your duty-swadharma, without any expectation; then there is no difficulty. Bhagawan further said, “Disregarding the praaptkarma, course demanding action, has anyone reached ‘Naishkarmya’ – the true state of actionless? How can anyone attain highest objective of Parmaartha, by discarding his own swadharma?”

We have to remember that any living creature in this world cannot remain even for a moment, without doing any action. Without action, even our life itself cannot be sustained. The reason is that the nature has bound all creatures by the three gunas, Satva, Rajas and tamas, and in this bound state all of us keep on doing some action or another all the time! On the other hand, to act against this natural rule, to force our senses to remain idle, and keep thinking in our mind, of sense objects all the time is clearly nothing else but pure hypocrisy. Instead, to be detached controlling our senses by our mind, and keep working by our karmendriyas, is wholly beneficial, the best course.

To this end Bhagawan says, ‘Never stop action, and keep doing your duty, your appointed action. It is the best and beneficial course. Otherwise what will happen?’

“Sarvaswa sanduni Vanaasi Gela | Vani Vanita chintu laagala ||
To Tyaagachi Badhakatve Aala | Ulathun padlaa Sansaari ||

Leaving everything in the Sansaara an aspirant proceeds to the forest. There, his mind started dwelling on ‘Woman’ (desire). His sense of renunciation weakened. He reverted back to Sansaara. This can happen. Hence a person who is inside his heart a Sangi- attached, outside he has renounced the sansaara cannot be stable in his renunciation.

For this reason, Sant Gnyandev has said:

‘Mhanoni je je uchita | aani avasare karuni prapta |
Te karma heturahita | Aachare tu || (2.78)
Dekhe Anukaram Aadhaare | Swadharma jo Aachare |
Mokshu tene vyaapare | Nishchita pawa || (2.80)

In this context Shri Karandikar says: Observing the rules, (Yagnaarth and without attachment) if we perform actions, then we can destroy the poison in the tail of the Scorpio, the sansaara and make it harmless. Not only that, but it can be beneficial too! And thus to let us know the secret to remove the bondage of our karma, is the main purpose of the Geeta (Geeta Tatva – Manjari – Page 102)

Bhagawan says further, in the third Adhyaaya – Whatever work we do, has to be Yagnaartha with the purpose of performing yagna – sacrifice. Works performed without the objective of yagna, always, bind the person. Not only that, but these actions of yagna also have to be without the desire for rewards. Here it is the principle of Karma – Vipak! Whether our actions are to be our bondage or for our development depend on our attitude. What is meant by Yagnabhavana,

yagna vrutti? It is the attitude of sacrifice for the benefit of others, the society. In our human life whatever activity we are doing have to be for the benefit of broader society and other living beings. And that too without any expectation of personal benefit.

‘Yagnaarthat karmano anyatra, loko ayam karmabandhanah |
Tadarthm karma Kaunteya, Muktasangah smaachara ||’ (3.9)

Bhagawan says:

‘यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबंधनः ।
तदर्थं कर्म कौंतेय मुक्तसंगः समाचार ॥’ (३.९)

Bhagawan has, before this, already talked about the importance of ‘Yagna’ and ‘Yagna Vrutti’. He says, in the days of Yore Brahmadev, having produced the human and other living beings, said to them, ” O human beings, with the help and attitude of this Yagnavrutti, strive the prosperity of all of you. This Yagnavrutti is like the Kamadhenu, who will definitely will give you plenty and make you all happy! How exactly this will come about? Because of this yagnavrutti on your part, Devas will be happy and will favour you by teaching you saatvik attitude among yourselves in your life! In this way by making each other happy and satisfied, you will bring about wellbeing and prosperity for all! Yagnavrutti means kartavya, our obligation to the society, let it be diluted in your heart and minds. Forgetting it means committing theft. On the other hand, the objects consecrated in a yagna are prasaad which can lead to our personal and social prosperity and wellbeing. Never let it be diminished. To forget or neglect it means to commit theft. While Yagnashishta, consecrated in a yagna are prasaad, which can lead to our personal and social prosperity and well-being. Never let it be diminished. To forget or neglect it means to commit theft. While Yagnashishta, consecrated food is Prasaad, which brings to you prosperity and well-being.

Displacing this Tyaagruti and to adopt in its place selfishness amounts to committing sin.

In this context, Bhagawan has more to say which is, “yagna is the wheel supporting the society by encouraging circulation of goodwill for everyone’s wellbeing. Everyone should keep the wheel moving.” The proverb ‘Jeevo Jeevasya Jeevanam’ is commonly interpreted as “the larger fish eats the smaller ones’ which is mistaken. We have to take it in the true meaning, that each person supports the lives of other persons in some way, however small it may be. Thus supporting each other, everyone attains divine happiness and also prosperity .Our Bharatiya philosophic tradition clearly says, “Every one of us is born with four debts runas”. These we have to repay during this life. These are, “Dev Runa, Rishi Runa, Pitru Runa and Samajruna”. Several millennia old our Rug Vedic tradition Varuna Niti, Vedic Rita Dharma also teaches us the same lessons, i.e. every Human being can rise with the help of three values: Samata Buddhi, Mamata buddhi and Ekata buddhi.

Shri Bhagawan asks further, “What is the nature of this Srushti-Chakra, Yagnya-Chakra, the merry-go-round of this world, and yagnya within it?” and the need to keep it going?

By food, man gathers strength of live (‘Annamaya Pranah’). Food is produced by the fresh water of the rain; The srushti yagnya chakra helps growth and nurturing of trees and green world, which in turn attracts the rain. Thus helping each other to sustain and grow, the srushti chakra is kept going strong from generation to generation. This is the swadharma, kartavya karma of Human being. Those who do not fulfill their swadharma, and keep running after the satisfaction of their senses are a curse on mankind perpetrators of sin. The Geeta says:

‘Evam pravartiam chakram, naanuvartayti iha yah |
Aghaayur indriya aramo Moghamk Partha sa jeevati || (3.16)

‘एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥’ (३.१६)

In this context Shri Karandikar says – (Geeta Tatva Manjari pg. 112) “This Yagnyachakra /Srushtichakra which, God has set in motion at the beginning of this world. Those who do not help, as per their ability, to keep it going, are a burden on this earth. Further if there is a large group of such sinful people, they become a burden on this earth and to mankind. On the other hand, people who are conscious of their duty, by their good deeds, they sustain this earth and mankind.

Shri Gnyaaneshwar says:

‘Paris pam Savyasaachi | Murti laahoni Devachi |
Khanti kariti karmaachi | Te gaanavandhe Gaa ||’ (2.145)

In this way, in the life of mankind, yagnachakra – the tradition of helping each other should be continued. After all, what is ‘yagnyarth’ Karma? To remove egoism from our mind, and with it, also the desire for the fruits of our work! Offering our ego in the fire of the Yagnya is the most important offering. Similarly to live in consonance with our swadharma is also a yagnya. Chhandogya Upanishadad says: ‘Purusho vaav Yagnyah | ‘पुरूषो वाव यज्ञः।’.

In the third Adhyaaya of Bhagawad Geeta, Bhagawan says, “Every person should know the swadharma and act without attachment. Such a Karma Yogi definitely earns Moksha - release from Sansara.

Gnyandev says:

‘Je Swadharme nishkaamata | Anusarale Partha |
Te Kaivalyapara Tatvataa | Paatale jagi ||’ (2.152)

Earlier, Bhagawan has given guidance to people in Karma Yoga and Loka Sangraha-vrutti. He says, “in the past, Rajarshi Janak, Priya vrata, Ashvapati and others attained Moksha by following swadharma and kartavya karma. Therefore, ‘O Arjuna, for you also it is the best and appropriate to carry out your duty for the benefit of people. People in general, follow whatever the ‘shreshthas’ – the best in society do. In reality, this is the human nature. Bhagawan sites his own example, and says, ‘He Arjuna, in all these three worlds, I require nothing for myself. Still I keep doing my duty; why? Because if I do not attend to my duty, the rest of the people will stop doing their work and I shall be responsible for disturbing the life in the society!’

Here, Bhagawan has clarified the concept of ‘Karmayoga’ means action without attachment and loksangraha means the same action which is beneficial to the society. Lokasangraha means primarily two duties, to perform one’s own dharma and abstain from other tendencies.

Shri Gnyandev also says:

Dekh pan Jankadika, karma jaata Ashekha |
Na sandita Moksha Sukha, Pavate Jahale || (2.152)

Similarly

Dekhe praptartha Jahale, je Nishkamataa pavale |
Tayaahi kartava ase urale, lokaalangi || (2.155)

Why? Shri Gnyandev specifically says:

Yeth Vadil Je Je kariti, Taya Naav Dharmu Theviti |
Tenchi yer anushtithi, Saamanya Sakala || (2.158)

Bhagawad Geeta put special emphasis on this concept of Lokasangraha. This concept appears at different places in the Upanishads also. In the Mahabharat it appears in the Udyogparva and the Shantiparva. However, in the Bhagad Geet has been accorded the place of honour. This is what is special about the Geeta.

Bhagawan, in the third Adhyaaya, says further: Just as the ignorant are keeping busy in work with attachment, in the same way, the enlightened should work incessantly with the objective of Lokasangraha. Here the Geeta also states that the enlightened should never confuse the minds of others. On the contrary, they should lead others by their own example! The same message has been practiced by the saints of the warkari sampraday.

Savta Maharaj says,

‘Kanda Muli Bhaji, Avghi Vithai Maazi.’

Sant Sena Maharaj would remove the dust on the mind and intellect, while saint Kabir would weave the garment of God’s Grace! All the saints have been inspired by the message of Bhagawad Geeta, through the ‘Bhavarth deepika’ of Sant Gnyaneshwar. Therein he says:

Margadhaare vartaave | Vishwa he mohare lavaave |
Alaukiku Nohave | Lokan Prati | |” (2.171)

Then, what exactly should be done?

Tethe satkriyaachi lavavi |
Tech Eki Prashansaavi Naishkarmi hi davavi | Acharoni |
Bhagawad Geeta part 30-p 71-73

The real reason for this is that Karmayoga is a great means of purifying our mind. There is a teaching, ‘Karmanaa Shuddhi | ‘कर्मणा शुद्धिः ।’ Work purifies, Otherwise the society

will be full of people who will teach high philosophy without putting it into practice thus spreading hypocrisy.

Gnyandeo also says:

He aise swabhava | Mhanauni karma na sandave |
Vishesh acharaave | Laage Santi || (3.151)

This is also why Bhagawan tells Arjuna, “Do all the work that you are required to do, with a sense of your duty, swadharma and without egoism.

Mayee sarvaani karmani, sanyasya adhyaatma chetasa |
Niraashir Nirmamo Bhutva, Yudhyaswa Vigatjwaraha || (3.30)

‘मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यसाध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्नर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥’ (३.३०)

Shri Bhagawan says, “Arjuna, offer the results of all the work that you perform with the sense of duty to Me. Also cast aside all attachment, sense of doership, and enmity from your heart; then fight against injustice, that is Dharma Yuddha. Only such action is justified by scriptures. Here Bhagawan has offered the devotees advice how they can perform action without incurring sin. How shall a farmer reap the best harvest; he has to prepare the field and sow the seeds, but there should also be the proper irrigation for the crops, not too little, nor too much, just appropriate measure. Similarly for best results, in a man’s life, there has to be the effort of performing duty along with the warmth of devotion to God! Then he is bound to reap the results of his efforts. The example of Sudama’s offering of pressed rice to his friend Krishna or of the Tulsi – basil leaves by Rukmini are well known. Basically the samtvabuddhi-equanimity is needed. The example of a shopkeeper, Tuladhar explaining to a Brahmin ‘Jaajali’ that in his business, one simple rule he observes is that the weighing scale has to be horizontal, equal!

Bhagawan has further explained in detail and emphasized, Karma Yoga coupled with equanimity, and Devotion to God in the shloka – (3.30) of the third Adhyaaya. Specially this concept has also been referred to in (2.45). ‘Traigunyavishayaa Veda’ ‘त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा...’ and in (4.24) ‘Brahmarpanam Brhama havi....’ ‘ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविः...’ According to Shri J. S. Karandikar (Geeta Tatva Manjari) says, “The main focus of the teaching of Shri Krishna in the Geeta, is on the principle of ‘Nishakaama Karma Yoga’ (focusing on Action without desire or attachment with the results of effort).

There are five specific aspects of this principle:

1. Be ‘Adhyaatma Chetas’ (Atmavan) – Ever conscious of the presence of the Inner soul.
2. Offer all your actions to God, Bhagawan.
3. Do not be concerned about the results while performing Action as your duty.
4. Be free of ‘Mamatva buddhi’ the feeling of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’, and have Purity of mind.
5. While performing your duty, be Vigtajwara – free of the fever of concern for what will happen?

Enriched by these five characteristics, performing our swadharma, is the highest goal and reward of human life. Even if life ends while performing our swadharma it should be welcome. It gives us the release, freedom from this human body and its limitations, ‘Moksha’.

However Pradhama which is easier and more attractive with its earthly enjoyment, is surely leading to our downfall. Moha is dangerous and should be shunned.

Instead Swadharma should be adopted. We should carry out our duty, Karvavya Karma and take up Nishkaam Karmayog. Suppose if burnt seeds are planted, will those seeds grow? Surely not. Then the final victory, achieving Moksha is not far. The question arises, if this is the case then why Man does not willingly adopt the same, and instead goes on that way to hell? This is the question which puzzles Arjuna and he seeks answer , guidance from Bhagawan Shri Krishna at the end of the third chapter. Arjuna says, “O Krishna, despite his unwillingness, why does man goes ahead and behaves sinfully, as if driven by some other force?

Bhagawan explains:

“Kama esha, krodha esh, Rajogunasamudhbhavaha |
Mahaashno Mahaapapma Viddhi enam iha vairinam || (3.37)

‘काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।
महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥’ (३.३७)

“ O, Arjuna listen, Hungry and sinful, this enemy of mankind, kaama and Krodha – (lust and anger) arises in the human mind from his Rajas and Tamas tendencies.”

This means that, though difficult to give up, we have to abstain from the desire and lust which inevitably leads to krodha – Anger and destroys Viveka- our discretion.

When prevented, immediately gives rise to ‘Krodha’ – anger I And close behind these two is ‘Lobha’ – greed! This very greed is described by Bhagwaan in the 16th chapter among the ‘Aasuri Sampad’ – Devilish traits’. (if these three are to be completely destroyed, one has to cultivate three virtues: ‘Dama’ – Self-control, ‘Dayaa – Pity, and ‘Daan’ – Charity.) however, for a common man it is not easily achievable. The reason is that this threefold enemy has normally destroyed his knowledge and

understanding, darkened his 'Saatvik Buddhi', just as the smoke blackens a mirror! Here it is also clear that 'Kaama' – desire is like fire which cannot be easily extinguished. It covers up a man's knowledge and understanding! Kaama being truly a magic trickster – 'Kaamroop' which thoroughly confuses his victim and betrays him.

Bhagawan further says: "What are the places where this 'Kama' lays in wait for his human 'prey'? These are the human senses, intellect and the mind. By the strong power of these three, Kama covers up the knowledge. So we have to carefully start with practicing control of the senses. Further acquiring the knowledge of our 'Self' – Aatmagnyan, we can then completely eliminate the evil influence of 'Kama'. Then as a result, with the help of this Aatma buddhi, we can regain mastery over the enemy, 'Kama' by Yoga. With the help of yogabuddhi, we can acquire the knowledge of the 'Aatma'. Using this highest knowledge of our own real 'Self', we can completely eliminate this invincible enemy.

“Evam buddhehe param buddhavaa sanstabhya Atmanam Atmana |
Jahi shatrum Mahabaho kamarupam Duraasadam ” || (3.43)

‘एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥’ (३.४३)

To this end, in the third Adhyaaya, Geeta tells us the great secret Mantra of Nishkaam karma Yoga, towards the objective of 'Loka Sangraha' – helping the humanity.

X

“Karma Brahmaarpana and Yagnya Vrutti”

Shri Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, in his ‘Geeta Saar – a Short Commentary’, writes, “The fourth Adhyaaya is traditionally known by the title ‘Gnyana karma sanyaas Yoga’”. In this chapter we are told that while performing actions, we should be anchored in Gnyana – Knowledge, and thereafter should renounce the results, i.e. adopt ‘Fala Sanyaas’. It means that we should offer these to ‘Brahma’ – the Creator. This is the true Sanyas – ‘Samyak- Nyas’. How is this true Sanyas performed? It can be done only by Attma Gnyan – True Knowledge of the ‘SELF’. Thus it is clear that one who is a Gnyaani, established in Yoga, does not become bound even while performing Actions. Shri Krishna has assured this in the fourth Adhyaaya. Hence the fourth Adhyaaya has a significant second title ‘Karma Brahmaarpan Yoga’.

At the beginning of this Adhyaaya, Shri Krishna says to the hero, Arjuna, “O Partha, I had taught this eternal Karmayoga, fully devoid of attachment, first to the Surya Narayana, the Sun God. “(Surya is actually an ideal example of Karma Yoga. Bhagawad Geeta also has praised Him as a ‘Dhyamurti’. See – shlokas 8, 9, 10, 21 and 12, 15). Later Surya passed it on to his descendent, Satyavrat ‘Manu’ (also known as Vaivaswat Manu) who in turn passed this Karmayoga to his son, Ikshvaku. Further in this family Bhagawan Rama was born, who received this knowledge. Thus this knowledge of Karmayoga was passed on from father to son by tradition. All the Rushis and Kings had the privilege of knowing this Karmayoga and practiced in their life and work. This is truly the good fortune of our motherland – ‘Bharat’.

Unfortunately, after a long time, this knowledge deteriorated. People by and large, forgot this teaching. Time usually takes its toll. There is no remedy.

Bhagawan further says, ‘O Arjuna, you are my friend and devoted to me. Therefore, I shall repeat this great and highly valuable Geeta – Rahasya, (sacred teaching). Listen attentively. Then you will be able to acquire this powerful ancient doctrine of Karma Yoga. Here Bhagawan has again claimed Arjuna as his friend and devotee. Such a relationship of ‘Sankya-bhakti’, involves action with devotion. This has been clarified in Shlokas 18.73 and 18.78.

On this traditional sacred knowledge of Karma Yoga, Shri J. S. Karandikar says – (Geeta Tatva Manjari’ pg. 143, 144). This reference, ‘I am again telling you this ancient knowledge’ specifically means that the Bhagawad Geeta’s teaching was different from that given in the ancient Upanishads. And its succession, Vivaswan, Manu, Ishwaaku, Nimi Nabhag, Videha Janak, Daivarat Janak, and such kings. With the passing time it was lost and it obvious that it reappeared in the form of Bhagawad Geeta. It further means that if we accept this lineage, then the Yoga presented in the Geeta is not a part of the Sanyaas tradition but belongs to the Kamayoga tradition. This observation of Shri Karandikar is highly important.

In this Kamayoga exposition by Bhagawan in the fourth Adhyaaya there are many past references. Arjuna was perplexed by this and expressed his doubt by the question, ‘O Shri Krishna, you are born in the present times and Surya is ages old. Then your claim that you taught this knowledge to Surya, how can it be? Bhagawan, with a smile said, O Arjuna, really before now, both you and I have undergone many births. I am aware of all of them, but you do not remember them. That is why you are asking this question. Saint Gnyandev has, in this regard.

“Taisa amurtachi mee kirty | pari prakruti adhishtee |
Taisaakarpane nat nati | Karyaalagagi ||

Bhagawan said, “O, Arjuna, I have had many births and lives. But the important difference is that I am not subject to ‘Prakruti’ like other living beings. Pravruti is under my control. That is – while other beings are subject to nature’s laws, and are born to live according to their actions in the previous lives, I am not subject laws of karma. On the contrary, I keep Prakruti itself under my control. Thus I take birth in this world by my own will. Why? To destroy Adharma, and to establish and protect the rule of Dharma on this earth.”

Bhagawan further said, “O, Arjuna, whenever there is depletion of Dharma and Adharma is on the rise, I take birth on this earth”.

“Paritraanaaya saadhunam, vinaashaaya cha dushkrutaam |
Dharma sansthaapana arthaaya Sambhavaami Yuge Yuge” ||
(4.8)

‘परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥’ (४.८)

This concept of ‘Avataara’ is truly a gift of the Bhagawad Geeta to the Indian philosophy. This Avataara (god taking birth in this world) is for Dharma Sansthaapna – Establishment and strengthening of Dharma – consciousness of one’s own duty. What is Dharma” Dharma of every person is, to achieve ‘Abhudaya’ and ‘Nishreyasa’ – (to earn one’s living and to achieve inner freedom and peace for himself and the society). Such an understanding of Dharma is good, correct understanding. Opposite to this is Adharma – misconduct, animal behavior. Bhagawan has to destroy such bad behavior.

Gnyandev says:

‘Adhrmaachi avaghi todi | Doshanchi lihili phadi ||
Sajjananchi karvi gudhi | Ubhavi Mi’ || (2.52)

Halfhearted effort is not meant here. Whole hearted compassion is required.

Again Sant Tukaram suggests:

‘Anik nirdaalan kantakaanchae | Or

‘Par pidak to aamha daavedaar |
Vishvi Vishwambhar Mhanunjiyaa ||

Thus we, the devotees of Bhagawan should note, understand the divine work of Bhagawan who takes birth on this earth to clear the misunderstanding, the dirt in the minds of human beings. He himself has attested his resolve:

‘Ye yathaa maam prapadyante, Tanstathaeva bhajamyaham |
(4.11)

‘ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्...।’ (४.११)

‘Whatever the purpose of actions, appropriate are the results, I give them. This is the divine justice’.

Further in the fourth adhyaaya, Bhagawan has explained to Arjuna, the four fold ‘Varna’ system of human society, and actions which are necessary, prohibited or adverse. God’s descent on this earth is ‘Prakruti vash’ i.e. natural and even His actions are as per the need of the situation. Besides performing actions also, He remains untouched by results of actions. While discussing all this, He explains the four fold natural categories. ‘Varna’ of human beings in the society.

What are these four categories?

These are Persons:

1. With interest in pursuit of knowledge
2. Having fighting spirit,
3. Business minded, and
4. Service minded.

These four categories are not at all based on the birth. There is no connection of Varna and Gnyati. In Bharat, there are today nearly 800 castes and 5000 sub-castes based on birth in a family. But the Varnas as described in the Geeta are only four and they are based on natural traits and occupations of people – “Guna Karma Vibhagashah”, (4.13) ‘गुणकर्मविभागशः’ (४.१३) Earlier also this phrase, ‘Guna karma vibhagayoho’ is mentioned in the Geeta . (3.28). ‘गुणकर्मविभागयोः’ (३.२८).

Sant Gnyandev has said,

‘Ekchi he dhansuhyapani | Pari Jahalejaa chahu Varni ||
Aise Guna Karmi kadasani | Keli sahaje || (4.79)

The next important question is – ‘What is ‘Karma’? The whole set – “Karma’, ‘Akarma’, Vikarma’?

Bhaawan says, ‘I don’t have attachment with the results of my actions. Hence actions do not bind me.’ This ‘Karma Mimansaa’ – analysis of the concept of Karma is itself quite complex. What is the practical form of Karma? And again specifically what does ‘Akarma’ mean? Many a scholar has been puzzled, or misled on this subject. Yet everyone must understand the nature of this ‘Karma’. Only then, he can be sure of being free from this sin. In fact the ‘Vidhi Shastra’ – legal provisions specify these rules for the society. Nitishastra – policy study expounds the policy do’s and don’ts. But the

‘Nashkarmaya Shastra’, analysis the Adhyaatmic approach of how to be free from attachment to results of our action and thereby maintain mind-state of freedom from action, even as we act. Finally how the action without attachment to its fruits leads us to development of our own ‘Aatma’ our ‘SELF’. These discussions and considerations are the core part of ‘Karma Mimansa’.

Thus we learn ‘What is the true meaning of the terms “karma’ and ‘Vikarma’ – i.e. Vishesh Karma?’ and ‘how to be established in the state of ‘Amarma’ or ‘nishkarma’? We should be clear about all these aspects. And in addition at the core, if the feeling of devotion to Bhagwan is there in all our actions, then living according to these guidelines we do not experience any difficulty.

For example when you take a vessel full of water on your head, you feel considerable weight difficult to bear. On the other hand you jump in the well or a river full of water., do you feel any difficult even though there is so much water all around as above you? The same is the case with Vikarma i.e. Vishesh karma. Then further ahead – all your Vikarma actions, you can turn into Akarma by casting out the attachment to the results of your action, by practicing Nishkaama Karmayoga. Hence Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta says, ‘One who has turned all his actions in life into ‘Nishkaama’ i.e. without attachment to fruits, and further has burnt all the fruits – ‘Karmavipak’ in the fire of ‘Aatmagnyan’ is a true ‘Gnyaani’ – a real ‘Pandit’.

In this respect, the eighteenth shloka of the fourth Adhyaaya is of Bhagwad Geeta is important. Achaarya Vinobaji terms this shloka as the ‘key’ shloka of the entire Geeta. This means that practicing Swadharma, one’s kartavya is itself true Akarma or Nishkarma. One who knows this is the real Buddhivaan – Intelligent, ‘True Yogi’.

Bhagawan says:

‘Karmani Akarma ya: Pashyed, akarmani cha Karma Yah |
Sa Buddhiman Manusheshu, Sa Yuktaha Krutsnakarmakrut ||”
(4.18)

‘कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः |
स बुद्धिमान् मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥’ (४.१८)

The meaning is – even though engaged naturally in action, from the point of view of results; he is ‘Akarma’ – non actor. On the other hand, one who is seemingly ‘Akarma’ (non-active), may be bound by his actions. All this should be clearly understood. To clearly and fully understand both these aspects is to be wholly knowledgeable about Karma. Bhagwad Geeta says, ‘A real gnyani such as this is ‘Krutsnakarma- krut’.

Saint Gnyandev has given a beautiful illustration to explain this point. He says:

‘Ani Udo-astacheni pramane |Taise na charlatan Suryaache chalane ||
Taise Naishkarmayatva jaane | Karmichi asataa ||’
(4.99)

For this Naishkarmyatva, this Karma Brahmaarpana – sthti to arise, there has to arise in the mind and heart of everyone, true, Yagnya Vrutti in every one. In the second half of the fourth Adhyaaya of the Geeta, Bhagawan has emphatically stressed this point. This Yagnya vrutti means renunciation. The attitude of ‘Idam Devvaaya dattam I Idam na Mama I’ We all should cultivate this attitude. For this our intellect should be trained correspondingly. Thus these constitute a chain of necessary conviction and add mental attitude. In order for this attitude of Karma-Brahmarpana, we are given the best roadmap by Bhagawan in the ‘Brahma-Yagna’ concept.

Bhagwan says:

Brahmarpanam, Brahma-havir-Brahmagnau brahmana Hutam |
Brahmaiva Tena Gantavyam, Brahma Karma Samaadhinaa ||
(4.24)

‘ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥’ (४.२४)

‘Brahma karma samadhina’ word signifies the integration of Gnyana and Karma that is knowledge and action. It is therefore, a ‘Mahayagnya’ – a great sacrifice. Bhagawan describes different aspect of this highest sacrifice. The aim of this Yagnya is for the performer to attain Brahma, means to be integral with the Universal Consciousness. The performer here, considers himself as Brahma, the ‘havi’ – offering as Brahma, in the fire, which is also Brahma, to the goal of the Yagna, Brahma Himself and completes the process of Brahma Yagnya. Here the performer and his actions are also unified and dissolved in Brahma. So much is this unity of the intellect of the performer with the Brahma that both are one in every sense. Naturally therefore, the performer in the end at his death, will go to Brahma. Bhagawan has clearly assured this in the Geeta. Bhagawan has described this Brahmaganya later in the fourth Adhyaaya. There He has termed it as ‘Gnyanyagna’, or ‘Aatmagnyana Yagna’. (Here also the unity of the Hota, Ugata, Adhvaryu, and Brahma – the four Brahmins and Yajamaan – the performer, are all considered Brahma rupa. i.e. same as brahma. This is the special feature of this Yagnya.)

However, earlier in the same Adhyaaya, Bhagawan has mentioned, how many other forms of Yagnya are practiced. There are, Rudh Yagnya Vidhi, one that has been followed in the past for a long time / Vishishta Devata yagnya, devoted to a specific God / Indriya Sanyama Yagnya, control of the senses/ Yishay Virakti yagnya, withdrawal from enjoyment of

objects / Prana Apana Yagnya, Yagnya of inward and outward breaths / Dravya yagnya, offering of grain / Tapo Yagnya, Yagnya of Tapas, austerities / Swaadyaaya Yagnya, Yagnya of Learning / Anashan Yagnya, Observing Fast. Thus these are nine types of Yagnya. However, objective is the same – to remove the dust, and clean the human mind, make it pious. Then only he human mind will be free of desire for objects of enjoyment, and the results of work. Similarly, in this way, his journey towards the highest goal of Brahmayagnya, or Gnyan yagnya will be facilitated. (Here again we have to remember the full import of the teaching in the shloka – 3.9)

There are some important points mentioned by the Bhagawad Geeta in respect of these nine types of yagnya. For example, Vishista Devataa yagnya, honours the gods such as Varun, Marut, Agni, mentioned in the Vedic lore, which are gods presiding over the natural forces – Nisarga-Shakiti Devata. While Vag-yagnya is related to the human faculties such as speech, hearing etc., Observing silence etc. falls under the shabdaadi Yagnya. Then there is Praanyama which enable control over the Vaayu tatva, i.e. Air. (Praanayama is referred to in several places in the Geeta; e.g. Shlokas Ch. 4.27, 29; Ch. 5.27, Ch. 6.11 to 14, ch. 8, 10, 12 and ch. 18.33 etc.) ‘Praanavayu’ is the external fresh air that we breathe in, and ‘Apaanvayu’ is the air that travels inside the human body. Adding Praanvaayu to Apaana is ‘Puraka’. Breathing out the air is Termed ‘rechaka’. Interrupting both these types is ‘Kumbhaka’. This process of Pranayama is well known. Referring to this, Bhagawan says ‘Number of such yagnyas are going on with their respective process are going on addressed to Brahma all the time. The intention behind these, the ‘Tyaagbhduddhi’ needs to be understood properly and is important for us to note. ‘Even ghyaatva Vimokshuyase’ (4.32) “Knowing thus you will be freed from this Sansaara’.

Further, in the fourth Adhyaaya, Bhagawan says, ‘O, Arjuna, Yagnya with the offering of Gnyana - understanding is

always superior, more beneficial, than the Yagnya by offering 'Dravya' – materials. The reason is that, in the end all such works end up in the knowledge of our 'Aatma' – our inner 'SELF'.

Gnyandev says, 'Just as all the stars ineffective before the sun, the same is true here; Atma gnyana surpasses all knowledge. (Gnyaneshwari – 2.159). However it is not easy to acquire this knowledge. One has to acquire it from the Veterans who know the same. One has to approach them with humility and learn with their favour. Humility is a must.(If a pot does not bend, then how will the water from the well enter it?) Bhagawan says, 'We must offer salutations to the Learned. Then we can express our doubt. We must have full confidence in them. Then, pleased with your sincerity, they will favour you with this 'Aatmagnyan – knowledge of the Self'.

Sant Gnyaneshwar says:

'Te Gnyana pain ga barave | jari mani athi jaanave ||
Tari Yaa Santan Bhajaave | Sarvasvesi ||' (4.165)

Shri Bhagawan says further, "Once a person has acquired this Aatmagnyan, then it is impossible for him to be a victim of Moha. By this knowledge of the 'Self' Aatmagnyaan, one is able to see the Creator in the Vishwa – creation and the creation in the Creator". (In Shri Gnyandev's words, we can say –

"Je je bhete Bhuta | Te Te Maneeje Bhagavanta" ||

Thereafter, with this same gnyaunbuddhi, we should work for 'Lok Sangraha" so that our mind /intellect will ever stay centered in our own 'Self' and we can also acquire Aatmagnyaan, with relative ease. This Aatmagnyan prapti is in fact, the last word in spiritual attainment! In the fourth adhyaaya Bhagawan himself assures, "o, Arjuna, The worsts

sinner will easily be able to swim across this ocean of sin by this Board of Aatmagnyan. Not only that, this blazing fire of Aatmagnyan will easily burn up all the bonds of Karma! Does not a blazing fire reduce all the pieces of wood which come into contact with it?!

Thus Gnyana yagnya is highly important. It removes one's blindness arising from attachment. It also burns all karma. Bhagawan says, "O, Arjuna, there is nothing holier than Aatmagnyan in this world. There is no doubt that a Nishkaam Karmayogi whose heart has been cleansed by his actions without attachment earns at appropriate time. The greatest reward of Aatmagnyan is by his actions.

Bhagawan says:

Na hi Gnyanena sadrusham pavitram iha visyate |
Tat swayam yoga sansiddhaha kalena Aatmani vindati || (4.38)

‘न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥’ (४.३८)

Bhagawan says further, 'Just as Aatmagnyaan has to be earned, same way we can get peace of mind by cultivating three traits: 'Sraddhaa – i.e. devotion, self-control and alertness'!

If we can be unattached in our mind, then only we can succeed in the test and earn the 'Aatmagnyaan! So to this end our mastering Karmayoga it is essential. It is the master key to Aatmagnyan.

Bhagawan also says, 'One who is devoted, has mastered the senses and who is thirsting for this knowledge attain 'Aatmagnyan;'. He immediately experiences total peace in his mind.

Shri Gnyandev says,

‘Mhanuni bahuta pari paahata | pudhati pudhati Nirdharita ||
He Gnyanichi Pavitrat | Gnyanich Aadhi ||

However, to obtain this knowledge the prime condition is, not to be ‘Sanshayakhor’- not to entertain any doubt!

Bhagawan says, ‘Those who are ‘Gnyaanheen – ignorant, without devotion, and doubting thomases, are bound to end up at the bottom of the pit! They do not get happiness – neither in this world, nor in the world beyond. ‘Sanshayaatma Vinashyati I’ (4.40) ‘संशयात्मा विनश्यति’ (४.४०)

Why so? The main reason is, that one who is fond of arguments and discussion all the time, he is bound to raise the doubts! Even if attains something, he still raises doubts in mind about his own experience! He being a sanshayakhor, he will doubt himself, his own experience! One who is blind from birth, how can one explain to him what is night and what is day? His own doubts are like the net spread by a hunter – once a prey is caught inside, the death is certain! – Says Gnyandev. One more harmful aspect of such a person is that he finds some or the other side issue to oppose or deny, ‘Kartavya’ – duty. This is even worse! In the fourth Adhyaaya, Bhagawan says, ‘One should always carry out one’s ‘Kartavya’ - duty. However its fruits should be ignored. One should keep in mind that using the weapon of Atmagnayaan, one should uproot the tree of doubt. Then there will be no danger left for us. Be assured!

This is why Bhagawan says:

‘Tasmaad agnyana sambhautam Hrutstham Gnyanasin Atmanaha |
Chhitvaenam sanshyam Yogam – Aathishtha Uttistha Bharata ||(4.42)

‘तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनाऽत्मनः ।
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥’ (४.४२)

‘O, Arjuna, stand up and destroy this ‘Sanshaya’ – doubt in your mind, by the sword of Aatmagnyan and follow always, this ‘Nishkaam Karmayog’. Truly, the most important task in our life, is to realize this Aatmagnyan. Everything can be attained with this Aatmagnyan.

Gnyandev says,

Surya disc is so small I but lights up the three worlds immensely ||

This sword of Aatmagnyan is similar. How can this be attained? By ‘Karma fala sanyaas’ – renouncing the fruits of your karma. Bhagawan has given us the same teaching in detail in this Fourth adhyaaya.

XI

“Greatness of ‘Jeevan-Mukta’”

Shri Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, in his ‘Geeta Saar’, says: ‘At the beginning of this fifth adhyaaya, Arjuna asks Bhagawan: ‘Of the two, Sankhya i.e. Gnyanoyoga (Knowledge) and action according to Swadharma, i.e. karmayoga, which is superior?’

Bhagawan replied clearly that ‘Between these two, Karmayoga is definitely superior’. Actually in this fifth Adhyaaya, the topics of the previous i.e. the fourth Adhyaaya, have been further clarified that ‘The real sanyaas is to perform actions with the attitude of ‘Brahmarpana Buddhi’ – i.e. intention of dedicating the fruits of action to lord Brahma.’ That is clear from the title of the fifth adhyaaya – “karma sanyas Yoga’.

However, why did Arjuna feel that he should ask for clarification? The reason is that Arjuna felt that Bhagawan Shri Krishna, first praises ‘Karma Sanyaas’ and then again praises Karma Yoga. Then which of these two, does He considers superior? However, truly speaking, Bhagawan had not praised abandonment of Karma. He had praised the Gnyani, - Knower and Aatmagnyaan, - Knowledge of the ‘SELF’. (4.33, 36 and 37 and 41). Truly speaking Bhagawan had expressed His respect for ‘Sanyasta Vrutti’. The Bhagawad Geeta, has not eulogized, Sanyaasashram, or abandonment of work by an individual. Hence Bhagawan clearly says, ‘O, Arjuna, in every way, Karmayoga is the Best’.

Why so? Reason is – from the point of view of release from the merry-go-round of birth and death and birth again, karmayoga is easy to understand and also easy to put it in practice in life. Karmayoga is the instrument as well as the goal,

way as well as the destination! Only this Karmayoga is to be combined with Sanyasta- vrutti- i.e. inner detachment. In short even while performing actions, being detached from the fruits, leads us to freedom from action. This attainment is possible for both, a Karmayogi as well as a Sanyasi – renunciant. Attaining this, person is truly a ‘Jeevanmukta’. Describing this state, Bhagawan says:

‘Gnanesh sa Nityasayasi, Yon a dweshti, na kankshati I
Nirdwanado hi Mahabaaho, Sukham bandhat vimuchyate II
(5.3)

‘ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न कांक्षति ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात् प्रमुच्यते ॥’ (५.३)

‘O, Arjuna, He, who does not resent, nor does he expect anything for himself, though a Karmayogi, he should be regarded as a real Sanyaasi. Free of the opposite tendencies, Raga and Dwesha, he easily attains freedom from the bondage of Karma. What is important is the attitude of real detachment and ‘Brahmarpana Kruti’! Those who believe that the real Karmayoga and Karmasanyas as different are truly ‘Moodha’ i.e. confused, because the ultimate result from these two routes, or the ultimate state achieved is the same: ‘Moksha’ – Freedom from the circle of birth and death. One who knows this clearly and exactly, he can be said to have learned the true Aatmagnyan, spiritual knowledge.

In this context, Acharya Vinoba Bhave refers to a well-known story of Yogiraj Shukracharya and Rajarshi Janak! King Janak was a disciple of Rishi Yaagyvakyaa. And Shukracharya was the disciple of King Janak! Maharshi Vyas said to Shukracharya, ‘You are a gnyani – ‘Knower of Truth’. However, so far you have not yet been blessed by a Sadguru – a true spiritual teacher. You should have this blessing. (just as a piece of gold, by printing a stamp of a King on it, becomes a Mohar) You go to King Janak for guidance on the spiritual

path. Thus instructed by Vyas Muni , Shukracharya set out to meet King Janak. He was, so far, residing in a forest. He had not seen any small city, let alone a capital city. He entered the city of King Janak and walked on the way to the palace looking around the planned city on the way.

The King Janak was on the third floor in his palace. Shukracharya reached there. The King Janak asked him the purpose of his visit.

Janak: 'Why have you come? Shuka: 'For learning the Aatmagnyan.'

Janak: "Who sent you? R – 'Vyaas Muni.'" Janak: "Wherefrom?" Shuka: 'From the ashram.'" Janak: While coming here, what did you see? Ans.: "Everywhere there were sweets in the shops." Q. What else did you see? Ans. There were steps made up of sugar'. Q: what do you see here? In answer to this Shuka replied: One statue of sugar is talking to another statue of sugar.

Saintly king Janak, expressed his satisfaction. That is it.'! Everywhere one Bhava – 'Brahmbhava'. He said, 'Good, Shukaacharya, you already have the knowledge – Aatmagnyaan; You have realized that you are the Aatma. You have complete unity with the SELF. What else is there to teach you? Such was Shukacharya, the disciple of King Janak.

Later Shukaacharya related Bhagawat story to King Parikshit, and imparted him the teaching of how one should face the moment of death. It is said that, Shukdev, while conducting the Yagna for seven days, never once changed his lap – customary Indian seating position on the floor. How extraordinary effortless, this Karmayoga! The reason is, perfect Sanyaasi and perfect Karmayogi both are same.

This is the message of the fifth Adhyaaya of the Geeta.

‘Yogayyкто Vishuddhaatma, Vijitaatma, jitendriyaha |
Saarvabhutatma Butaatma kurvan api na lipyate || (5.7)

‘योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेंद्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥’ (५.७)

Rephrasing this very message of Karmayoga, Bhagaawan says in fifth Adhyaaya in shloka 7 to 12- “O, Arjuna, it is difficult to achieve Sanyaas without the help of Karmayoga. But karmayogi Rishi Munies achieve Moksha – Freedom in a very short time,’ The reason is, a karmoayogi is helped by the three steps – 1) Aatmavishuddhi – cleansing oneself, through it – 2) Aatma vikas – Self-development and finally 3) Full self-control !

How this is possible? The Nishkaam Karmayogi acquires full control over his senses. He then cleans his Antakarana, his inner instrument thoroughly. Then he considers the Aatma residing in all living beings as his own Atma. Then keeping his mind fully unattached, he deals with all living beings as if all these are his own inner being, his own Aatma. All this also, he offers upto Brahma!

Thereafter, in all, even the most common, activities in the daily life, such as seeing, speaking, hearing, seeping, giving, taking, breathing even opening and closing eyes, the senses concerned are busy with their own activities; but he himself remains unaffected feeling ‘I am not doing anything.’ Hence what happens thereafter?

Bhagawan says:

‘Brahmanyaadhay karmaani Sangam tyaktvaa karoti yaha |
Lipyate na sa Paapena, Padma patramiva Ambhasaaa || (5.10)

‘ब्रह्मण्याध्याय कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥’ (५.१०)

Meaning, the karmayogi who sets aside all desire for results of his actions, and offers all his actions to Brahma, i.e. to Bhagawan, remains unaffected like the Lotus leaf in the water.

Gnyadev says in this respect,

‘To karme kari sakale | Par Kkarmabandhaa naa kale ||
Jaise na simpe jail jalen | Padma patra || (5.10)

This example of ‘Padma Patra’ appears also in the Chhandogya Upanishad. In both the places the situation is the same. Shri Karandikar, author of ‘Geeta Tatva Manjari’, considers this shloka 5.10 highly important. On the basis of this shloka, he asks, “What is the important secret of the Geeta?” His answer is “Doctrine of Nishkama Karma.”

In this context, Bhagawan also says, “Whatever karma, action through his Indriyas, mind and intellect the Karmayogi performs, he does all these without aasakti- attachment. As a result, he earns Aatmashuddhi.

Bhagawan further says: “A karmayogi, by offering the fruits of his actions to me, attains total Peace, while without Karmayoga, person busy in the world with the desire for fruits of his actions, is bound by Paapa and Punya (Sin and Merit). Jitendriya, person who is in full control of his senses, experiences ananda – bliss. He is not bound by his karma. As a result he lives happily in his body, which is like a city with nine gates, ruled as a king by him enjoying Aatmananda. Bhagawan has recognized him as ‘Jeevanmukta’. This term has appeared in the fifth Adhyaaya – sholka 28 – ‘Yaha sadaa-mukta eva saha’. ‘यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ।’

The description of a Jeevan mukta by Bhagavan, in three parts, is based on that given earlier, in the second Adhyaaya; 1. Atma as jivanmukta – free of action (in shlokas 5.13 to 5.17), 2) Atma as Samtva-buddhi (2.18 to 2.20) and 3. Aatma’s inner tranquility and happiness. (shloka No. 21 to 23)

Bhagawan says:

‘Gnyaanena tu tadagnyanm, yesham nashitamaatmanaha |
Tesdaamadityavad gnyanam prakaashayati tatparaha || (5.16)

‘ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥’ (५.१६)

Comparing such an Aatmangnyaani with the blazing Sun, Bhagawan might have all the traits of the Sun in mind. This Sun is an ideal karmayogi. He is regular and without any Ahamakara – pride. He distributes his light equally to all the creations, with Samatva. He is ‘Akarta’ – himself engaging in no action, while inspiring others to action. Only Surya can be and is the ‘The Sun’!

Shree Bhagawan says further : - Such a Jeevanmukta is ‘Aatmagnyani’ – Knower of the ‘SELF’ and has single minded devotion for Me. His mind as well as intellect is always centered on Me. All his sins are washed out by his Aatmagnyan, the ties of Karma are broken and as a result he is free from the rounds of birth and death. His samatvabhav – equal mindedness is extraordinary. He behaves equanimously with a learned and respectful person as well as with one who denies brahma; with a pious docile cow or a much scorned dog. To him, all these opposites seem equal, are equal. (On a photo of Shree Dattatraya, there is a cow as well as a dog.)

Describing such a person with equanimity, Shri Gnyandev says:

‘Mhanauni sarvatra sadaa sama | Te Aapanachi adwaya Brahma |
He sampurna jaane Varma | Sama drushtiche || ‘ (5.16)

Thus Bhagawan says emphatically, ‘O, Arjuna, what is special about it is: One who is established in this ‘Sama Bhaava’, he is free from the circle of birth and death! He no longer feels bound in this body. Even while being in this body, he feels one with the eternal Brahma. He has the true attitude of Oneness! He is not overjoyed by getting something that is desirable, nor does he feel unhappy when he is faced with unpleasant situation. His is always possessed of sad-asad vivek, discrimination of good and bad. He is Sthira-buddhi, even minded and constantly aware of Brahma. Bhagawan means this Nirdvandvataa of jeevanmukta is extremely important. That itself is the aid for attaining the state of being one with Paramaatma. Truly the basic duality in human life is his likes and dislikes. It is the source of all other dualities, says the Chhandogya Upanishad. The Bhagawad Geeta also emphasizes it again and again. (See shloka nos. 2.45/4.22/5.3/7.27,28/15.5)

For such a person, who is established in equanimity, external means of happiness have least attraction, and so also, such external factors do not produce any unhappiness for him. Such a one is always established in the Joy, Ananda of being one with Brahma. Actually, this contact of senses with the objects is the primary source of joy and unhappiness. A Jeevanmukta, is beyond all these. His mind is not touched by these worldly feelings of happiness and unhappiness. He is able to curb the passions of kama and Krodha – attraction and anger. He is primarily after Brahmanirvaana – Absolute Peace and contentment. This important concept of ‘Brahmannirvaana’ finds mention in the Bhagawad Geeta first in the second Adhyaaya (2.22). The same is now repeated three times in the fifth Adhyaaya. (5.24, 5.25 and 5.26).

What is the nature of this brahmanirvaana state of the Jeevanmukta? Being totally satisfied in himself – Aatmasantosh is his state of happiness; Bliss of the self is his resting place and the knowledge of the Self illuminates his inner being. Such a one alone secures freedom from birth and death – ‘Moksha’! All his sins have been removed, his doubts removed. Thus keeping his senses under his control, he is engaged in the welfare of all living beings. He transforms his life in this world itself into total freedom. In fact he transforms his worldly life itself into Moksha – total freedom. In this body only, by his self-efforts he secured Moksha. What is his true being?

Bhagawan says:

‘Yatendriya Mano Buddhir Munir Mokshaparaayanaha |
Vigatechhaa bhaya krodho Yas sadaa Mukta eva saha || (5.28)

‘यतेंद्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।

विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥’ (५.२८)

Thus, a Jeevan Mukta has the full control over his senses, mind and intellect. He is also free. He keeps himself away from sensual desire, fear and anger.

Further he recognizes Bhagawan is the receiver of the offering in the Yagna (i.e. Karma yoga, service to Society) and Tapas (i.e. mental detachment, cleansing of one’s own nature). He is the supreme Lord of the three worlds. (Earth, Haven, and Beyond). The Jeevanmukta understands clearly that the Lord is friend of every being. Thus he experiences total peace of mind. Along with peace he also gets serenity. He becomes a sincere devotee of the Lord. This is the greatness of Jeevanmukta, like adding sugar to the milk!

XII

“Dhyaanyoga and Samatvayoga”

Shri Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, in his small treatise ‘Geeta saar’ says about the sixth Adhyaaya of Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta, “The sixth Adhyaaya of Geeta is titled ‘Aatma samyam Yoga. How do we practice ‘Practice ‘Atma samyama? How do we keep our restless mind under control? And what is the advantage of such a practice? This has been covered in this sixth Adhyaaya. This adhyaaya is also called Dhynanyoga or Abhyas Yoga.” This opinion of Bhide Shastri is significant.

Besides what is the connection of this sixth chapter to the earlier three chapters? With this question, we notice that the third is the Karma Yoga, the fourth discusses the ‘Vikarma’, i.e. vishesh karma, special or additional actions; while the fifth chapter is on ‘Akarma’ or ‘Nishkarmya, i.e. Absence of karma. Further the Aatma sanyam Yoga i.e. ‘Abhyaas Yoga’ which is integration of all the above three, is discussed thoroughly in the sixth chapter. The essence of this chapter is ‘Dhyaan Yoga and Samtva Yoga’.

At the beginning of this 6th Adhyaaya, Bhagawan says to Arjuna that the real Sanyaasi and real Yogi is one who keeps doing his Kartavya Karma, carries out his duty, irrespective of the fruits that may result from these. On the contrary, one who does not do ‘agnihotra’ and such other nitya karma, daily actions as duties and abandons all karma’ is neither a sanyasi nor a Yogi. Further, Bhagawan has compared Yoga path with climbing a mountain. Just as ‘Mumukshu’ denotes a curious person, ‘Arurukshu’ is (one who desires to climb higher). Bhagawan has termed a person who has conquered his desire for action as ‘Yogarudha’. To be exact, He alone is a saadhuy, who is in complete control of his own senses. In other words, He also masters yoga, who never forgets that he is ‘Aatma’.

Further Bhagawan tells us that 'nishkaarma karma' is the way for Yoga siddhi, mastery of yoga. For further progress 'Shama', being peaceful, is necessary and indispensable.

We can acquire 'Aatmabodh' through this spiritual Sadhanaa. We ourselves can rise to the stage when we experience "Aham Brahmaasmi", Moksha – Freedom can be through this. It is important to note that human beings only can attain this goal. Only he can rise from his human state of 'Nara' to Naraayana'. The reason is, 'Aatma Swaatantrya' – Freedom of the Self is available only to Human beings. Only he can make the necessary extreme effort.

Through Arjuna, Bhagawan tells all of us with a sense of urgency:

Udharet aatmna Aatmaanam, Na Atmaanam avasaadayet |
Atmaa eva Atmno Bandhu, Atma eva Ripur Atmandaha | |' (6.5)

‘उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥’ (६.५)

Thus, it is for the human being to avail this opportunity to rise to this highest state, instead of falling in the pit. We are our own brothers and we also can be our own enemy. Choice is ours. Bhagawan tells us here that 'Aatma vishwas' – our self-confidence is the only and basic powerful tool with us for this Saadhana. We must have strong desire, ambition, will to realize the Paramatmaa. Even in their childhood, Prahlada, Dhruva and Eknath had this desire and they realized it early in their lives!

If you practice 'Nishkaam Karmayoga' and achieve the state of Karmayogi, then you need not have any fear of being caught 'Karma vipak'. For this you have to practice Dhyana yoga and Samatva! Shri Bhagawan tells us, 'If you acquire full

control on the senses, then you will have victory over yourself! Using this human body as stepping stone, you would have successfully raised the flag of self-victory! Such a karmayogi can easily rise to the height beyond duality. Having conquered his own inner instrument – ‘Anthkaran’, he can remain unaffected by the duality of heat and cold, happiness and unhappiness and also honour and insult. He then considers both gold and mud as equal because he is united with Bhagawan by his devotion! In short he has reached the height of unity, ‘Samatva Yoga’. He looks at, brother, friend, foe and everyone, good , bad and all, with equality – ‘Samabuddhi Visheshatatha.’ He is a real Yogi.

For this objective, what is the specific ‘Parmaarthik Saadhanaa’? How to practice this Dhyaana Yoga? Explaining this, Bhagawan says:

‘योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥’ (६.१०)

‘Yogi yunjeeta satatam Aatmaanam Rahasi sthitaha |
Ekaaki yata chittaatmaa Niraashir Aparigraphaha’ || (6.10)

A Yogi should put aside all contact with people, living in solitude, control his mind and intellect, leaving aside all desires and greed, concentrate his attention on his practice of Dhyana Yoga. He should leave aside both nothingness as well as multiplicity and concentrate his mind on practicing Dyaana Yoga. Ekaagrata means one should hold on to only one thought! It is a great force, It strengthens the mind .It should be practiced. One should be ‘Yata-Chitta’. ;Yata means ‘in control’. Yogi’s mind should be continuously under his control. Thereby he should have purity of mind. This Yoga explained in the Geeta is not simply a science of ‘Asana’ – sitting in one pose. It is ‘Nididhyaasana’ Shastra as explained above. This distinction should be borne in mind.

What all should be done by the yogi for Dhyaana and Dharana? Bhagawan has already begun this dialogue prior to the sixth Adhyaaya, near the end of the fifth Adhyaaya in the shlokas (5.27, 5.28). A Muny, desirous of Moksha, Mukukshu, concentrates his sight on the middle point between his eyebrows, sitting in the Padmaasana posture. He then equalizing his ingoing breadth with outgoing breath, brings his senses, mind and intellect in full control. Fully separating himself from passion, fear and anger, he focuses his mind on the Supreme Being, in an effort to merge his consciousness into the supreme consciousness, Parameshwara. Thereby in the natural course he comes to the state of being EVER FREE

- 'Yaha Sadaa Mukta ev saha'. 'यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ।'

Bhagawan, thereafter in this sixth Adhyaaya, imparts appropriate teaching for his further progress. He says, 'The aspirant should select a clean, pious place, spread some grass and place a Deer skin and cover it with a piece of clean cloth and take his seat in 'Padmaasana' – Lotus posture. Then with a firm resolve, he should stabilize his Antahkaran – inner instrument, indriyas and body without movement. Mind should be purified, focused and then he should begin his abhyaas, practice of Dhyaana – meditation.

How an aspirant should proceed in 'Dhyaan Yoga'? Bhagawan says: "Aspirant should take his seat as per instruction, in Padmasana posture, keeping head and entire backbone straight and erect, devoid of any movement, keep his eyes centered on the point between eyebrows, mind peaceful and free from any fear, following the Brahmo -pasana vrata-system, devote his mind fully to meditation on Me." He should meditate on Bhagawan as his all, and be mentally wholly devoted to Him! These are straight, because this practice is effective to assure long and healthy life. Here Bhagawan has said, routine are necessary and helpful in realizing this Atma,

are together termed as 'Brahmacharya' if we follow these we can secured Moksha, mukti in this life itself-'jeevan Mukti'. For this, we have only to be united with Bhagawan in our mind!

Bhagawan says further, 'Just as the yogi needs to make his mind one pointed, so also he has to strive all through his life for achieving 'Parimitataa'. What this means is that exactness is very important. No loose ends or undefined periphery. This is a very important aspect of life. Then only the yogi can achieve a stable state, Saamy Avastha, Saamy Drushti, saamy Yoga.

In this context, Bhagawan has clearly said, 'the aspirant whose – Food intake, behavior, sleep, daytime activity, all actions in his life are balanced, appropriate, is a Yogi whom misery does not touch'.

'Yuktaahaara Vihaarasya | Yukta cheshtasya Karmasu |
Yukta-swapnaavabodhysa | Yogoa Bhavati Dukhhaa ||' (6.17)

‘युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥’ (६.१७)

To understand this teaching by Bhagawan, it is useful to refer to what Swami Swarupananda, says in this regard. Swamiji is well known for his interpretations of teachings of Saint Gnyaneshwar. Swamiji, Premdeep of Ratnagiri Pawas, and expert propagator of So'ham Sadhana, says:

'Nako niraahaar, nako sevu far, sadaa mitahaar, also dyavaa |
Nako ati zop, nako Jaagarana, asaave pramana nidremaaji |
Nako bolu faar, nako dharu Mauna, Karaave Bhashana parimit |
Sanyami Jeevan, vagataaa sahaj, Swami mhane tuj Yoga siddhi''

The 'Sthiraavastha' – motionless posture, of a Yogi who has totally withdrawn his senses from external objects has been aptly described by Bhagawan by comparing it with a lamp placed in a place where there is not the slightest whiff of air.

(Yathaa deepo nivatastho, nengate sopamaa smruta). It means that this Yogi, having withdrawn his 'chitta' – mind from the external world, has established the same in the inner soul. 'aatma' which is also 'Paramatma' the God, Infinite. He has left all his desires for the objects of pleasure far behind. It is clear and obvious that now, he retains no such desire and has become 'Nihspruha', 'Mircichhaa' – fully devoid of any such desire. Elimination of desire – "Vaasana", victory over Mind – "Manojaya" and knowledge of his inner Self- 'Aatmagnyana' are all accomplished by him. A King among Yogis, 'Self' perceiving the 'Self', he is fully satiated. His state of inner happiness, of being in Brahma-consciousness is incomparable.

Bhagawan says that this Yogi cannot be disturbed by any calamity, however serious. What is unhappiness? Earlier in the fifth Adhyaaya, it is explained –

‘Ye his sansparshjaa bhoga, Dukkha yonayaha ev Te’ |

‘ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनयः एव ते ।’

(Union of the senses with the objects of enjoyment is the source of unhappiness)

Again in the sixth Adhyaaya, it is stated:

‘Tam vidyaat dukha – samyoga – viyogam Yoga sangyitam I”

‘तं विद्यात् दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योग संज्ञितम्’

His Yoga' should be firmly established and integral in our daily life and behavior by firm resolve because mind is by nature, very restless. We have to take it out of the compelling influence of our senses, and stabilize it in the inner self. Just as we dam a flowing stream of water, in the same way our mind, running after sense objects, should be stopped by a dam of

‘Viveka’ in the discretion. By putting an end to anxiety, our mind should be established firmly in our ‘Aatma’ – Our Self”

Then this yogi, who has merged with Brahma, is not touched by the earthly escapades and he tastes true peace of mind and supreme happiness, continuously without breaks; true ‘Aatmananda’. His view of this world is full of Grace. He has no fear from anybody. He has full confidence in himself and for the same reason he is generous towards others. He sees his own ‘Self’. ‘Aatmatatva’ in everyone, and in every one, himself. This is the attitude of ‘Bhagawat-Sharana’. He sees the Supreme, ‘Vishwambhara’ in the world and world in the Vishwambhara. He behaves with everyone without any distinction or difference. Hence wherever he may be, he is not separated, nor far from Bhagawan. He is true ‘Bhakta’ – true devotee. Then how can he be ‘Vi-Bhakta - separated?

Bhagawan says, “O, Arjuna, He who sees everyone as himself, experiencing ‘Sukha-Dukha’ as if they are his own, he is a true Yogi. Here Bhagawan has given incomparable description of a true Yogi in four pearls in the form of four shlokas. Therein He has described the intent, his mind-state, way he talks, his way of behavior and objective of a true Yogi.

Arjuna, who was listening to Bhagawan, also said with all sincerity, “O, Bhagawan, the ‘Saamya Yoga’, which you have described to me, I have understood.

“Yo-ayam yogas tuayaa samyena Madhusudana |’

‘योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।’

These four shlokas describing Saamya Yoga are:

‘Sarva bhuta stham Aatmanam, sarva bhutani cha Aatmani |
Ikshate Yogayukta atmaa, sarvatra sama darshanaha ||’ (6.29)

‘Yo maam pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyati |
Tasyaaham na pranashyaami sa cha me na praneshyati II’ (6.30)

‘Sarvabhuta sthitam yo mam bhajati ektavam aasthitaha |
Sarvathaa vartamano api sa yogi mayi vartate ||’ (6.31)

‘Aatmupyena sarvatra samam pashyati yo Arjuna |
Sukham vaa yadi vaa dukham sa yogi paramo mataha ||’ (6.32)

‘आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।
सुखं वा यदि दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥’ (६.३२)

Aacharya Vinoba Bhave had been very fond of these four shlokas. He saw the message of the whole Geeta, i.e. ‘Rachanaatmak Saamyā Yoga’ in these shlokas. These same four shlokas of the Geeta have been retold by the five saints of Maharashtra.

Shri Gnyaaneshwar says:

‘Je je bhete bhuta | Te te maanije Bhagawanta ||
Haa Bhakti yoga nishchita | Jaana Maazaa || (6.29)

Shri Namdev says:

‘Tu Avakaash me bhumikaa | Tu samudra, me Dwaarkaa ||
Tu Linga me Salunkaa | swayen donhi || (6.30)

Similarly Sant Eknaath says:

‘Jana techy Janardana | Ekaa Janaardani bhajana || (6.31)

Sant Tukara says:

‘Tukaa mhane eka dehaache avayava |
Sukha Dukha jeeva Bhog pawe ||’

OR

‘Vishnuamaya jaga I Vaishnavanchaa Dharma |
Bheda Abheda Bhrama Amangala ||

Samarth Ramdas says:

‘Aapanaas Chimota Ghetalaa | Tene jeeva kaasavis zala |
Apanyaa varoni dusaryaalaa | Olakhita jaave || ’ (6.32)

‘आपणास चिमोटा घेतला | तेणे जीव कासावीस जाला |
आपणावरोनि दुसऱ्याला | ओळखीत जावे ||’ (६.३२)

Thus Maharashtra saints have described the Samatva yoga.

As such, these five saints of Maharashtra have reached the Court of the Deva (Shri Krishna) with the help of these samatva yoga lessons of the Geeta.

About this ‘Saamya Yoga’, Sant Gnyaandev says:

‘Mhanoni Aapan paan vishwa dekhije | Aanhi Aapan Vishwa hoije ||
Aise saamychi Ek Upaasije | Paandavaa Ga ||’ (6.409)

Such a Saamya Yoga is, of course, the highest; yet, the doubt troubling Arjuna is also natural and practical. (e.g. (3.36) ‘Ath Kena prayuktoyam paapam charati purushaha I...’) Asking about a similar doubt, Arjuna says, “O, Bhagawaan, it is true that the Saamya Yoga, described by you is the best, but due to the flitting nature of my mind, I do not feel this Yogic buddhi will last for much time. Truly, O Krishna, human mind is so strong and yet, so restless, that it is difficult to control it. Really it is like locking up the wind. (earlier also in shloka 2.67 Mind is described as – ‘ Vaayur Naava eva Abhasi” | ‘वायुर्नावमिवाभसि |’

Bhagawan replied, ‘Arjuna, you are right. But this difficult mind can be brought under our control in two ways!

First by practice, and secondly by cultivating 'vairaagya' – absence of 'Raaga' – 'Anuraaga-' (Attachment) . With either of them mind control can be developed. One, who continuously practices in this way, invariably does succeed.

We note here once again that Vairaagya means, Vigata Raag – total absence of attachment with the world tainted with Vaasanaa – attachment! And on the other hand – Vishesh Raaga, intense love for Bhagawan! This is the true 'Vairaagya' – 'Rasaanaam RasatamaI ' 'रसानां रसतमः ।' He is Bhagawaan. As saint Tukaram says: 'Tukaa Mhanhe, chavi aale I Je ka mishrita Vitthale II ' Abhyaas means to repeat again and again the good thoughts in our mind, and mould all our actions accordingly. Such limitless effort is 'Abhyasa'! Both these, Vairaagya and Abhaas are absolutely necessary and useful for victory over the mind. One has to note here, the slight difference between these two. Vairaagya is destructive (just like removing the straws from a field), while Abhaas is a constructive tool, (like sowing the seeds). However, both these are useful for Dhyaana Yoga, Samatva yoga.

In this way, Bhagawan described in detail, the Dhyaana Yoga and Samatva Yoga. Yet with his practical bent of mind, Arjuna raised a further doubt. He said to Bhagawan, 'O, Shri Krishna, suppose an aspirant is fully devoted and yet, if there is a break in his practice, and before attaining the final goal, if his mind is diverted then what this condition is? If suppose he, faced by some Moha – attraction, does not remain firmly on the road to realization of Brahma, then what happens to him? Like a cloud, if it bursts and is destroyed totally, does the yogi also has such an end of total destruction? 'O, Deva, you alone are in a position to dispel this terrible doubt in my mind. Please help me!

In this question from Arjuna, there is the deep rooted pain and the urgency of an earnest person, whose sadhana is

interrupted (whether by his tardiness or unexpectedly by death). The simile of a cloud burst is aptly used. However, Shri Krishna, who is full of knowledge, and love for his devoted friend, assures him, that service and devotion offered to Bhagawan with deep desire of Realization, and the effort put forth in meditation whatever stage it may be, never goes to waste.

Bhagawan says, ‘O, Arjuna, A Dhyana Yogi, is bound to go to a higher state, in this world and the next; because he; who is engaged in good actions never falls to lower regions.

Shri Krishna says:

‘Partha naiveha namutra vinaashas Tasya na Vidyate |
Na hi Kalyana krut kashchit durgatim Taata gachchhatti ||’ (6.40)

‘पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत् कश्चित् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥’ (६.४०)

Here in the sixth adhyaaya Bhagawan says, ‘O, Arjuna, do not worry about the devotee who had wandered adrift for a while from the straight path. Aatmaa is immortal. Hence he is bound to be born again in a family where the members are already on the path towards attaining this spiritual goal, one’s own ‘Self’. Or else in a family of one who is possessed of this spiritual goal, the Self! Such a birth is not easy to get, but it is the result of his strong faith. He will surely get the fruit of his previous ‘saadhana’ – resources also in this life. (for this a part of the whole process of the fruits of one’s Karma, which is carried over from birth to birth. Again it is the result of the process of ‘Karma Vipaaak’ as stated in the Geeta.) Therefore, by his thirst for Yoga knowledge and practice, he will continue to strive for the knowledge and experience of Aatmaa. This promise of Bhagawan to Arjuna is a source of assurance to the whole mankind.

In this context, again Sant Gyaandev's words below are significant.

'Taishi dashechi vaat na paahataa | Vayasechiyaa gaavaa na jaataa ||
Baalpanich sarvagnyataa | Vari tayaache || (6.453)

Earlier in the second Aadhyaaya of the Geeta, Bhagawan had told, 'nehaabhikrama naashosti' 'नेहाभिक्रमनाशोस्ति ।' (२.४०) which means – the spiritual work already started too powerful to be destroyed. If there is any obstacle on the way, it is removed. The good works have their own strength, such that however great the danger may be, they protect the aspirant from it. Such promise is given by Bhagawan when he says at the end of sixth Adhyaaya, "O, Arjuna, In this way, this meritorious Yogi, after actively pursuing Yoga Saadhana for many lifetimes, finally earns success; he definitely attains param Gati – Moksha. Bhagawan considers this 'Samatva Yogi', the best among all saadhaks. Some may be pursuing Dhyaana, others karma or Gnyaana. Among them all, this yogi is the best, because by his yoga, he has achieved 'Samatva buddhi'. Even then, further he is the most sincere devotee of Bhagawan. So he is not only a Yogi but he has become one with the Bhagawan. You too, be like him. This is the message of the Geeta to all of us. Hence, Bhagawan says: 'Tasmad yogi Bhava Arjuna. I' 'तस्मात् योगी भव अर्जुन ।'

XIII

“Story of Gnyaan - Vignyaana”

In this ‘Geeta Saar’, a short commentary on the Geeta, Shri Sadaashiv Shastri Bhide writes about seventh Adhyaaya; ‘What is the nature of Knowledge, ‘Tatva gnyaan’ – philosophy, and ‘Srushti Vignyaan’ – science of the world? What is their position? How they are upheld? How they are both related? All this is discussed in detail in the seventh Adhyaaya of the Geeta. In the opinion of many thinkers, Chapters 7 – 12 contains best account of ‘Bhakti’ tradition of spiritual path. All said and done, for attaining the supreme, the path of ‘Bhakti’ – devotion, is the Royal road! Even whatever dirt and dust are stuck in our mind is washed clean by holy water of devotion to Bhagawan. It is also true that our linking for the pleasures of the world is destroyed by the far superior taste by the same remedy of devotion. The seventh Adhyaaya of the Geeta tells us what and how we should be . The eighth Adhyaay teaches us how to offer our life with devotion to Bhagawan, while the ninth Aadhyaay describes how we should live our life.

At the beginning of this 7th Adhyaay, Shri Bhagawan says, “O, Arjuna, hear me with full attention, and understand clearly how you can, through practice of Yoga, recognize ‘Me’ without any doubt. I am describing to you in full detail the ‘Tatvagnyaan’ – knowledge of the essence of life and ‘Srusthi Vignyaan’, science of this world. These are in reality, hidden to the world of ordinary human beings. One out of a thousand tries to learn this secret, and even among these ‘Jignyasu’ – inquisitive, a few truly and thoroughly know the Truth; Knowledge which is so difficult to acquire.”

Shri Gnyaandev has described the same ‘Gnyaana – Vignyaana’ – in a simple form. He says: ‘Really Aatma

Gnyaana' – knowledge of the 'Self' is the only true knowledge, in which you truly recognize 'Bhagawan' Then, what is 'Vignyaana? The information about the world, 'Prapanch' is Vignyaana. And further, to believe that 'Prapancha is the real world", is ignorance, 'Agnyaana'.

Shri Gnyaandev says:

'Arjunaa tayaa naava gnyaana | Year prapanchu te vignyaana |
Tetha Satyabuddhi, te agnyaana | he hi jaana ||' (7.6)

‘अर्जुना तया नाव ज्ञान । येर प्रपंचु ते विज्ञान ।
तेथ सत्यबुद्धी ते अज्ञान । हे ही जाण ॥’ (७.६)

Bhagawan calls this 'Aatma Gnyaana' as 'Paraa prakruti' and the 'Jada Vignyaana' as 'Aparaa prakruti. An aspirant for Paaramaatha has to know both these clearly, and exactly. Earlier also in the sixth Adhyaaya, eighth shloka, aspirant is exhorted to become 'Gnyaan – Vignyaana Triptaatma' – i.e. to be pervaded by spiritual knowledge as well as the science of the physical world. What is the nature of this 'Aparaa Prakruti' – physical world? It consists of five primary elements – Earth, Water, Air, fire and Light and additional three, Mind, Intellect and Ahankar i.e. Ego feeling, thus it becomes eightfold – 'Ashtadhaa Prakruti'. Here 'mind', is meant to be the combination of senses and intellect. Intellect is the deciding factor Eighth factor, 'Ahamkaar' is the feeling of attachment to the body as 'self'. This eight fold nature is of lower level than the 'Paramaatma' – All-pervading Universal Consciousness. Hence it is called Aparaa. The whole creation is made up of the play of this eight fold Prakruti. (Earlier, in the chapter on the 'Saankhya shastra and Saankhya Yoga, we have been told this background at length).

If we consider only the inanimate aspect of the creation, then it is pure Saankhya philosophy', while chaitanya is the

basis of pure Vedaanta philosophy. Bhagawad Geeta stresses the integration of both these viewpoints. Hence the Geeta states that the 'aparaa Prakruti' derives its impetus from the 'Para prakruti' which is the original source, 'Chaitanya', which is the special message of Bhagawan in the Geeta. In the 6th shloka of the seventh Adhyaaya, Bhagawan says, "O, Arjuna all these objects are derived from Me. i.e. form the Paraa and Aparaa prakruti and dissolve in Me. Hence, I am the origin of this creation and in turn, the same dissolves in Me. Further Bhagawan has explained by comparing the whole creation to a garland made of all these objects as diamonds held together with Him as the thread!

‘मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्ति धनंजय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा हव ॥’ (७.७)

Dnyadev says

“Suvarnaache mani kele | Te soniyaache suti ovile |
Taise sabaahya dharile | me chi Vishwa ||” (7.32)

Earlier in the shlokas eight to eleven, in the seventh Adhyaaya, it seems as if there is the condensed version of 'Vibhuti Yoga', while in twelve to fourteen, Triguna version of 'Ishat' darshan is seen. Shloka 15 and 28, point to the 'Davasura Sampatti' concept. These three important concepts are discussed in their various aspects at different places in the later chapters in the Geeta. But the same discussion in its details seems to be initiated in this seventh Adhyaaya. Here in the smaller version of Vibhuti yoga, Bhagawan says to Arjuna, "understand clearly the important aspects of the science of this creation and its various parts. See that I am there in Water as it's 'Taste'; in the sun and Moon as 'Light'; and in the hymns of Gnyaana, I am the 'OM' sound! Some experts go further and interpret the symbol 'Om' as the signature of Bhagawan! He adds, 'The Sound in the sky is also me while I reside in every

being as its life force.” He is full of compassion for all beings. Hence he says to Arjuna, ‘O, Arjuna, I am the Tapas of the Tapaswins, the intelligence of the Intelligent, and boldness of the ‘Heroes’.

After this smaller Vibhuti yoga, in the seventh Adhyaaya, clarifying the role of the three Gunas in the human life, Bhagawan says: “O, Arjuna, I have made these three gunas and they are in me only, but I, on the other hand, am not there in the gunas. Remember, I am not limited by them. (Just as I am there in greatness. But greatness does not contain Me). These three gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, play an important role in the creation of this world, and its continuation. Of these three, we need to help increase the Saatvik, Rajas has to be contained and the tamaas should be destroyed. In our human life, the goal should always be before us like the Pole star! Here we have also to keep in mind that this srushti, the world, arising out of these three gunas is also a play of Yogamaya of Bhagawan, which is in different forms, divine original source, Prakruti of the Sankhya, worshiped by devout as the Aadi Shakti ! Bhagawan himself has also shown the way to cross the ocean of Maaya. It is, complete surrender to Bhagawan, one pointed devotion to Him.

In this context Sant Gnyaandev says:

‘Yetha ekachi leelaa trarale | Te sarvabhava maj bhajale ||
Tayan ailechi thadi sarale | Maayaajaala ||’ (7.97)

However, there always are people with ‘Aasuri Vrutti’ who commit sinful actions. They are, confused due to effect of Maya. Caught in the web of Aasuri-lower tendencies, they are inimical to Bhagawan and keep away from him. On the other hand persons of good nature are devoted to Him and see Him in the whole creation and attain the highest state. Bhagaan explains the four types of people among these.

‘chaturvidhaa bhajante mam | janaahaa sukrutino Arjuna |
Aarto Jignyacur Artharthi | gnyaani cha Bharatarshabha || (7.16)

‘चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥’ (७.१६)

‘arta’ – a person, troubled and unhappy, ‘Jignyaasu’ – one who is eager to find out the answers to the puzzles of this world, ‘Artharthi’ – one with a keen desire for wealth and earthly pleasures and ‘gnyaani’ – person with a keen desire to resolve the riddle of this worldly life. These four types of well-behaved devotees approach Bhagawan with humility for his blessings.

Naturally, the question arises: ‘Who is the best among these four?’ Bhagawan answers clearly confirms: ‘He, who performs all his actions as his duty, without keeping an eye on rewards to be gained, is the Gnyaani, the best devotee of all. (Later in the 12th Adhyaaya, the qualities of such a devotee, with his greatness, are described.) He goes on to say, ‘All the four described (in shlokas 7.16) above are great. But this ‘Gnyaani’ devotee is my ‘Aatmaa - most dear to me in all ways, because he is ‘Yukta-Chitta- has merged his mind in Me; is Vijitaatmaa – has conquered his own ‘Self’. He alone has come to my secure protection! He is true ‘Ishvaadi’ – (firmly believes in ‘Isha’). Only he realizes exactly that this whole creation is pervaded by ‘Vaasudeva’. This Gnyaani devotee, comes to me. Truly, it is difficult to find one like him. (The only one goal, the pole star, worthwhile for ‘Nara’ – a human being is to be Narayana, the supreme God. This should be the only and last desire.)

In Bharatiya tradition and philosophy, our belief is ‘Ishaa vaasyam Idam sarvam ‘ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वम् ।’ It proclaims the prime importance of Vedic tradition of the whole Universe being my own ‘Self’. It underlines the significance of the Rita –

the Truth of 'samashti', all this, being centered in Bhagawaan. It emphasizes the fact that God resides in the whole universe. It maintains that salutations to all gods, ultimately reach 'Keshava' only! Even so, it does not deny the worship of different other gods, whether Vedic gods of nature or belief in other different gods of the present. It speaks volumes of the generous viewpoint of Bharatiya Philosophy. This concept of 'Ishta Devata' is the great capital of the Bharatiya philosophy.

Bhagawan says:

'Yo Yo yam yam tanum bhaktaha shraddhayaa architam ichchati |
Tasya tasyaachalaam shrddhaam Taam eva Vidadhaamyaham || (7.21)

'यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयाऽर्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विद्धाम्यहम् ॥' (७.२१)

Bhagawan says, 'Whoever devotee offers his love and devotion to Me, with matchless generosity and total earnestness, in whatever form, I myself respond with equal love and fulfill his heart's desire and request in all respects. As a result the devotee of Devatta in each form realizes that form itself in his mind. It is also true that they do not reach Me. Those who thirst after, they come and merge with Me. These objects of their choice and desire, are time bound and do not last long. My devotees desire to realize Me only, and not fruits.

Now the question arises, 'Why this happens to be so? Why some people devote themselves to other gods, leaving aside knowing the highest, most auspicious, Parama Aatmaa – GOD of all Gods? Why do they not recognize the original GOD, who is the source of all other Gods? Why do these other people turn to these lower Gods? Answering this question in the Geeta, Bhagawaan says, "O, Arjuna, being covered by my own Maaya – divine power, I am not visible, understood by ordinary people. Not knowing Adhyaatma, they are not aware that I am without birth and death. I know the past, the present

and the future of all beings but they do not know me. They are unable to achieve the Adhyaatmic non-dual state, and do not go beyond the state of happiness and unhappiness, likes and dislikes. Hence they are in a state of confusion.

Then what happens to such persons? They are caught in a vicious circle of desires and dislikes, on to happiness and unhappiness, then on to attraction and confusion. How and when, can it be terminated? This is extremely difficult. These ignorant people are not even aware of Param-Aatmaa, the source of the whole creation.

On the other hand, they seem to be lost in the various ornaments without seeing that they are all really made of God. They do not notice that this is their misunderstanding. So they are in this foolish state.

Sant Gnyaneshwar quotes Bhagawaan saying:

‘Devo Devi mi chi paahi | Haahi nishchaya tyaasi naahi ||
Bhaava te te thaayi | Vegalaata dhari ||’ (7.144)

Then the question is, what is the remedy for this misunderstanding? How are all the people going to be freed from his confusion of the pair of opposites? The answer is, by keen devotion to Bhagawaan! Hence Geeta says:

‘Yeshaam tvantagatam paapam janaanaam punyakarmanaam |
Te devendra moha nirmulktaa bhajante maam drudhavrataaha ||’ (7.28)

‘येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वंद्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥’ (७.२८)

Bhagawaan here give the assurance, ‘Those pious persons who, by their good karmas-actions, exhausted their bad ones, are freed from the duality of happiness and unhappiness.

They are, as such, firm in their mind and behavior, fully lost in devotion to me! Thus they are busy with actions which, with my grace, can deliver them from old age and death.

They also clearly know about Parabrahma – highest deity, Adhyaatma – spiritual science and the Karmayoga – Yoga of action. Not only that, they know Me, as the sum total of Adhibhuta – unconscious world, Adhidaivat – Knowledge of deity, and consciousness; and Adhi yagnya – essence of spirituality. They know me as the essence of the threefold existence, the One and only, Bhagawaan. They realize in their mind that I am param tatva – the ultimate existence. It is not in pieces here and there. These devotees of Bhagawaan are united in their mind with Bhagawaan. Naturally they are not disturbed even at the moment of their departure from this world. On the contrary, even at the moment of death, they know and are conscious of Bhagawaan and merge with Him. Bhagawaan has given this kind of complete assurance in the seventh Adhyaaya. This is the full account and end of Gnyaan – Vignyaana.

XIV

“Brahmaarpan Saadhanaa” (Austerities Offered to Brahma)

In the seventh Adhyaaya of the Geeta, we learnt about the two fold knowledge – Gnyaana and Vignyaana: knowledge of the Aatma (Aatmagnyaana) and the knowledge of the world. Now in the eighth Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan tells us about why and how we should perform the pious acts without focusing on what we gain out of them! As a result of such actions on our part, our confusion and attraction for the opposites will be cured. This saadhanaa of the higher aspiration and yoga of action on these lines should be carried out consistently during our entire life, till the end. Then the result will be that our soul, Aatma will be transformed, merged in the Paramaatma – GOD, will become GOD. The devotee will attain GOD. Such is the Saadhanaa of Brahmaarpana. Hence this eighth-Adhyaaya is named as ‘Akkshara- Brahma –Yoga’, Shri Sadaashiva Shaastri Bhide comments in his ‘Geeta saara’: “Akkshara means indestructible. Akkshara – Brahma Yoga means Moksha – ‘release’. Freedom from birth and death. Who is able to attain this Moksha and who is not eligible for this and has to be reborn, is discussed by Bhagawaan in the eighth chapter. This chapter is aptly titled – ‘Taarak Brahmyoga’. (Taarak means that which will save us.”) Aachaarya Vinoba Bhave, in his commentary ‘Geetaaee’, writes about the initial section of this Adhyaaya, “Let me remember this till my next twenty four births and deaths.”

The saint Eknaath also takes the same stand in throughout his commentary. He gives us five points summary:

1. Remember that human life is for a short term.
2. Remain conscious of God throughout our life.
3. See Bhagawaan in all living beings.
4. Offer all our actions and their fruit to Brahma.

5. Make an offering of our whole life – ‘Param Artha’.
This in short, is the teaching of the Geeta.
There is an episode in the life of Saint Eknaath.

Once Eknaath told a person, “You are going to die in eight days’. As a result, that person spent the entire time period in good actions. So then Eknaath told this person, ‘O, friend, what you did for these eight days –(remembering that I am going to die in eight days), we live our entire life, remaining conscious of this fact. Since one day this body is to go, we have to remember to become – Deva’s (God’s) servant, not Desha’s – (not of the body) We should speak in pleasant language, treat everyone with love. We should exert to bring happiness everyone’s life. This teaching of Saint Eknaath is, in fact, the saadhana of Brahmaarpana as per the Geeta’s teaching.

Bhagawaan has given the seven point programme in the beginning of eighth Adhyaaya, in the brief language of short discourses typical of the Upanishads.

Upanishads are a part of the Vedas, a number of short chapters in the form of a dialogue between – A Rishi, the Teacher, and his several disciples on esoteric¹ topics in the forest residence of the teacher.

‘Brahma’ – the best and eternal original substance and Creator of the Universe

‘Adhyaatma’ – The original characteristic nature of any entity

‘Adhibhuta’ – All the impermanent² products

¹ Esoteric = mysterious /secret,

² Impermanent = temporary,

‘Adhidaiva’ – The permanent entity in all the different entities

‘Karma’ – The action which brought forth living and non-living entities from Brahma

‘Adhiyagna’- The first cause of the universe and the bodies and entities therein, is the ‘Adhiyagna’; i.e. Paramaatma, Purushottama.

These six questions and their answers are the six aspects of the supreme ‘God’.

From this origin, the creation of this Universe begins. Again in this conversation, there are references to kaaran Brahma, Kaarya brahma and Nirupathik Brahma also. Or else, Chidansha, a tiny part of Brahma, Hiranyagarbha and ‘Ishwara’ are also referred to. Hereafter, the seventh and last question is:

‘..... Prayana kale cha katham gnyeyo asi niyataatmabhihi | (8.2)

‘...प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥’ (८.२)

Aani Niyantaa antah karani | tuvan jaanaave deha prayaani |
Te kaiseni Sharang paani | Parisavaa Maate || (8.2)

Bhagawaan explains:

Bhagawaan says: ‘O, Arjuna, the person who remembers me at the time of his death, He certainly attains to me. Have no doubt about it.’

‘अंतकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥’ (८.५)

Because at the time of death, the person goes and meets the same form as the one that was in his mind since he was thinking of the same at the last moment. We can remember the story of Rishi Jadabharat as an example. As he was concerned with the health of the injured deer at the time of his death, he is said to have been born as a deer!

This is why, Bhagawaan reminds us –

‘Tasmaat sarveshu kaaleshu, Mam anusmara yuddhya cha |
Mayi arpita mano buddhir maam evaishyasi ashanshayam || (8.7)

‘तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युद्ध्य च |
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मामिवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥’ (८.७)

Which, means “O, Arjuna, you remember me at all moments and fight the battle as your duty. When you have offered your mind and intellect to Me, then even while engaged in this rightful battle you will, without doubt, come to Me.’ Says Bhagawaan Shri Krishna. This promise given by Bhagawaan is of great importance for us all. When we do all our work as per our Dharma – ‘Duty’, and that too remembering Bhagawaan at all times, it means that we are following our swadharma – while keeping our mind on God. This is Karmayoga rooted in Gnyaana – spiritual understanding, it is Nishkaam karmayoga. This is the meaning of Geeta, the Dharma as explained by Shri Krishna.

Truly the significance of the Geeta is contained in this one shloka ‘.... Tasmaat sarveshu kaaleshu’ The message ‘Yudhya cha’ also means ‘Nityatam kuru karma tvam...I’ ‘नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं |’ to remember God and do your duty.’ Maam anusmara.... I’ is also important. Then there is no concern about life, nor is there any fear of death. Not only that but,

‘Ante mathi saa gathi’ ‘अन्ते मतिः सा गतिः ।’ is also applicable in this case.

Shri Gnyaandev says:

‘Aani marani jayaa je aathave | To techy gatiten pave |
Mhanouni sadaa smaraave | Maatechi tuvaan ||’ (8.75)

That is, for this to be realized, as per teaching of Geeta, ‘Vairagya’ – detachment and ‘Abhyaas’, these two auspicious practices are very important.

About the ‘Abhyaas yoga, Bhagwan says in the eighth adhyaaya, ‘O, Paartha, A yogi who does not allow his mind to wander anywhere and keeps focused by means of Abhyaas, on the ‘Divine Being’, i.e. Bhagawaan remembers him without break, goes and meets Him – the Divine being.

What is this Divine Being like? He is highly prestigious, all knowing, ancient and beyond Time. He is the governor; finest of the fine particles. He is the support of al, beyond our imagination. He is like the Sun, a blazing light, not leaving any corner in darkness. He is the best of all. Anyone who remembers Him, with devotion and earnestness, at the moment of departure, he is certain to be released from the wheel of birth and death.

How are we to carry out this Yoga of Ishwara-Nishthaa, and Brahmaarpan Saadhana? Bhagawan explains to us in detail in the following words:

“He should concentrate his breath and attention in the midpoint of his forehead between the eyes, and continuously think of the divine character and personality of this highest ‘Person’. (Note: Reference has been made to this important spot between the eyebrows, earlier in fifth Adhyaaya. ‘Chakshu

cha Bruvoh antare krutvaal' (5.27). While meditating thus without break we should keep the nine centers of our senses closed, and our mind and heart quiet. We should take our breath inward and hold it in the top of our head. Then established in Dhyān Samādhi yoga, silently experience the sound of 'Om' – i.e. Brahma in one word, the person should leave his body. Then such a devotee – Yogi, certainly attains 'Parama pada' - the highest state!

Bhagawaan gives the assurance that: -

'Om ity eka aksharam Brahma vyaaharan Maam Anusmaran |
Yah prayaati tyajan deham sa yaati paramaam gatim ||' (8.13)

‘ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥’ (८.१३)

This yoga has to be practiced with total mind and heart in it! And with full interest in the paramaarth saadhana, we should not feel it difficulty in doing so, just as the Sun does not feel burden of his rays!

TukaramMaharaj says:

'Padile valan indriyan sakalaan | Bhav to niraalaa naahi duja ||'

In this Brahma arpana Saadhana, the austerities of body, mind, and speech are also of great importance.

In this context, Bhagawaan says: 'O, Arjuna, the devotee who continuously remembers me one pointedly, I am easily attainable. Once he comes to me, having secured the highest achievement, he is not subject to rebirth, which is full of pain and insecurity.'

Otherwise the soul, at times reaches the stage of 'brahmaloka' – where there is long period of bliss, like the

sleep. However he does not attain the final 'Moksha'. He later reverts to the same circle of birth and death full of pain and troubles.

Gnyandev says: ' he ghatika-yantra jaise paribhrame gaa'

Friendly, the last stage is, to attain the state of 'Akshar Brahma' or 'Purushottama! But that is not attained by these unfortunate souls. Their period of unhappiness lasts for long periods. For example, the long period of one thousand yugas equals one day of Brahma! And the night is also of the same length of time! After the night is gone, when the day begins, all the moving and non-moving bodies are born. And when the day is over, all these entities disappear in the non-manifest state! Similarly, the inanimate substances appear and disappear subject to Nature! Beyond all these entities subject to change in time and space, is the 'Paramaatmaa'. To attain Him, to obtain Him should be the duty, fulfillment and final aim of every living being.

Gnyandev says: 'Jo vishvachi houni ase I Pari vishva naasileni na naase |'

The main question is, 'How do we succeed in attaining Bhagawaan? How do we reach the peak of the state of Brahma? Our ancestors have indicated the ways like, use of Devyaana, Pitruyaan etc. The saints of every epoch had attained this 'Highest State'. They had won the divine life. The primary reason is that the saints have universal personality. 'Tukaa zaala Panduranga I'. Such a divine state can be won only by this attitude!

Bhagawaan Himself says: 'What they call 'Akshara' – meaning non-destructible; which is the highest, invisible 'Brahma Tatva', is the destined state of every living being. That state is singular, without any such other.

Once, one reaches this state..... there is no return from there.

‘Yam praapya n nivartante tad dhaama paramam mama |’(8.21)

‘यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम |’ (८.२१)

How can one attain this highest deity – Bhagawan? By one pointed devotion to Him!

Listen, in whom, all beings are contained, because of whom, the whole universe has appeared this ‘best among Men’, how can we attain Him? Only by undivided devotion!

When is the best time for Brahmaarpana Saadhanna? What is the best way for it? And what is the best state for it?

Bhagawaan says:

‘Yatra kale tu anaavruttim Aavruttim chaiva Yoginaha |
Prayaataa yaanti tyam kaalam vakshyaami Bharatrushabhaha ||
(8.23)

‘यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः |
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ||’ (८.२३)

‘O, Bharata Shreshtha, the time period which is suitable for leaving the body so that one does not return in a new birth, and the time which is such that one has to return to another birth, I shall now tell you.

The time considered as Agni i.e. fire, Jyoti i.e. bright sunny day time, Shukla paksha i.e. the bright half of the month, and the six months of ‘Uttarayana’, when the sun is in the northern part of the Equator constitute the time appropriate to

leave one's body. The yogis, knowers of Brahma, who leave their body during these time slots, go to Brahmic state. One the other hand, those who leave their body during evenings, night time, dark half of the month and during Dakshinaayana i.e. when the sun is in the southern part of the globe return to this earth after spending some time in the Chandra loka, realms where they enjoy the fruit of their karma and take birth again here on earth in a new body. These two roads 'krishna' and 'shukla' i.e. black and white, are said to be, for every living being, leading to the other spheres. These two traditionally sanctified paths are described in the yogic interpretation as Uttarayana and Dakshinayana; 'ayn' means – a door, an entrance. (Geeta – first Adhyaaya – 1.1) Uttaarayan is the period of six months (14th Jan. to 14th July) in which the Sun moves towards north from topics of Capricorn to Cancer. While Dakshinaayan is the other six months period (14th July to 14th Jan.) in which Sun moves back from North to South. Again 'Chandraloka' is the space where the Yogi lives in pleasant and luxurious atmosphere, a dream world! Thus these two paths described by Bhagawaan, can be, from the view point of a Yogi, favourable or otherwise, for proceeding to the other world after death.

The yogi's intelligence should be bright like the 'Shukla Paksha' – the bright fortnight. His mind should be fully developed like the full moon. There should be no clouds of 'Aasakti' – attachment. The day is for performing the Karma-actions, keeping idleness away. 'Agni jwalaa' – the flame of fire is for burning up the desires both for objects, as well as for sensual pleasures. This then, is the path suitable for the practice of Yoga, the pure, white and bright path, the 'Shukla Paksha'. The opposite is the dark, inauspicious 'Krishna Paksha' – the dark fortnight, which should be avoided. The aspirant who knows the exact nature and characteristics of these two, he is the best, the kind among Yogis. So much so that he merits the combined results of knowledge of Veda, Yagna and Tapa – austerities, and beyond. He merges with the Bhagawaan

Himself. He earns a place in the realm of Knowledge. Bhagawaan has given the above assurance.

He says: ‘O, Partha, understand clearly these two paths. ‘Anukul’ – favourable and ‘pratikul’ – opposite path. Always remain alert. Put aside all preference and attachment. Defeat all desire and avoid impurity. Controlling all senses, be a victorious Yogi defying all attraction! Continue to perform brahmaarpana – saadhana. Never allow it to weaken or break. Remain a Yogi, a life-long paramaatha Saadhak!

Be an unflinching devotee of Bhagawaan. Transform yourself from a statue of mud to a divine ‘Murti – idol’!

Bhagawaan says:

‘Na ete Sruti Paarth Jaanan Yogi Muhyati Kashchana |
Tasmaat sarvueshu yoga-yukto bhava Arjuna ||’ (8.27)

‘नैते सूती पार्थ जानन् योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥’ (८.२७)

Gnuyaandev, also says,

‘Yaakarane paandusuta | Tuva hoaave yogayktaa |
Yetuleni sarva kaali saamyataa | Aapan pan hoila ||’ (8.256)

XV

“Bhagawad Bhakti – Raajyog”

The ninth Adhyaaya of Bhagawad Geeta describes for us the Raaj Yoga of Devotion to Bhagawan. While praising it, Gnyandev has said at the beginning of the tenth Adhyaaya, ‘Earlier Ninth Adhyaaya is extremely important because the essence of seven hundred shlokas of the whole Geeta is presented here. Truly this ninth Adhyaaya is unparalleled as garland of priceless gems!

In Sant Ghnaandev’s words:

‘Jo abhipraavo sate shati | To eklaachi navami ||

OR

Jaise Rama Ravana zunjile | taise navamin Krushnaache bolane ||

Truly the Ninth chapter is ‘Bhagawaan’s opinion. It’s name is ‘Rajvidyaa Rajguhya Yoga’. What is its meaning? We are familiar with the words: ‘Rajate’, ‘Virajate’, ‘Shobhate’, these are all similar words, meaning attractive, shining. Also ‘Raja’ means the Best. Rajvidya is, thus, the best learning. What Vidya is this? Moksha Saadhaana’! – the pursuit of freedom. Similarly ‘Rajaguhya’ means the most important secret. The ‘secret of Bhagawad bhakti’ – devotion to God, ‘Parameshwvara’ – is Bhakti Yoga! This is the message of the ninth Adhyaay – one pointed devotion to God leads us in the end to ‘Moksha;’ – release from the circus of birth and death. Only it has to have the support of ‘Nishkaama Karmayog’. This is the Bhagawad-Bhakti Yoga, also called ‘Raj Yoga’.

Sadashiv Shastri Bhide in his short commentary, Geeta Saara, says, ‘What is the knowledge leading to Moksha? And what is the secret doctrine to achieve it? It is described in this ninth Adhyaaya of Geeta. Of all the different practices for

Moksha, Bhaktimarga – devotion to God is the best, the ‘Royal Road’, for everyone. In the second shloka of this Adhyaaya Bhagawaan himself says, ‘The practice of Bhagawad Bhakti – devotion to God, is the jewel of all secrets: Rajavidya among all practices. It is to be practiced to test its effectiveness. It is the most pious practice to follow for one’s happiness. It is eternal, indestructible. It is Dharmya, pious and just.

In the words of Shri Bhagawaan,

‘Raajvidyaa Rajaguhyam pavitram idam uttamam |
Pratyaksha Avagamam dharmyam susukham kartum Avyaam || (9.2)

‘राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तृमव्ययम् ॥’ (९.२)

Here, there is a wonderful fusion of Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga! Specially, Bhakti marga is not for discussion and arguments; what is important here is its practice in our life.

‘Aapanh Swadharma Aacharavaa, aani te kaarya ishwararpan karaave |’

This is the secret of Bhakti. In this world, every person, in truth, is an image of God. In the service of this God in the form of human beings, we have to observe our Swadharma. For service to man is service to God. ‘Manva’ seva is ‘Madhav’ seva.

Sant Eknath says:

‘Jana techy Janardana | Eka Janaardani Bhajana ||’

This is why we should note that, ‘To deny the Bhagawaan, present in each and every being, and not to offer service to him, is to disrespect Bhagawaan and devotion to Him. Just think, if we tear off a letter from a king, is it not insult to the King himself?

Yes, it is the insult of the King himself. We have to understand correctly that this is 'Rajavidya', 'Brahmavidya'. This is 'Bhakti Yoga'. Whoever does not have confidence in this true Dharma, they cannot attain Bhagawan. They cannot attain 'Moksha' – release and are born again in this world.

Bhagawaan has clarified here his unique relationship with all beings in this world. Really it is unique, and it is necessary to properly understand it for practicing devotion, Bhaktiyoga.

Bhagawaan says, 'O, Partha, all this universe is pervaded by Me only. It has spread originally from Me. Also be aware that, 'All this' is pervaded by me, yet I am not limited by it. This is my distinctive quality, being limitless Lord over All this. This is my Yoga, 'Yoga of Ishwara' – 'Aishwarya Yoga'. It means that the universe is the form of the Lord., 'Vishweshwara', however He is not limited by it, just as the wind is within the space but the space is not in it, bus is much larger. This then, is the unique relationship.

Shri Gnyaandev quotes Bhagawaan Himself,

'Saange agnistav dhum hoye | Tethe dhumi kaay Agni aahe |
Teisaa vikaaroo haa mi nihe | Jari Vikaar'laa Ase ||' (9.59)

The reason is that creatures in this world are subject to death and destruction. But the Parammatmaa, the Lord, is indestructible. To understand correctly this Aishwarya Yoga is the height of philosophy, the developed state of human mind. Earlier in the seventh Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan, while describing the example of wind, has said in these words:

'Matta eva iti taan viddhi na tu aham teshu te Mai I'

‘मत्त एवेति तान् विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ।’

The truth is that Paramaatmaa, the state of the highest being is beyond Maayaa – illusion, pure and original state. Therein how can other beings be? Those who are born are subject to Nature. However Bhagawaan, Paramaatmaa is ‘Vasha Prakruti’, i.e. controls prakruti. He is independent.

In other words, Bhagawaan, as prakruti-nature is in everyone. But as ‘Purusha’ he is not in everyone. He is the Atmaa of the Universe, and ‘Vishvottrirna’ i.e. above and beyond this world. For Bhakti Yoga, it is a must, to understand all this.

In this Ninth Adhyaaya of Geeta, Bhagawaan says further, “All my actions in this world are without attachment. Hence I am completely free of any bias. Naturally I am not bound by my actions. I am the lord of this universe. I make nature to bring forth all these animate and inanimate creatures and things. As a result, while all these things go on in the world, I am not involved in any of these. (being the Lord, means also being the witness, without attachment, without any bondage.)

The exact words of Bhagawaan are:

‘Mayaa Adhyakshena prakrutihi suyate sacharaacharam |
Hetunaa Anena Kaunteya, Jagat Viparivartate || (9.10)

‘मयाऽध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनाऽनेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥’ (९.१०)

Gnyaandev also says:

‘Taisaa bhutakarmi anaasaktu | Mi bhuti Ase || (9.29)

Further in the ninth Adhyaaya Bhagawaan has elaborated the strange behavior of people in this world. Bhagawaan says: “I am ‘Loka Maheshawara’. Ignorant people who, do not at all recognize my best form, take me to be an ordinary person like others, and feel that I am even lower than many other people. They even ignore me, and behave haughtily with me.” This view of Bhagawaan is indeed correct. In this practical world people have a strangely different standard of ‘Bhakti’ – devotion. We fail to recognize the changeless, indestructible, form of Bhagawaan without attributes, and recognize him only in the form of idols in the temples. Then we consider Him just like us, and ignore Him. Then we go on doing Arati to Him, morning, noon and evening and offer his tasty food that we like!

We recognize Him to be present in trees, stones and other things but we fail to see Him in people around us. In fact, to recognize His form hiding in every human being and to serve them as the form of God is, truly, to see God. This is the divine treasure! But ignorant people fall a prey to demoniac forces! Their minds are infected. They enlist themselves on the demons’ side and oppose godliness. As a result their hopes and aspirations are dashed. Their actions and their knowledge remain fruitless.

Then what is the true ‘Bhakti’, true devotion? Sankirtan, Singing God’s name, and who is a true devotee? One, who sees God in everything...

‘Vaasudevah sarvam iti sa Mahaatma sudurlaba | (7.19)

‘वासुदेवः सर्वमिती स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ।’ (७.१९)

Mahatma is one who perceives everyone with an equal eye. This is the Vedic teaching. He is the inheritor of

divine virtues. He acknowledges that Bhagawaan is changeless, indestructible, the origin of all creation, and with this attitude he is ever devoted to Bhagawaan.

Where does he reside? How should we worship Him? This is the question every person faces. The answer is:

‘Naaham vasaami Vaikunthe | Yoginaam hrudayaravau |
Madbhaktaa yatra gaayanti | Tara tishthaami Naarada ||’

‘नाहं वसामि वैकुण्ठे । योगिनां हृदये रवौ ।
मद्भक्तः यत्र गायन्ति तत्र तिष्ठामि नारद ॥’

Bhagawaan says in the Bhagawad Geeta, “O, Partha, Real bhakti devotes his actions to Me, practices vratas; equal minded, he sings hymns to Me, offers his salutations and has his mind always focused on Me.

In this Ninth Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says:

‘Satatam kirayanto maam yatantashcha dradhavrataaha |
Namashyantashcha maam bhaktyaa Nitya yuktaa upaasate ||
(9.14)

‘सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥’ (९.१४)

This Hari-bhakti, devotion to Hari, described above in verse 9.14 also appears in the Geeta in other places such as shlokas 10.9, 11.36,18.68.

In this context, Gnyaandev also says through Bhagawaan:

‘Tari kirtanaacheni natanaache | naashile vyavasaaya
praayashchitaanche |

Je naavaache naahi paapaache | Aise kele ||” (9.196)

‘Aiseni maaze naavaghoshe | Naahi kariti Vishwachi dukkhe |
(9.119)

‘Aise Naamghosh gaurave | dhavalale Vishva ||’ (.202)

‘Pari taypaapaasi Pandavaa | Mee haa haraplaa gavasavaa |
Jetha naamghoshu baravaa | Kariti Maazaa || (9.207)

‘Krishna Vishnu Hari Govinda | Yaa Naavache nikhil prabandh |
Maazi Aatma charchaa vishada | Udanda gaati ||’ (9.209)

This is the praise of the naam sankirtan, (singing the names of the Lord), by Gnyaadev in the ninth Adhyaaya.

Sant Namaadev, also sings in the Abhanga style, praises of the lord’s name in the following manner:

‘Shetee Netaa thode | Mote aanataati gaade |
Ekya Naame Hari Jode | Fite Janmaache saakade ||”

This is the real Japa Yagnya, prasing God’s name, which is reaching out to all, in every direction. It is true devotion. This God of all gods, reaching out to the lowest and uplifting them all is the most high. In comparison the so called wish fulfilling gods and practices are little use. The benefits they give to their entreaties are also worldly and small, not lasting! All this Bhagawaan has made explicit in the Ninth Adhyaaya. Even so, Bhagwaan does not discard them, nor shows disrespect for them. On the contrary He accepts them, owns them saying these lower gods, yagnyas are also ‘my own forms’. In a sense this is also ‘Vibhuti Yoga’.

Bhagawaan says, these Yagnyas, fire, the things offered in fire are all Me only. Similarly the ‘Shraddha’, ‘Tarpan’ – offerings made to the ancestors, also reaches Me. Not only that, these materials, ‘aushadhi’ are also my own forms. ‘Soma’ – (a

drink made out of leaves) in the offering also reaches Me. Finally in all these practices, I am both the performer as well as the receiver of these austerities. The rewards for these to the performers are also given by Me. The performers, whether Yagnik, devvrati or Pitruvarti (ancestor worshippers), all are Me only, and their offerings also reach me. They are all offering their worship, even if these are not in proper prescribed manner, in the end, to Me only!

Bhagawaan says to Arjuna, “O, Partha, listen in this world, I am the Mother, Father and the support of all. The learned and me subject of knowledge, is Me. I am ‘OM’, the pious syllable. I am the three Vedas, Rug, Yajur and Sama! I am the nutrient of all. I am the Supreme Witness! I am the friend of all. I am the shelter, the Adobe of all! I am the Source, Life and the Final Plight of the World! I am the indestructible Seed. I am the Warmth and the Cold and the cause of the Rain. I am the Death, the Life and importantly! Sat and Asat, being and the non-being, all these I am!

It is clear that those austerities which are made with an eye on the benefits, yield results which do not last, while those with genuine devotion yield eternal happiness, says the Geeta. Hence Bhagawaan says, ‘O Partha, those who perform austerities according to the teachings of the three Vedas (Rug, Yajur and Saam), their desire for the heaven is fulfilled. After death they go to Indra’s Punyalok (heaven) and there, enjoy the luxurious life there. What next” After their balance is over, they have to come back on this earth in a human birth! The reason is, they are not desirous of ‘Moksha’, i.e. to merge with God Himself! They are for sensual pleasure as a human being. As a result, they keep going from earth to Heaven and back in an eternal circle depending upon their karma. No ‘Moksha’ for them.

On the contrary, a real devotee of God is a truly pious person, a mixture of pure and impure Karma. They are bathed

in the true devotion to God, having the treasure of divinity, truly merged with God- Bhagawaan! Hence God himself takes care of their ‘Yoga’ and ‘Kshema’ means –welfare here and hereafter!’ ‘Yoga’ means exerting for getting what you need, and ‘Kshema’ means preserving what you have earned! Also ‘Yoga’ means ‘Saadhana’ and ‘Kshema’ means ‘Kalyan’. In spiritual context, ‘Yoga’ means Ishwar darshan and Kshema means realizing ‘Self’ as Ishwar. The devotee need not be concerned with these! Bhagawaan Himself takes this responsibility. He gives His assurance to that effect!

‘Anantyaash chintayanto Maam ye Janaaha Paryupaasate |
Tesham nitya Abhiyuktaanaam Yoga Kshemam Vahaamyaham ||’ (9.22)

‘अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥’ (९.२२)

Bhagawaan Says, ‘Those who single mindedly and continuously think of Me, who are my sincere devotees, I take their full responsibility on Me in every way’. He further adds: ‘O, my devotee, whatever you do, take your food, perform haven, gives alms, or perform austerities, offer all of this to Me. Your sincere devotion does not require the show of an expensive offer. It need not be an expensive gift. Even if a leaf of a tree, a flower or a fruit or may be even just water is offered with sincere devotion, it is enough! I will be pleased with pure feeling of devotion. Such pure hearted feeling of devotion is always dear to me.

‘Patram pushpam falam toyam yo me Bhaktyaa prayachhati |
Tadaham Bhaktyupahrutam Ashnaami prayataattmanaha ||’ (9.26)

‘पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥’ (९.२६)

His is attested by our traditional history of devotion, whether it was the story of Sudama, the berries of Shabari, or of the last little leaf in Draupadi's vessel! Or else it may be the leaf of Tulsi plant offered by Rukmini, in the tale of weighing of Shri Krishna in a balance!

Sant Gnyaneshwar's couplet below is aptly expressive of an aspect of the life of Bhagawaan Shri Krishna, Krishna says:

'Te kaay saangaave Kiriti | Tumhi dehile Aaplyaa dithi |
Mi Sudaamchiya sodi gaathi | Pavhelaagi ||'

Bhagawaan Himself gives his admission:

'Pengaa bhakti eki me jaane | Tetha santhor mi na mhane |
Aamhi Bhaavache paahune | Bhalateyaa ||' (9.395)

Such a devotee frees himself, from all bonds of his Karma, and finally merges with Bhagawaan.

Such a Gnyaani Bhakta – devotee with Aatma – Gnyaan, has been given a special title as 'Sanyaas Yog Yuktaatma' 'संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा' (९.२८) Achaarya Vinoba says (Velor Pravachane – P. 117): 'The meaning of this word is 'one who has offered the fruits of his actions to god. By offering all his actions to God, he has both Yoga and Sanyaas, - he is 'Sanyaas – Yoga- yukta-atmaa'. Truly Yoga and Sanyaas both are the best. Yoga is the means by which Sanyaas can be achieved. The root 'Nyas' means to leave, to separate. And Yuj means to join. Thus to offer our Karma Yoga with attitude of Sanyaas is the best approach in human life to unite with God. 'Bhakti Yoga directed to God is like a 'Paras Mani', by its touch a stone is turned into Gold.

Further Bhagawaan says, 'I am equal in my treatment with every being. I do not have any one specially favourable or otherwise. However, those who have one pointed devotion are

even in Me and I, in them. Even if a person has not behaved well in the past, but has repented and now turns to Me, he is also my devotee. He can also achieve lasting true happiness with practicing his Dharma.

‘... kaunteya pratijaaneehi na Me bhaktah pranashyati, || (9.39)

‘...कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ।’ (९.३९)

Be assured, Arjuna, that my devotee never meets with downfall. Truly, Bhagawaan has kept the window of ‘devotion to God’ wide open for each and every one. There is only one condition for entry to this royal road. And that is ‘One’s mind and heart should be pure! We should have a desire for our good behavior. Nothing else!

Bhagawaan says, ‘There is no bar to this royal road based on either caste, occupation or sex; We have been assured: ‘... Te’pi yanti paraam gatim II (9.32). ‘तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ।’ (९.३२)

Those who know, assure us that there have been many examples in our culture in the past, of this promise being fulfilled; such as, King Janak and an ordinary house wife-Sulabha, famous for the dialogue between them, on the subject of ‘Aatma Gnyaan’. The greatness of Sulabha is reflected in this dialogue. Another such example is of learned Jaajali, whom an ordinary shopkeeper, Tulaadhaar had taught a lesson in spirituality! It is our good luck, as Saint Chokhaa melaa says,

‘Natkhat yaave | Shuddha houni jaave ||
Davandi piti Bhave | Chokhaa Melaa ||

Supporting this view, of greatness of devotion – Bhagawad Bhakti, sant Gnyaneshwar says:

‘Mhanaouni Kula Jaati Varna | Te aadhavechi gaa Akaaarana ||
Tetha Arjunaa maaze Pana | Saarthaka Eka ||’ (9.452)

‘Mhanouni Bhakti Gaa etha sare | Jaati apramaana |’ (9.448)

‘... Pari Ma tukitaa Tukaa | Tuti Naahi ||’ (9.445)

How is this Rajayoga of ‘Bhakti’ – devotion to the Lord?

‘Mag Jaati vyakti pade bindule |’ (Bindule means zero)

How much, does such a devotee, feel oneness with Bhagawaan?

‘..... Jaise Saagari lavan kana Milaale |’ (9.457)

Hence Bhagawaan says, “O, Partha, Fix your mind on ‘Me’ – a form of Paramaatma. Offer worship to Me. Bow to Me., and being one with Me, observe ‘Yoga of Samatva’. No doubt you will become Parmaatma’.

‘Manmanaa byhava mdbhakto madyaaji Mam pamaskuru |
Mamaiveshyasi Yuktwaivam Aatmanam matparaayanaha ||’ (9.34)

‘मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥’ (९.३४)

This is the Rajayoga of devotion to Bhagawaan.

In the words of Shri Gnyaandeva,

‘Tari zadzduni vahilaa niga | Ithe Bhaktichiye yaate laaga |
Jiyaa paavasi Avyanga Nij Dharma Maaze ||’ (9.516)

XVI

“Grand Vibhuti yoga”

What is the meaning of Vibhuti? ‘Vi’ means ‘Vishesha’ – special and ‘bhuti’ means being. ‘Vibhuti of Bhagawaan’ means a thing, or a person having special attributes of Bhagawaan’s presence. In the words of Shri Gnyaandev,

‘Mhanouni vibhutichaa thaavo | Arjuna daavil Siddhaanha raavo |
To aaikaa mhane Gnyaandeo | Nivruttich ||’ (9.528)

Sadaashiv Shastri Bhide in his ‘Geeta saara’ says, ‘Vibhuti means shining ‘Light’. Ishwara – God in his seed form, is present in everything. Yet, where this seed takes on a special intense light, then it is called ‘Vibhuti’. This is described in the first half of the tenth Adhyaaya (Shloka 1-19) and in the later (20-42) the main aspects of God’s vibhuti. This fact emphasized by Shri Bhide is important. Ninth Adhyaaya was devoted to Raj Yoga of devotion, while tenth teaches us to discover Bhagawaan’s presence in every being, in everything.

It is important to imbibe this teaching of the Geeta in us. It is said, ‘When you learn to read Nisarga – the Nature all around, you are truly ‘Gnyaani’ – learned. Vedas say that ‘All things whether obvious or subtle, objects and ideas are full of ‘Paramaatma’. The wind, river, Cow, a particle of earth, day or night, in everything, everywhere Paramaatma is present.

The Vedic verses describe these as:

‘Madhu vaataa rutaayat | Madhu ksharanti Sindhavaha |
Maadhvirgaavo bhavantu naha | madhu naktam utorshasi ||
Madhumat parthivaha rajaha | |

How is it possible for everyone to understand / accept such overall merging with God and the universe? This is why Bhagawaan relates first His vibhutis, simpler, clearer and things visible everywhere, and then leads us to principles of philosophy, just as teaching the letters to a child and then leading him on to more complex phases. Similarly Bhagawaan leads us in the tenth Adhyaaya.

In the tenth Adhyaaya of Geeta, the entire description of Vibhuti yoga is an excellent effort of Vyaas Muni to depict in words what Bhagawaan had to convey to mankind. It is the picture of our entire cultural and spiritual inheritance.

‘Ekam Sat Vipraahaa Bahudhaa Vadanti |’

‘एकं सत् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति |’

This highest state and experience is expressed as if in a movie. At the beginning shlokas 1 to 3 of this Adhyaaya describe God’s own form. In the shloka no. 4 to 7, His own life and dynasty is depicted. Shlokas 8 to 11, give us an idea of devotion to God.

At the beginning itself, of the tenth Adhyaaya Bhagawaan says, ‘O, Valorous Arjuna, you seem happy to receive my above account. So I am giving you some more information which I alone can give because the purpose of my birth and my work here is not known even to the Gods and Rishies! It is natural because the first cause of both is in Me only!

In the shlokas that follow, Bhagawaan has described his own creation of, both positive and negative elements in this Universe.(Even the description of His Vibhuties is also two fold – positive and negative). In the bhartiyaa tradition there is no place for the concept of Satanic Role! The worst also, can

become the best. Similarly, worst persons like Ravana and Kamsa can also merge into Bhagawaan. Therefore, here in the beginning shlokas of tenth adhyaaya, both positive and negative aspects are mentioned. He says, positive aspects are intelligence, knowledge, non-attachment, equality, contentment, austerity, generosity – alms giving, repute etc. On the other hand, shortage, fear, disrepute, and misery are some of the negative aspects. All these are Bhagawaan only, and He himself has produced them. He goes on to say, ‘O, Partha, it is I, who has produced all these people, whether Manu, Muni or Maharshi. All the beings in the whole world are my children.

All this is my ‘Vibhuti’ i.e. expanse, I and their source is my Yogic power. Yogamaya. Only a mature person, ‘Sthira-Buddhi’ , knows and understands this correctly. Only such person attains ‘Samatva yoga’. He says.

‘etaam vibhutim yogam cha mama yo vetti tatvataha |
So avikampena yujyate, na atra samshayaha ||’(10.7)

‘एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥’ (१०.७)

The whole creation came about from the thought of the Parameshvara, the Supreme Being. First His thought produced ‘Hiranya Garbha’ i.e. ‘Brahma’, the creator aspect of God. From this, came the whole living, as well as inanimate worlds. For this reason, naturally all these creatures in the entire world worship Him, as the first cause, in his various forms. Bhagawad Geeta holds both, ‘Aprokasha’ i.e. Direct knowledge and Paraabhakti, i.e. singular devotion, as one and the same. That is why the devotees from the knowledge route, are also fond of singing the praise of the Lord. It is not simply the \praise, as ‘Leela-samkirtana’ – that of an episode on the stage of the world. It is well thought out, reasoned, understanding of God

as the Original Ultimate Truth behind all Existence! Hence Bhagawaan calls it 'Buddhi Yoga' – the Yoga of Intelligence. Bhagawaan assures that I, living in the hearts of my sincere devotees, bless them with the inner light of Gnyaan – highest knowledge and remove the darkness of ignorance. Thereby the feeling of opposition is replaced by strong positive attitude!

Arjuna was happy with this whole hearted assurance by Bhagawaan since he had earlier heard the same from many a learned Rishi and Muni. Who are these Rishi and Munis? Rishi is a 'Drashtaa' – having a unique and noble outlook of life, who can see far in the future. A 'Maharshi' is even greater Rishi. And 'Muni' is a profound thinker who contemplates on important issues of life in general ! In ages past, there lived in this land Rishies such as Gautam, Bharadwaj, Kashyap, Vasishtha, Vishwamitra, Atri, Jamadagni and others.

'Rajarshi' means both Raja – A King who is also a rishi – for example King 'Janak'.

Further, who is a 'Devarshi'? One who worships God with attributes, following the path of devotion – Bhakti and is also a Drashta, is 'Devarshi'. Naarad Muni is the most famous Devarshi.

Rishi Vasishtha was a 'Brahmarshi' – one who knows clearly, 'Brahma Tatva'.

Devala was a follower of the path of 'karma'.

Asit Rishi was follower of the path of Knowledge – 'Gnyaana Marga'.

Naarad Muni followed 'Bhakti Marga', path of devotion and,

Vyaasa Muni is considered to be an Aachaarya, and a follower of Moksha Marga.

Arjuna says to Krishna, with humility, "O, Bhagawaan, All these great Rishies have sung your praises. You are Parabrahma, eternal Divinity. You are without birth and death, and all pervading. You are truly invisible, because neither Gods recognize you, nor the daemons!

You only evoke feelings in all the living beings in this world, and you are their supreme leader. You are god of all gods. You are lagadpati, Purushottama. Therefore, 'O, Best among men, You alone can know your own Self, none else can. Therefore, please expound to me your expanse, special qualities, your power of Yoga. I am most happy hearing all this, in your own sweet words! Hence please tell me 'O, Bhagawaan, in what manner I can contemplate and know your exact form and nature! Tell me where all, in what things and places You can be found! Then I shall contemplate on those very qualities for knowing You!"

Arjuna says:

'Katham vidyam aham, Yodinstwam sadaa parichintayan |
Keshu keshu cha bhaveshu, chinyou asi Bhagawaan mayaa | |'
(10.17)

'कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥' (१०.१७)

Bhagawaan, then said, 'All right O, Arjuna, I shall tell you of my main special aspects. It is impossible to tell you all, because there is no end to such qualities of mine'. Hence Bhagawaan told Arjuna about his seven Vibhuties which were apparently conflicting! Vidhaayak i.e. soft and describing the Lord, and 'Viparit', meaning seemingly opposite of Ishwara.

Among these ‘viparit’ – opposite vibhuti, are ‘Kaala’ i.e. Time, ‘Kaama’ – Lust, ‘Sarpa’ – Serpent, (Naag), ‘Dyuta’ – gamble, ‘Danda’ – Fine and even, ‘Mrutyu’ – Death. The positive, ‘Aabhaasi’ vibhuti have been already described before in detail. In the bruhadaarnyaka Upanishad, Brahma’s thirty three characteristics have been described in (3.9.1). Here in Bhagawad Geeta, seventy two Vibhuti of Bhagawaan have been enumerated. Some of these are in the visible universe and others, are inner characteristics of sages and Bhagawaan. It can be restated as, Bhagawaan’s visible form is Vibhuti and invisible characteristics are ‘Yoga Shakti’ or ‘Yoga Maaya’.

Bhagawaan says, ‘Among the twelve sons of mother Adeeti, the Aadityas, I am Vishnu. Among the bright stars, I am ‘Ravi raj’, the Sun, with dazzling rays. I am ‘Marichi’, the seasonal wind, and among stars, I am the Moon. I am ‘Saama Veda, among the Vedas. I am ‘Indra’, the King of Haven. I am the mind among the senses, and also the consciousness in all the living beings. Among the eleven Rudras, I am Shiva. I am Kubera, among the Rich and the Yakshas. Among the eight Rudras, Guardians of Men and their wealth. I am the King Kubera among the eight guardians of human settlements, I am the most important God ‘Agni’, the fire. Among the Mountains I am the ‘Meru’. O, Arjuna, I am ‘Bruhaspati’ among the Philosophers and ‘Kartik Swami’ among warriors! The largest and best water body, I am the Ocean.

Bhagwaan says:

‘Maharshinaam Bhrugur Aham, Giraam Asmi Ekam Akshram |
Yagnyanaam Japa Japayagnosmi, Sthavaraanaam Himalayaha ||’
(10.25)

‘महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावरणां हिमालयः ॥’ (१०.२५)

Among the Great Rishis, I am 'Bhrugu', Syllable 'OM' among the letters, while among various types of yagnas, I am 'Japaygana'. Among the immovable entities, I am 'Himaalaya'.

The rishi Bhrugu, whom Bhagawaan mentions as 'Mahaa Rishi' was the best among the students of Vedic God Varun. He is said to have discovered the 'fire'. He has written many 'Suktas' – important shlokas for various ceremonial occasions. What Bhagawaan himself claims to be, the syllable 'OM' is like the Signature of Bhagawaan.

Sant Gnyaandev praises the 'OM' syllable as:

'Tetha Pranava Ek naam | Ho Ekaakeshar brahma |' (8.118)

Again among the Yagnas, 'Japaygana', which is repeating the God's name, is the best. Remembering and repeating the name of God – Hari naam Sankirtan is very important in the efforts of reaching God. Japayagna is also termed as 'Japa-dhyaan'. This has to be with deep feeling, with heart's desire to reach and be merged with God. 'Dhyaana consists in merging our sight and sound in God. There is reference in the Epic Mahabharat, in Shantiparva that Japa – Dhyaan leads one to reach Brahma. Again the reference to the highest mountain in the world, Himaalaya in 'Bhaarat' – India, as the form of Bhagawaan, underlines the greatness of Bhagawaan and the importance of the country with such a spiritual Heritage.

Maha Kavi kalidaas, well known Sanskrit poet of India in the middle ages, describes Himalaya as the 'Maan Dand', measure of the importance of the country, Bhaarat.

Further Bhagawaan says, about His Vibhuti Yoga, 'O, Arjuna, I am the 'Ashvattha' – peepal tree, foremost among the Trees. (Peepal tree is believed to release Oxygen, both during day as well as night, unlike other trees). Among the Devarshis,

I am Naarada Muni and among the Gandharvas, I am 'Chitra ratha'. Among the Siddha – Accomplished Yogis, I am Kapil Muni, Aachaarya Kapil. Among the horses, I am the 'Uchchaishrava'. This great Horse of the Gods, was one among the various prize products of the Churning of Ocean by the Gods – Devvas and the Danavas., the Devils in the ancient times. It is believed that this best horse was saddled to the chariot of 'Indra' the king of Haven. Among the Elephants, I am the 'airaavata', which was the beloved elephant of Indra. Bhagawaan Continues further, 'O, Arjuna, I am the King among Men'. The King was assigned by the Gods, the task of maintaining good order among the Society on earth. This description is found in the chapters 67 and 68, of Shanti-parva in the epic Mahabharat. This must have led to the belief – 'Naha Vishnuh Pruthivpati I '(Vishnu – as the ruler of the world). 'नः विष्णुः पृथिवीपति ।'

Further Bhagawaan says, 'O, Partha, among the weapons, I am the 'Vajra-(steel) of Indra. It is believed that this weapon was made from the bones of Rishi Dadhichi (who donated his hones for the weapons of God Indra, for the welfare of mankind. Indra hunted down the daemon Vrutasura by this weapon. Among the cows, I am the 'Kaam Dhenu', one of the jewels from the 'Samudra Manthan'. I am the Desire for breeding in Mankind. And among the snakes. I am 'Vaasuki' – (the sarpa – snakes have one fang while the Naagas are supposed to have many fangs.) I am 'Shesha Naag', among the Naagas. Among the gods of water, I am Varuna. Among Pitrugana – the Ancestors, I am 'Aryama' – the main ancestor of mankind. The word, Aryama also means worship worthy, with an aura, and the best. Similarly, I am Yama – 'Samyama', the capacity of restraint.

Amkong the cruel Daityas, He is Prahlad, a child devotee of Bhagawaan. And as kaala Purusha among the Daityas – the cruel. Among Animals, Bhagawan is in the form

of the Lion. He is 'Garuda' among the birds. Among the speedy, he is the Wind! He is Shri Rama, among the warriors. Among the species living in water, he is 'Dev Masa', while among the rivers, He is sacred river Gangaa. While Bhagawaan has described his Vibhutis in the gross objects, now He goes on to describe His vibhutis in the subtle realm. He says, 'I am the 'Sarga' i.e. the beginning of this world, and also the middle and the end. I am, among the knowledge, I am highest, "Adhyaatma Vidya", the knowledge of the 'Self'- Aatmaa! Why is the knowledge the highest? This question may arise but it is the only knowledge that can destroy human agony and lament! This question may arise but it is the only knowledge that can destroy human agony and lament! No other. Similarly, the awakening that arises as a result of the discourse of the learned and the holy is also the vibhuti of Bhagawaan.

Further, Bhagawaan says, 'O, Arjuna'

'Aksharaanaam A- kaarosmi, dwandwaha Saamaasikasya cha |
Aham eva Akshayah kaalo, dhaataa aham vishvatomukhaha ||'
(10.33)

‘अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वंद्वः सामासिकस्य च ।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताऽहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥’ (१०.३३)

In the Alphabet, I am 'A' – kaara. In the sacred symbol 'Om' i.e. A, U, M; I am the syllable 'A' – the beginning syllable. Again, in the grammar of the samaasa – combination of syllables, I am 'Dwarndwa' which has balance in both the beginning and the ending syllables. There is equality between the two syllables. For example – the word 'Harihara'! Also the permanent, 'Akshaya Kaala' is myself. I am also the creator of this universe, 'Brahma'. At the same time, I am also the 'Kaala' – the death of this world. And after the pralaya, the end of the universe, the source of renewal of this universe is Me only. The mother of this world, the Stree-shakti, the woman power is also

Me. 'Her seven forms' i.e. Kirti, Sri, Vani, Smruti, Medhaa, Dhruvi and Kshamaa, are all Me only', says Bhagawaan, in this Vibhuti Yoga!

He says further, that the 'Trayi Vidya' is the three fold knowledge in the three Vedas – Rugveda, Yajurveda and Saamveda. These represent: 'Gnyaana' – Knowledge, 'Karma'- work, and 'Saam'- is naada-Brahma, as Singing of Vedic shlokas. Among these Vedic Shlokas also, Bruhat Saama, singing the Saam shlokas in the 'Bruhati' – Chhanda is said to be the lord himself! Again, O, Partha, among the seasons I am 'Vasant', and among the Months of the year, I am the month of 'Margshirsh'. (During the Mahabharat times the rainy season was said to begin with this month). The festivals of 'Dev Diwali' and 'Shakambhari' are celebrated for nine days in this month. In the Anushaasan parva, recounting the importance of giving Alms 'Margshirsh' month is mentioned. The Geeta Jayanti, is celebrated on the eleventh day. 'Shuddha Ekadashi' of Margashirsha.

Further elaborating the positive 'Vibhuti', Bhgawaan says, "O, Partha, in the brightness, I am the light of the Brave; in the opposite side, in evil aspects I am the 'Game of Gambling'! Though, in this too the important thing is to win righteously, bravely and with determination. All these are my attributes. For example I am 'Vaasudev' of the Yadavas, and 'Dhananjaya' of the Pandavas. Among the Munis, I am Vyaasa and Ushanaacharya of the philosophers! Among the rulers, I am the power of punishment, and 'Dhruva Niti'- firmness of the policies. Among the Secrets, I am 'Mauna' – keeping quiet. In the knowers, I am supreme, 'Aatma Gnyaan', Knowledge of the 'Self'! In short, I am the seed in all the objects. There is nothing in this world, in which I, 'Parmaatma', am not present. Be assured of this fact!

At the end of this tenth Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says,

‘Naantosti mama divyaanaam Vibhutinaam Parantapa |
Etd uddeshataha Prokto vibhuter vistaro Mayaa ||’ (10.40)

‘नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरौ मया ॥’ (१०.४०)

‘O, Arjuna’, What more, I shall I say? Truly speaking there is no end to my vibhuties! What I have described here, these seventy two of vibhuties are only a sample of my traits. Instead, do understand the essence of what, this word, ‘Vibhuti’ means! Wherever, in whatever object there is the presence of the shining light, (Vibhuti-ness), holiness and ‘Chaitanya’ – Consciousness (Urjaa), guiding light, all that you take it as ‘Divine Vibhuti’. This is the all-encompassing Truth.

‘Yet, O, Arjuna, what is the necessity for you to go into these details? Rather you keep in mind the underlying principle, that I, as Pramaatma, have encompassed all that is in this universe and beyond! Thus with great affection, Bhagawaan narrated this Vibhuti Yoga to Arjuna. We note there that this tenth adhyaaya, is the understanding of Bhagawaan’s endless qualities, ‘Vibhuti Chintan’ rather than Viobhuti Yoga. For example, when we once recognize the holiness of the river Gangaa then while bathing in any river, we naturally sing the praises of Gangaa, with ‘Hara Hara Gange Bhaagirathi’! Our traditional worship of idols of any god, reminds us of the presence of the Highest ‘Ishvara’ in this whole Universe as well as in our own heart. This worship in the Bharatiya tradition is not to any specific god, but that of the essence and concept of the highest God! From this point of view the whole Universe appears to us one with Brahma, God. This the eternal message of the Geeta’s Vibhuti Yoga!

XVII

“Vilakshan Vishwa Roopa Darshan”

The eleventh Adhyaaya of Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta is very dear to the devotees. While the tenth Adhyaaya is about the Vibhutis – numerous qualities of Bhagawaan, the eleventh Adhyaaya is the visible form, His photo! Shri Bhide Shastri says in his ‘Geeta Saar’ – ‘When Arjuna prayed to God, Bhagawaan Shri Krishna, bestowed on him the Divine eyes to enable him to see the Bhagawaan’s vast, fearful and awe inspiring form in the eleventh Adhyaaya. ‘As it is, this picture is terrible. However it is also true that only devotion to Bhagawaan can make it devoid of fear for the devotee. In this whole Adhyaaya we experience wonder at the unlimited aspects of Bhagawaan! At the same time the seriousness of the situation is also depicted in a wonderful manner.

Shri Gnyaandev says about this Adhyaaya:

‘Yeth Shantaachiya Dhara | Adbhut aalaa paahunera |
Aani yeranhi rasaa pantikaraa | jaahalaa Bhanu || (11.2)

At the beginning of this Adhyaaya, Arjuna says, ‘O, Bhagawaan, my misunderstanding about the Universe and your exact nature has been removed by what you have explained to me so far. You have described in detail, its origin and its end which I have heard with interest! O, Parmeshwara, is it possible for me to witness with my eyes, this wonderful expense of your vibhutis? Please favour me with this darshana, and oblige. I am anxious to see this divine form.’

‘Manyase yadi tatshakyam mayaa drashtum iti Prabho |
Yogeshwara Tato Me Twam Darshayaatmanam Avyayam ||”
(11.4)

‘मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥’ (११.४)

This request by Arjuna is very important, because in the tenth adhyaaya Krishna had said, “See God in the entire creation.” It is therefore, natural for Arjuna to wonder, ‘If we can see god in everything, how such a form of the God will be! As a result Bhagawaan blessed his favourite friend with this divine vision! Thus this adhyaaya has taken a form like the daily ritual of Aarti, by waving the light before the image of God. Seeing this grand divine vision, Arjuna exclaims again and again, ‘O, Bhagawaan, I bow to you, from all directions, from the front, sides and the back. My salutations to you, thousand times.

‘Punahashcha bhuyopi namo namhas Te || (11.39)

‘पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ।’ (११.३९)

OR

Namostu Te sarvataha Eva Sarva |’ (11.40)

‘नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ॥’ (११.४०)

Because wherever he looked, Arjuna saw only Yogeshwar Bhagawaan! There is only one message of this eleventh Adhtyaaya, which is, that we are a tool in the hands of this Universal Energy. We simply have to do our duty with humility.

‘Niyatam kuru Karma twam | (3.8)

‘नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं ।’ (३.८)

And 'Nmitta maatram bhava Savyasaachin |' (11.33)

‘निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् |’ (११.३३)

In short, what was the request of Arjuna like?

In the words of Gnyaandev,

‘O, Bhagawaan,

‘Tuze Vishwa roop pana aghave | maja dithisi gochar hoave ||
Aisi thor aasa jive | Bandhoni Aahe ||’ (11.88)

Thus, Arjuna as ardent devotee received the gift of Parameshwara’s grace. Bhagawaan said, “O, Arjuna, see here thousands of my divine forms in different types, shapes and colours. (These are not separated from each other. All together, these are the different forms, making up an indivisible Unity of One ‘Vishwa roopa’ – Single Universal form.)

‘Tuka Mhane ekaa | Dehaache avayava ||
Sukh dukh jeeva | Bhoga Paave ||’

Bhagawaan said, ‘O, Partha, as mentioned earlier in Vibhuti Yoga, in this Universal vision, there are twelve Adityas, eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, two Ashvinikumars, and fortynine Maruts. There are surprises that you may not even see! What is the Universal form on the whole? As per Chhandogya Upanishad, ‘Tat Twam Asi’ ‘तत्त्वमसि |’ You are ‘That’. In this ‘Vishwa Roop darshan’ of Bhagawaan, there are both moving and nonmoving objects of the universe. This is the Divine vision of the Universal ‘SELF’! It is His Aishwara Yoga, unusual and beyond imagination. Hence Bhagawaan said, ‘O, Partha, you are desirous of seeing all this Vishwaroopa – Grand vision in its entirety in ‘Me’, but you cannot do so with your human eyes. I am giving you special

divine eyes. With them, behold My Divine Form – “Vishwa Roopa’. Bhagawaan said this because our human eyes can only see the visible part of the Universe – Srushti. For seeing the ‘Avyakta’, the rest nonphysical, mental and intellectual aspects, you need the eyes of Samaadhi – the vision that is possible only by ‘Dhyaan’ – deep meditation, Samaadhi, Bhagawaan gave this vision to Arjuna. Thus he could observe the whole of the creation’ including the mental and intellectual.

The framework itself of the 11th Adhyaaya is fairly significant. Vishwaroop Darshan is very much like a great ceremony of worship of the Universe as an icon. There are three main characters who have together performed this worship. The first is Sanjaya, who described what he saw. (shloka No. 9 to 14). Thereafter Arjuna (No.15 to 21), and then Bhagawaan Himself (No.32 to 34). Sanjay’s narration is actually like a worship of the deity with words! He describes what he sees externally of the Universal form, weapons in His hands, and the shining ornaments. Then the sixteen part worship and at the end has described the Divine light as if it is the Aarti offered to the Deity! All this was possible due to the gift of Durdarshan – tele sight, bestowed on him by Vyaas Muni. This outer description is a matchless example of poetry. Sanjay says, ‘What words can describe this unique ‘Darshan’ – sight, with which Bhagawaan has appeared in all his glory to his favourite friend and disciple – Arjuna? This vision was comforting and friendly for the devotees, but fearful for the demons.

Arjuna saw this vision of the universal form had innumerable eyes and mouths. In every limb there were surprises galore! There were innumerable divine ornaments on limbs, and weapons in the hands. Multicoloured clothes and ornaments were such as never seen before, sprinkled with divine attar. There is no limit to the expanse of His form. His light is indescribable. Suppose if there were a thousand Suns in

the sky at a time, the light therefrom will give some idea of Bhagawaan's glorious form that was before Arjuna.

‘Divi Surya sahastrasya bhavedyugapad utthitaa |
Yadi bhaah sadrushi saa syad tasya Mahatmanah ||’ (11.12)

‘दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद् भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥’ (११.१२)

Gyaandev has said,

‘Taise te divya surya sahastraveri | jari udayati Ekechi Avasari |
Tarhi taya tejaachi thori | Ppamu naye ||’ (11.238)

In this way, Arjuna was rendered speechless by the grand vision of the lord before him. He had goose pimples all over! His heart was full of pure feelings. He lowered his head with humility, and with folded hands said, “O, my Lord, What I am witnessing is altogether amazing! In your body, I am seeing all the gods, all the species of beings, from Brahmadeva, and Shiva Shankara, to all the great Rishis!

‘O, Lord of the Universe, with the entire universe in your own Self, I see your countless hands, mouths, eyes and feet. On all sides unendingly, your expanse is seen. I am unable to see the beginning and the end of your vistaara – spread! You are like the fire spread endlessly in all directions. You are the Best, Immortal, full of light. You are the ultimate objective of all knowledge. You are the ultimate support! You are the protector of Dharma. You are indestructible, the Oldest!

What Arjuna describes here is not merely poetry. It is his own experience of God, given to him by the divine sight blessed by God! Saints and Mahatmaas – great souls can have this experience in every epoch. History is the witness of this fact. This experience of Vishwa – roop – darshan given to Arjuna by Bhagawaan, is in a sense the practical demonstration

of Bhagawaan's power of Yoga. Many great beings have been blessed with such experience. The same is described here in the words of Arjuna. He says further, 'What is the form/nature of Bhagawaan? You are without beginning, middle and end, with infinite power, innumerable hands, whose eyes are the sun and the Moon, and burning fire is whose mouth.' You enlighten the whole universe with your light and supply heat. You alone pervade the earth and the sky above in all directions!

As a result, by your anger, the whole world is full of fear. (Arjuna is correct in this statement, because whatever karma is done with attachment to fruits, their result have to be experienced by the person.

Hence Gnyaandev says,

'Aataa dukkha kalloli zalvanti | Teenhi Bhuvane ||' (11.399)

Arjuna says, 'O, Deva adhideva, All the Gods are entering You; great Rishis and Sidhas are worshipping you with the words 'Swasti, swasti' along with many sacred Mantras.

'Swasti iti uktwaa Maharshi Siddhasanghaaha |
Stuvanti twaam stutibhihee pushalaabhihi ||' (11.21)

'...स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः।
स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥' (११.२१)

Gnyaadev says,

'He bolata tuz swasti vaada | Kariti stavana ||' (11.331)

From here onwards, the 'Vishwa roopa darshan' of Bhagawaan more and more fierce as a result, Arjuna also gets

more and more frightened. How did it appear to Arjuna? Increasing steadily in size and fierceness, with His eyes opened wide and fierce looking, he seemed to reach the sky, encompassing the whole earth, his feet reaching down below in the Paataala, the underworld! Not only that, the whole armies of both Pandavas and Kauravas seemed helplessly being sucked into it, their heads being crushed and destroyed as the rivers enter the ocean, or as if the bees were flying into the flames of a forest fire! The Vishwa-roopa seemed to be enjoying the entire process. Arjuna was surprised as to who was behind frightening phenomenon. He could not understand and felt entirely disoriented.

No doubt this Vishwa roop darshan of Bhagawaan is out of this world and frightening. Rivers flowing in the Ocean indicates total annihilation, and the example of the flame and the bees also points to the same direction for the universe. This vision contains both terrifying effect as well as intense surprise.

Gnyaandev comments on this vast spectacle in the eleventh Adhyaaya, saying,

‘Are konhi konhate na maari | Etha meechi ho sarvasamhaari |
He vishvaroop vyaaje Hari | Prakatita ase|| ‘ (11.408)

Or Else,

‘Jaisee vanaveyaachiyaa Vedhaa | Sampadati Mruge || ‘ (11.435)

Witnessing such a fierce spectacle of ‘Vishwa Roopa’ Arjuna was, no doubt, frightened and yet at the same time, He felt both intense respect and devotion. Hence, in shloka 31 of eleventh Adhyaaya, he seems to have switched to using more respectful ‘Bhavaan’ – rather than the earlier ‘Twam’ addressing Bhagawaan.

‘O, Arjuna, understand clearly that I am the ‘Kaala’ – the Death incarnate who destroys these people and grows on the prey’, said Bhagawaan.’All these warriors gathered here on this battle field are going to be destroyed. ‘Arjuna, do not think that you are going to kill them in battle, may he be Drona, Bhishma or Jayadraratha; they are all going to be killed by Me-not you. You are only a Nimitta – the immediate cause!

‘.... Mayi eva neihataahaa purvam eva |
Nimitta maatra bhava Savyasaachin ||’ (11.33)

‘...मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव ।
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥’ (११.३३)

Upon seeing this frightening spectacle and hearing the dark future proclaimed by Bhagawaan, Arjuna felt cold and started shivering. With both hands folded, he respectfully saluted Bhagawaan and addressed Bhagawaan thus, “O, Bhagawanta, You had in the past, told me your ‘Avataara Kaarya’ – principal task for which you have taken birth on this earth, which is, protection of holy men and destruction of the vicious

‘Yadaa yadaa hi Dharmasya Glannir bhavati Bharat |
Abhyuthaanam adharmasya, Tada Aatmaanam srutjaamyaham ||
(4.7)

‘I find this oath fully reflected in your divine from ‘Vishwa roopa darshan’, because I see the future results in it. The whole universe is seen rejoicing in your virtuous actions. All the Siddhas offer their salutations again and again. Only, the evil forces are frightened and are seen fleeing in all the ten directions. The above situations as seen by Arjuna, is indicated in this shloka. (11.36)

In the eleven shlokas (from No. 36 to 46) Arjuna makes a request to Shri Krishna, which is very popular among the

people who love and respect the teachings in the Geeta. This group of shlokas is also termed as 'Kshampan Stotra' and is read on a daily basis by them. It is believed that this daily study and repetition helps remove all obstacles in the path to reach their goal.

Arjuna further says, 'O, God of all gods, Occupant of this universe, you are above both good and not good, and beyond the manifest and non-manifest. You are the Original stuff-substance, and are indestructible! You are before Brahmadev, who has produced this universe. You are the oldest and the support of the universe, and treasure of all knowledge. You occupy the entire Universe and beyond. All the divinity described in the Vibhuti Yoga, Vaayu, Varun, Agni, Chandra or Yama dharma, all these always looked up to you. O, Kehsava, Not knowing your true nature and your greatness, I have behaved with you as a friend. It is my mistake! O, Bhagawaan Shri Krishna, best of the Yaadavas, Please forgive this grave lapse on my part! Arjuna asked for forgiveness again and again.

Here we can note that Arjuna is soft by nature. In fact his name itself means soft natured. On top of this, he is much concerned and repentant about what he considers his lapse-, for behaving in a friendly manner all this time. Hence using respectful language and asking forgiveness from Krishna he says, 'O, Achyta, I have eared. I kept on speaking to you with familiarity. I often crossed the bounds of respect. On many occasions I joked with you, as with a friend. At times my words may have been insulting to you. Please forgive me for all these transgressions made in my ignorance.

Gnyandev says on this occasion,

'Tari aataa aparmeyaa | Maja sharanaagataa aapuliyaa ||
Kshamaa kijoji yaayaa | Aparaadhaansi ||' (11.560)

Arjuna says further, ‘O, Bhagavanta, You are the creator of this whole – movable and immovable Creation. You are the object of worship. You are ‘**Gurunaam Guru**’ – the Teacher off all Teachers. In all these three lokas, You are greatest. I offer my salutations to you in all humility. My earlier follies, you please ignore as a father Friend and a dear one please forgive me your large heartedness!

‘... Piteva putrasya sakheva sakhuhu |
Priyaha Priyaaya Arhasi deva Sodhum ||’ (11.44)

‘...पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः ।
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥’ (११.४४)

In the eleventh Adhyaaya of the Bhagawad Geeta, we see that Arjuna had mindfully requested Bhagawaan for pardon. There he has appealed Bhagawaan, as from a loving friend. But now on he speaks as from a respectful devotee!

With utter humility, he said to Bhagawaan, ‘O God of all gods, Shri Krishna, by the Darshan of your supernatural form I am amazed and happy! At the same time, however, I am full of fear and uneasy. Therefore, please withdraw this terrible form. Please be kind and show me your previous beautiful form.

‘Kirtinam gardinam chakrahastam Icchaamani twaam drashtum
aham tathaava |

Tenaiva rupena chaturbhjena sahastra baaho bhava Vishva murte ||’
(11.46)

‘किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तम् इच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥’ (११.४६)

The devotees of Bhagawaan also like to see Him dressed in his Crown, discus and the mace. In all these ideas there are said to be certain indications. First, about the ‘Avataara’ – descent of Bhagawaan. Here on earth in Human form. From this view point, ‘Kirit’ – Establishing Dharma. ‘Chakra’ – protection of the Good and ‘Gadas – punishment of the wicked!

Regarding ‘Chaturbhuja’ – form which is popular among the devotees, Aachaarya Vinoba Bhave has offered very good analysis and explanation of its hidden meaning. He says, ‘If Bhagawan is believed to be just like ordinary man with two hands, then the duality of ‘Raaga’ – preference and ‘Dweshha’ – aversion, arises. If he is taken to be having numerous hands, then there is ‘samaadhi yoga’ and service is impossible! Hence Bhagawaan was assigned the form with four hands, with the help of Maya. Of these, two hands are for the Life here and other two are for life hereafter. This understanding was satisfactory for devotees’ assurance!

Here in this Adhyaaya Bhagawaan has granted the request of the devotee. He says, ‘O, Partha, I am pleased with your devotion. Hence I have shown you my vast and the best form with the power of Yogamaaya. Except you, none else has ever witnessed this form of mine. Not only that, keep in mind. O, best of Kurus, that it is impossible for anyone on this earth, through Veda, Tapasyaa, Yagnya, giving Alms, or any other good work, to witness this Universal form of mine! If you found this specter unbearable, do not be afraid. For your satisfaction, I shall resume my earlier softer form. Be pleased!

Gnyaadndev has said,

‘Aataa karu tujayaasaarikhe | Aise mhanile Vishwatomukhe |
Tari Maagil roop sakhe | Nyaahai paan tu ||’ (11.639)

Then Sanjay said, 'With these words of comfort, with love Vaasudeva, leaving aside the Vishwa roop, assumed his beautiful human form. Naturally Arjuna, now free from fear was reassured and happy, said, 'Deva, my dear friend, seeing your normal loving human face, I am now happy beyond words! I am not afraid any more.

Bhagawaan, again said, 'O, Arjuna, you now know exactly, what is the state of 'Paramaatma'. What you witnessed is not available even for the gods. You have won it by your whole hearted devotion to Me, by your karmayoga rooted in your devotion. Do understand that only by one pointed devotion to Me, it is possible to clearly see, and understand my stature and earn entry in my presence.

Bhagawaan said,

'Matakarmakrut matparamo madbhaktaha sangvarjitaha |
Nirvairah sarva bhuteshu yaha sa maam eti Pandava ||' (11.55)

‘मत्कर्मकृत मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥’ (११.५५)

'O, Arjuna, one who performs all actions with the understanding that all this work is by Parameshwara only, is following karma Yoga. Similarly, one who is entirely devoted to me, is rooted in Bhaktiyoga, He who discarding attachment, and is not inimical to anyone, He alone finally comes and mergers in Me! This assurance given emphatically by Bhagawaan is very important. Aadi Shankaracharya calls this shloka (11.55) as 'Sarvarth saara' – the crème of the entire Bhagawad Geeta! This shloka summarizes the 'Vishwa roop Darshan' is highly important.

Aacharya Vinoba Bhave, says in his 'Geetaai':

'Maazya karmaat jo magna | Bhaktine bharalaa ase |
Jagi nisanga nirvaira | Mile to maja tatpara ||'

We can note here that the path of Bhakti in the Geeta does not emphasize discarding 'work', but advocates performing work without attachment, 'Karmayoga'. Such a one is 'Karma Yogi', 'Samatva Yogi'. He is 'Nishkaama Karmayogi' and deeply rooted in devotion to God! This is the real message of Bhagawadgeeta.

XVIII

“Attributes of a ‘Gyaani Bhakta’”

The twelfth Adhyaaya of Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta is well known as ‘Bhakti Yoga’. Consisting of only twenty shlokas, this chapter is short, yet with very high importance. Bharat Ratna, Maharshi Karve, in his autobiography, praises this chapter saying, “Daily during my routine work, I keep repeating these shlokas silently.” Such is the impact of this Adhyaaya on human life.

Bhagawaan Himself has said about this adhyaaya, ‘Ye tu Dharmya amrutam idam..... ‘ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं...’. It is like a pot of nectar. Bhaktiras, Brahmaraas has been very well depicted and eulogized here. Sadashiv Shaastri Bhide says, in his Geeta Saara, ‘What are the true attributes of a devotee? Who are the true devotees whom Bhagawaan has praised? How does a true devotee live his life?’ All this has been described in this Adhyaaya.

This Adhyaaya starts with the question of Arjuna, ‘O, Bhagawaan, among the devotees who is merging entirely with you, worships your human form, and one who worships your invisible permanent state, who do you consider better Yogi, knowing Yoga well and dearest to you?’

We may note here that the Fifth Adhyaaya also started with a similar question. There, it was the question of preference between the Sanyaasa Vrutti and Nishkaama Karmayoga. Here it is the question of preference between the worship of the Nirguna god, free of attributes and Saguna, with attributes.

Such a question is no doubt, difficult to answer. How can you compare two sides of a perfect circle? Or again, how

can a mother compare her two children and decide who is better of the two?

Achaarya Vinoba Bhave says in his book, ‘Geeta Pravachane’, How one is to compare the two pairs of brothers, Rama and Laxmana, with Rama and Bharata? But Bharata also had to take the help of Rama’s sandals. It is also true that devotion to God imparts Olaava to Nirgunopaasanaa. To answer Arjuna’s question we have to employ two tests, ease and safety. Still we have to keep in mind that the devotee described in the twelfth Adhyaaya is the best Yogi. He is also ‘gnyaani’, knower of the ‘Self’. He worships God with attributes, visible as in an idol. However he offers his worship to ‘Parabrahma’ – God in the visible form of the universe. Describing the nature of a Gnyaani devotee, Bhagawaan, in the twelfth adhyaaya says, ‘He is ‘Adveshtaa’- free of malice, ‘Sadsantushta’, free of greed, ‘Loka sangrahi’ friendly to all, free of attachment, ‘Aniketa’, homeless (always on the move – world as his home), and has a stable mind. He is friend of the whole world. All these attributes together can be only in an ‘Aatmagnyaani Bhakta’ – devotee knower of the Self.

Arjuna’s question at the start of the twelfth Adhyaaya as to who is better - ‘A person who worships God without attributes, or who worships Bhagawan?’ This leads us to think that in this adhyaaya discussion is centered on comparison of Dhyaana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga. However, replying to his question, Bhagawaan has referred to Dhyaan Yoga, Gnyaan Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Karma Yoga, all the four yogas. (For example Shloka No. 12, ‘Shreyo hi gnyaanam Abhyaasaat..... . ‘श्रेयो हि ज्ञानम् अभ्यासात् ...’ However, in the four Yogas, Bhagawaan seems to specially favour Bhakti Yoga. For in this context, there occurs, the phrase ‘Yaha (Bhaktaha) saha me priyaha |’ ‘यः (भक्तः) सः मे प्रियः |’ in the adhyaaya, not once or twice but six times!

It seems that, to the opening question by Arjuna, describing the importance of the Bhakta and of Bhakti, Bhagawaan says, ‘O, Arjuna, whoever worships me always, with his entire mind concentrated upon me, in total devotion, he is most dear to me. You see Arjuna, dhyaan Yogi, who pray to the Nirguna also come to me (Paramaatma, Bhagawan); because specially they, with full control on their senses, remain equal minded towards all beings everywhere and are every ready for helping all men as well as all living beings. They worship the ‘Nirguna Brahma’, which cannot be described in words or even in thought, is ever changeless, all pervading, but they also, in the end come to Me only. Only thing is, those who adopt this path, naturally face greater difficulties! It is very difficult for human beings to realize the invisible.- (Avyakta’) Parabrahma, for

‘Klesho Adhikataras Tesham Avyakta Aasakta Chetasaam |
Avyaktyaa hi Gatir Dukkham Dehavadbhihi Avaapyate ||’ (12.5)

‘क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् |
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ||’ (१२.५)

The reminder by Bhagawaan, who is full of sympathy for all beings, of the difficulties in Dhyaan Yoga is very important. The reason is, human body and mind have set limits by nature. Realization of the abstract ‘Brahma’ by the limited capacities of human beings is only possible by intense effort.

Sant Gnyaandev says:

‘Vaachuni Yogaacheni bale | Adhika kaahi Mile |
Aise naahi Aagale | Kashtachi Tayaa ||’ (12.59)

‘Kimbahunaa Pandavaa | Haa Agnipraveshu Nitya Navaa |
Prataare vin Karaavaa | To Haa Yogu ||’ (12.66)

‘Paahe paan Yogache Chane | Je Bochariya Padati Khane |
Tain Pota Bharane hi Praane | shuddhi Male ||’ (12.70)

This is the situation. On the contrary Bhaktimaaarga, the path of devotion is easy and safe. Herein the senses are not regarded as obstacles but the instruments. For example, eyes help us to see the form of ‘Hari’ – Murti; ears are useful for hearing , the ‘Hari kathaa’; to sing the praises of God, the tongue helps us: by hands we can serve all beings, seeing God in them and legs help to carryout pilgrimage to Pandhari.

In this twelfth Adhyaaya, Bhagawan says, ‘O, Partha, those who are wholly devoted to me, offer all their ‘Karma’ to me. They are always absorbed in meditation upon my form, and sing my bhajans.

Gnyaandev says,

‘Teya Sarvaatmakan Ishwaran | Swakarma Kusumanchi Veera ||
Pujaa Keli Hoy Apaaraa | Toshanlaagi I ||’ (18.917)

‘तेया सर्वात्मकां ईश्वरां | स्वकर्मकुसुमांची वीरा |
पूजा केली होय अपारा | तोषांलागी ||’ (१८.९१७)

Thus, ‘Bhagawad Bhatkti’, devotion to God, is very important. It helps foster love for Ishwara in our minds. There is another important factor here. ‘Gnyaana’, knowledge helps us to burn the dirt and waste of gross impressions collected in our minds. But the capacity to remove the waste of finer impressions is only in the heart felt devotion and Prayer to God.

Actually, our human body is brittle like a statue of mud. To transform it from this weakness to highest capacity of Chaitanya, is only in the devotion to Bhagawaan. He says:

‘Tesham Aham Samud shartaa Mrutyu Sansaar Saagarat |
Bhavaaminachirat parth Mayi Aaveshita Chetasaam ||’ (12.7)

‘तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥’ (१२.७)

Here again we see that Bhagawaan takes upon Himself, the responsibility of saving mankind, which is a matter of great good fortune for us! In this twelfth Adhtyaaya, he says, ‘O, Partha, I make haste to save those bhaktas, who are devoted to Me, from the ocean of Sansaara, full of deadly waves of birth and death (..... Kaivartakaha Keshavaha ! – is true!) ‘कैवर्तकः केशवः ।’

It is said, ‘Satya sankapaacha Daata Shri Bhagawaan’.

Similarly we can say: ‘Bhakta Bhavishyaachaa Rakshitaa Shri Bhagawaan.’ Shri Bhagawaan is the protector of Devotees’ is also true.

Those fortunate ones who are backed by the might of Shri Bhagawaan, what need they have to worry about in their lives.

Gnyaandev says:

‘Erhavi tari Maaziyaa Bhaktaa | Aani Sansaaraachi Chintaa |
Kaay samarthaachi kaantaa | Koraanna Maage ||’

Further Bhagawaan has indicated how a devotee can attain by steps the final goal of ‘Moksha’ i.e. freedom from the cycle of birth and death in this world. First requirement is mind to be completely focused on ‘Ishwara’. Next is practicing to offer all the fruits of one’s works and deeds to Him. And finally

to completely focus your mind on the work in hand without giving a thought to what will be your benefit.

Bhagawan says, ‘O, Partha, you should focus your mind on my ‘swaroop’ – form and then your intellect should also be joined with Me. As a result it will merge and become united with Me. Thereby you will be free.’ Bhakta should do all this with total faith in the Lord.

Gnyaaneshwar has said: -

‘Maaliye jevute nele | Tevute niwantachi gele ||
Taya Paaniyaa aise kele | Hoaaveji ||’ (12.120)

Hagawaan tells Arjuna, ‘If you wish to train your mind to concentrate on me, you have to keep trying again and again. (Yogaabhyaasa) with a desire to realize Me. Gnyaaneshwar has also advised,

‘Tari gaa aise kari | Yaa aathyaahaara Mazari ||
Motake Nimishbhari | Detu jaaye ||’ (12.105)

Similarly,

‘Mhanouni Abhyaasaasi Pahi | Sarvadaa dushkara naahi |
Yaalagi maazaahi thayi | Abhyaase Mila ||’ (12.133)

Also Tukara says,

Asaadhya te saadhya | Karita saayaas |
Kaarana Abyaasa | Tuka Mhane ||

Samarth Ramdas says:

‘Yatna to Dev jaanaavaa | Antari Dhareetaa bare |’
‘Kaahi galbalaa kaahi nivvala | Aisaa kanthit java kaal ||’

Bhagawaan advises Arjuna, 'If you feel Abhyaas yoga (Practice) is difficult for you, then, you have other alternatives.

Gnyaan is better than Abhyaas, Dhyaan is higher than Gnyaana, and better still is karma-fala-Tyaag or Ishwararpana which leads you quickly to Peace. There is no doubt about this. This is the traditional road, as described in the Geeta.

'Shreyo hi gnyaanam abhyaasaat, gnyaanaad dhyaanam vishishyate |
Dhyaanaad karmafalatyagas tyagaat shaantim anantaram ||'
(12.12)

‘श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥’ (१२.१२)

Shri J. S. Karandikar in his 'Geeta Tatva Manjari' (p. 402, 410 and 411) writes, that Bhagawaan has praised discarding the results of one's Karma – (actions). He has mentioned various steps one by one. Only thing is, while, other steps are like health foods, while 'Karma fala tyaga' is like strong medicine which destroys the disease at its roots. All said and done, what is the message of the Bhagawad Geeta? It is appropriate blending of the 'Nishkaam Karmayoga' – perform actions without attachment to results, arising out of 'Gnyaana' – true knowledge of the Self, with 'Bhakti' – true devotion. Discarding the fruits of action, in essence becomes 'inaction'. Where there is not a blade of dried grass what can happen if a burning coal is dropped? Similarly, in the absence of the desire for the fruits of action, the danger of its ill effect is automatically removed!

Bhagawaan has described the traits of a 'devotee with Gnyaana' – knowledge of the Self. Such a devotee is 'Sthita Pragnya' – with a strong, stable mind (2nd Adhyaaya), Ever satisfied like 'Jeevanmukta' (5th adhyaaya) and rooted in Yoga (6th Adhyaaya).

‘Adweshtaa Sarva bhutanaam Maitraha Karuna eva cha |
Neimamo Nirahankaaraha Samadukkkhasukkha Kshami || (12.13)
‘Santushtaha Satatam Yogi Yataatmaa Dradhanishchayatha |
Mayiaprapita Manobudhaai Yo Me Bhaktaha Sa Me priyaha ||
(12.14)

‘अद्वेषा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ (१२.१३)
संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥’ (१२.१४)

Such a Gnyaani Bhakta does not decry anyone, in fact, he just cannot! He is ever satisfied. He is ‘Anaaskta’ – without attachment. Friendly to all, he attracts people around him. He is at home in all places. He does not get involved in anything, in anyone. Also he does not hate anyone. In summing up Bhagawaan says, “He is friend of all, without malice for anyone, whose nature is compassionate to everyone, has purged himself of egoism as well as of ‘Aasakti’- attachment, pardons everyone freely and is equal in all travails; such is a ‘Gnyaani-Bhakta’.

Sant Gnyaandev describes him as,

‘Uttamaache Dharijel Adhmaache Avherijel he kaahich Tenije |
Vasudhaa jevi ||
Gaayichi Trusha kan Vyaaghraa Vish Haruni Maaru | Aise
Nenhechi karu |Toya Jaise ||
Kaa Dharichiyaa Ujedu Karaava | Paarkhiyaa Andhaaru Hoaava ||
He Nenhechi Pandavaa |Deepu jaisaa ||’
(12.145) (12.147) (12.148)

Describing him further, how satisfied he is, Gnyaandev goes on to say,

‘Vaarshiye Vinh Saagaru | Jaisaa Jale Nitya Nirbharu |
Taisaa Nirupaachaaru | Santoshi Jo ||’ (12.151)

Or,

‘Aat Baaheri Yogu | Nirvaaleyaahi Chaangu | Tari Maazaa
Anuraagu | Saprema jayaa ||’

Not only that, he quotes Bhagwaan also:

‘Arjuna Gaa to Bhaktu | Tochi Yogi Toch Muktu |
To Vallabhaa Me Kantu | Aisaa Padhiye ||’ (12.156)

In the same way, in this twelfth Adhyaaya, clarifying further, the character of a Gnyaani Bhakta his ‘Lok sangraahak’ trait is specifically emphasized. What is such a devotee like? He does not cause any trouble to anyone, nor does he troubled by anyone else, and he is free from joy, anger, fear and pain!

This is specifically important here. The best example of this ability to save the weakest, fallen human being and bring all in his friendly cycle, is a Saint! The reason is, that company of a saint has greater power to destroy evil tendencies, and effects of past evil actions, and change such people, than even the pilgrimage to the sacred Himalayas or the sacred river Gangaa!

‘Santaacheni Angalage | Paapache Jinhanhe Gangee |
Tenhe santasange | Shuchitva kaise || (Gnyaneshwari – 21.177)

Again, Gnyaani Bhakta is an ideal example of the capacity of a true ‘Loka Sangraahak’ capacity.

‘Kimbahunaa Pandavaa | Sharir jaise Avayavaa |
Taise Nubage Jiva | Jivapanhe II (12.167)

He jagachi Deha Jaahale | Mhanhni Priyaapriya Gele |
Harshaamarsha thele | Dujene vina || (12.168)

Tukaram says: -

‘Vishnumaya Jaga | Vishnavaanchaa Dharma |
Bhedaabheda Bhrama | Amangala ||

Konaahi Jivaachaa | Na Ghado Matsara ||
Varma Sarveshwara Pujanaache ||

Tuka Mhahhe Ekaa | Dehaache Avayava |
Sukha Dukha Jeeva | Bhoga Paave || ’

Bhagawad Geeta says, ‘This Gnyaani Bhakta is detached in his Mind, have no expectations, is in a sacred state of mind and heart, always alert, insist on Karma without expectation of specific results, and as a result have no trace of anxiety in his Mind. He has eliminated even the starting of such action. They have no desire for any gain whatsoever. His only aim is ‘Kartavya karma’ – i.e. ‘work that needs to be done for the benefit of humanity without an eye on any personal gain’! Naturally, he is always most dear to Bhagawaan. Again describing such a Gnyaani Bhakta, Bhagawaan says:

‘Sama Shatrau cha Mitre cha tathaa Maana-apamaanayoho |
Shitshnha Sukhadukheshu samaha Sanga Vivarjitaha ||’ (12.18)

‘समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः |
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ||’ (१२.११८)

On this Gnyaandev says:

‘Aatbaher Chokhaalu | Surya jaisaa Ujaalu |
Aanhi Tatvaarathi cha Paayaalu | Dehanha Jo ||’ (12.179)

Vyaapak Aani Udasa | Jaise Kan He Aakaasha
Taise Jayaache Maanasa | Sarvatra Gaa ||(12.180)

Aapanachi Vishwa jaahalaa | Tari Bhedabhavo Sahaja chi Gelaaa ||
Mhanhoni Dweshu thelaa | Tayaa Purusha II (12.191)

Vokhte Kaa Gomate | He kahich Numate |
Raatri Divas n Ghate | Suryaas Jevi ||'(12.194)

Expounding further the characteristics of a Gnyaani Bhakta in the twelfth Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says: 'A Gnyaani Bhakta is beyond happiness and unhappiness, hatred and anger, desire and lust. Further, he is beyond concept of good and bad. Such a person is altogether dear to me'.

Saints too have praised him in their own words,

'Harichiyaa Daasaa | Shubh Kaala sarva Dishaa ||'

‘हरिचिया दासा । शुभकाळ सर्व दिशा ।’

In the end Bhagawan says, 'Such a 'Gnyaani Bhakta' has gone beyond the usual opposites of 'Friend and Enemy', 'Honour and Dishonour', 'Hot and Cold', Happiness and Unhappiness' or 'Praise and Blame', All these opposites are same to him, for he has gone beyond them all. He is totally unattached. Most of the time, he observes silence. Whatever he receives in the normal course, he is satisfied. He feels at home everywhere, inside or outside. He is not bound by 'I' and 'Mine'. Such a balanced devotee is, in all ways, very dear to Me! Expounding these three qualities, 'Equal to All'. 'Stable Mind, and 'Friendly to All', Sant Gnyaanedev says: - This Gnyaani devotee behaves equally with everyone.

'Partha jayaachyaa Thaayee | Vaishamyaaachi Vaartaa Naahi ||
Ripu Mitraa dohi | Sarisaa Paadu ||(12.197)

Jo Khandaavayaa Ghaavo Ghaali | Kaa Laavani Jeyaane Keli |
Doghan Ekachi Saavali | Vrukaha de Jaisaa || (12.199)

Naa Tari eekshadandu | Paalatiayaahi Godu |
Gaalateyaahi Kadu | Noheti Jevi || (12.200)

Saahi Rutu Samaana | Jaise Kaa he Gagna |
Aise Ekachi Maana | Shitoshna Jayaa || (12.202)

Dakshina uttar Maarutaa | Meru Jaisaa Pandu Suta |
Taisaa sukha Dukha Praapta | Madhyasthu Jo || (12.203)

Maadhurye Chandrikaa | Sarisi Raayaa Rankaa |
Taisaa Jo Saklikaa | Bhutaa Samu || (12.204)

Similarly, Gnyanaadev describes, how a devotee can be
'Aatma Gnyaani' and 'Sthira Mati'.

Jo Nindete ne Ghe | Stuti na Shalaaghe |
Aakaashan Na lage | Lepu jaisaa || (12.207)

Jo Yathaa Laabhe Na Tokhe | Alaabhe Na Paarukhe |
Pause Vina Na Sukhe | Samudru Jaisaa || (12.210)

Aani Vaayuchi Eke thaayi | Bidhaar Jaise Naahi |
Taisaa Na dharichikehi | Aashryo Jo || (12.211)

He third important characteristic of a Gnyaani Bhakta is
that he is a friend of the entire world, and he maintains this
friendship. In this context Gnyaandev says: -

'Ye tu Dharmyaamrutam Idam Yathoktam Paryupaasate |
Sharddhaana Matparamaa Bhaktaaste Ateeva Me Priyaaha ||
(12.20)

‘ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
श्रद्धाणा मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥’ (१२.२०)

In Gnyaandev's words:

'Te He Goshti Ramya | Amruta Dhaaraa Damya |
Kariti Pratitigamya | Aikoni Je ||' (12.230)

They are really fortunate!

XIX

“Kshetra – Dhaari and Kshetra - Swami”

When we begin ‘Paarmaarthik Saadhanaa’ – the practice of spiritual Saadhana, what is the first lesson we have to learn on this path? We learn to distinguish between ‘Aatmaa’ – soul, and ‘soulless’. The entire superstructure of teaching is built on this foundation! When we can recognize this difference our journey on the spiritual path gains progress! Just as there is the skin and the pulp inside a banana or body and there is the Knower, the ‘I’ inside. In the outer world, there is the whole Universe, ‘Prakruit’ – the field, ‘Kshetra’ – the human body and there is the knower, ‘Kshetrangnya’ of this field inside. The idea of the field and its owner is the basis. The principle ‘Yat Brahmande tad pinde’ is also true.

This is why; we have to understand that this human body is not ‘I’. Instead of this outer body, we need to respect our inner soul, ‘Aatma’. The body is only an instrument. To take pride in the body is like worshipping a machine! We should not have our ‘self’, to be used by the machine. We should be aware every moment, of this fact. ‘तत् त्वम् असि ।’. Tat Twam Asi I’ and ‘Aham Bramha Asmi I’ ‘अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ।’. All this discussion and explanation, is there in the thirteenth Adhyaaya of the Geeta, titled – ‘Kshetra-Kshetragnya Yoga’.

In this respect, Sadashiv Shastri Bhide says, ‘Kshetra’ means our body, and ‘Kshetragnya’ means ‘Knower of this ‘Kshetra’! How, knowing the difference between the body and the Aatma, we get ‘Shaswat Shanti’ – ever lasting peace, is discussed in this thirteenth Adhyaaya of the Geeta’.

Why has Geeta termed this human body as the ‘Kshetra’? One concept is that the body is ‘the field of action’

for the Aatma. Hence it may have been referred to as 'Kshetra' – a field.

Second possibility is, just as the ordinary farm produces various crops, in the same way our body, also performs various actions producing fruits both good and bad, useful and harmful. (The principle of Karma Vipaka). Hence the word 'Kshetra' – Farm, may have been applied to human body in the Geeta! Thus, if the body is the field, who is the 'Kshetragnya'? he is the consciousness in the body, the 'Antaryaami' – 'Atma' – Inner soul! He knows the 'Kshetra' – the body exactly, hence 'Kshetragnya'. He is impartial, merely a witness. He is, in fact, controller of the body. He directs the body. This is what the people who know the science of the soul, 'Adhyaatma' proclaim. In the very first shloka of the thirteenth Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says, 'O, Arjuna, this body is called 'Kshetra'. Those who know Adhyaatma Shastra declare that the knower of the body, Kshetra is 'Kshetragnya'.

Bhagawaan says further, 'O, Arjuna note that the 'Kshetragnya' in all the bodies in the whole Universe is Me only – Aatma. 'Param Aatma' – Bhagawaan, GOD of all gods.

Shri Gnyaandev says: -

'Je Je bhete Bhuta | Te Te Maanije Bhagawanta |
Haa Bhakti Yogu Nishchita | Jaana Maaza | | ...

To understand that Kshetra is body and Kshetragnya, the owner of the body is 'Atma Gnyaan'.

Further Bhagawwan says, 'O, Partha, to understand what is 'Kshetra', its effect, nature and types, its impurities and how these arise; again, the meaning of 'Kshetragnya', and its field of work; all these things, I shall briefly explain to you. In fact, this knowledge was imparted in the distant past by many Rishi-Munies, in the 'Chhandas' and 'Suktas'. Therein, they

have also discussed the causes and effects conferred. The Upanishads and the Brahmasutras are well known for the reasoned presentation of Aatma and Anaatma (Non Aatma).

Between the 'Purusha' and 'Prakruti, 'Purusha' is conscious while this body consists of elements from the Prakruti. According to the shlokas 5 and 6, of 13th Adhyaaya, this body is made up of thirty one constituents. What are these? Five Mahabhuta; then 'Ahamkaar;' – ego, 'Buddhi' – intelligence, and 'Avyakta-Prakruti' – Ten Indriyas (Five Gnyaan and five Karma), Mind, Five 'Vishyas' – Obejects, Desire – malice, happiness and unhappiness, patience, and their derivatives, all these are collectively known as 'Kshetra'. This is what Bhagawaan has described in the beginning of the thirteenth Adhyaaya of the Geeta. (All this description is covered under 'Sankhya Shastra' and 'Sankhya Yoga'.) In this description there the word for conscious element, 'Chetana'. There is a difference between 'Chetanaa' and 'Chaitanya'. The word 'Chaitanya' is the form of Aatma and its reflection in the body is 'Chetaana'. This chetana is a characteristic of Kshetra', the body. It is a movement of the body. 'Praana' is its 'Khuna' – source!

Shri Karandikar says in his 'Geeta Tatva Manjari'- (p.412), 'Upto the twelfth Adhyaaya of Geeta out of the five aspects of Nishkaam Karma Yoga (Ref. Shloka (2.45) Traigynya Vishayaa Vedas..) so far, 'Nirdwandwa', 'nitya satva stha' and the third, 'BNiryogakshema' have been discussed. Further, in the next three Adhyaayas, remaining two aspects – 'Aatmavaan' and 'Nistraigunya' are to be discussed.

Gnyanandev says, 'The scriptures seem to fall short in describing the various traits of 'Paarmaatma'. It is our great good fortune that Bhagawaan Himself describes in the thirteenth Adhyaaya in the Bhagawad Geeta, what is Gnyaan, and Aatma – Gnyaana.

Shri Gnyanaadev says:

‘Vedaanche bruhat Saama Sutra | Je dekhanhe Panhe Pavitra |
Pari Tayaachi He Kshetra | Nephavechi || (13.68)

The Bhagawad Geeta, and therein the thirteenth Adhyaaya are specially important because here Gnyaana and Aatma Gnyaana (knowledge and specially that of the Aatma) are clearly defined. ‘Gnyaana’ means to imbibe the good values in our character. Simply bookish learning has no value. Important thing is to realize the ‘Self’, ‘Aatma Saakshaatkaar’.

In the Shloka Nos. 7 to 11 of thirteenth Aadhyaaya, Bhagawaan has clearly mentioned the virtues a person should cultivate himself, in order to attain this highest goal in life. Sant Gnyaandev has actually written seven hundred verse commentary on these four verses of Geeta. So much is the importance of these virtues in pursuit of the highest goal of Paramaarth Saadhanaa.

What are these virtues? Absence of Pride and showmanship, Nonviolence, forgiveness, simplicity, service of one’s Guru-teachers, Piety, steadiness, control of one’s mind, and aversion to sense pleasures. To be aware of presence of the five states of birth, death and old age, disease and unhappiness in human life Absence of lust and involvement in the opposite sex. Equanimity in all circumstances, favourable or adverse. Single minded devotion to God. Avoiding crowds, desire to live in seclusion, etc. are all the traits of ‘Gnyaana’ –knowledge. Apart from all the above, two additional traits are – 1. The Understanding that ‘Adhyaatma’ – Knowledge of ‘Aatma’ – the ‘SELF’ is Supreme and final, and 2. The desire to lead our life in accordance with the above virtues. The desire to lead our life in accordance with the above virtues, the opposite of all the above is ‘Agnyaana’.

In the words of Bhagawaan:

‘Adhyaatm Gnyaan Nityatwam Tatva gnyaan Artha Darshanam |
Etd Gnyaanam iti Proktam Agnyaanam Yad Ato Anyathaa ||’
(13.11)

‘अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥’ (१३.११)

The eighteen virtues and two principles mentioned by Bhagawaan, are the instruments for gaining ‘Gnyaana’ – Knowledge and also the traits of knowledge. This knowledge is ‘Aatma Gnyaan’. Adhyaatma Gnyaan, Aatma Jignyaasa! (Adhyaatma Vidya Vidyaanaam (10.32) ‘अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानाम् ।’. It destroys ‘shloka’ – Grief, and ‘Moha’ – temptation. Between Aatma-Paramaatma and our intelligence, there develops a screen of attachments and aversion, which we have to destroy! This is accomplished by ‘Chittashuddhi’ – purifying our mind. Efforts for Chitta-shuddhi, by virtues, leads to ‘Self-knowledge’ – Aatma Gnyaana. All else contributes to Agnyaana!

Bhagawaan says, ‘This is the Eternal Truth, by knowing which we reach immortality and ‘Moksha’ Freedom. The very best ‘Brahma’ is the only truth worth knowing. It is ‘Anaadi’, ‘Ananta’ – without beginning and end. It is Sad-Asad – Vilakshana’ ‘सदसद्विलक्षण’

Then kartak (कर्ता) Paramatma (परमात्मा) He alone provides sustenance to all living beings. He appears to be with diverse traits. Yet He is beyond all ‘gunas’ – traits. He is both inside and outside each substance in the universe. He is moving and yet not moving. He is far and yet is near. There seems to be diversity,. He seems to be divided being in all living entities, but basically He is one. He is,

‘Avibhaktam cha Bhuteshu vibhaktam iva cha Sthitam I (13.16)

‘अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।’ (१३.१६)

He alone creates, sustains and destroys all the living and non-living objects in the universe. He is Brahmaa, Vishnu and Mahesha.

In the thirteenth Adhyaaya, Shloka No. 13 to 17, there is philosophic discussion of ‘Aatma’ and ‘Param aathma’, which is quite instructive. Therein we find that several adjectives taken from the ancient scriptures, ‘Upanishads’. Bhagawaan says, ‘O, Partha, What more to say? Brahma is Himself, the luster of the shining, Knowledge as well as the subject of Knowledge and can be known only by ‘Gnyaana’. There is no threefold division here; all three are in one ‘Samput’. The same Brahma is resident in the hearts of all. Bhagawaan says. ‘This ‘Kshetra’ (body), ‘Aatma-Gnyaan’ (Knowledge of the ‘Self’, and ‘Gnyeya’- the essence of Brahma, all this I have described in brief for your benefit.

He says further,

‘Iti Kshetram tathaa Gnyaanam, gneyam cha Uktam samaasataha |
Madbhakta etad Vignyaaya Mad Bhaavaaya Uppadhyate ||’ (13.18)

‘इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।

मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥’ (१३.१८)

Gnyaandev says,

‘Te Maate kiriti | Hech laanhoniyaa Shevati |
Aapanapayaa Saatovaati | Michi Hoti ||’ (13.945)

We observe that in the thirteenth Adhyaaya, from verse No. 1 to 18, analysis of ‘Kshetra-Kshetragnya’ is presented. In shlokas 19 to 25, there is ‘Purusha-Prakruti Viveka’ and shloka

26 to 34, give us the integration of above two. Here what is referred to as 'Prakruti' and "Purush" is the same as 'Paraa' and 'Aparaa' Prakruti in the seventh Adhyaaya of Geeta. Both these being inseparable from 'Ishwara' they are without beginning and end, like Him. Shlokas 19 to 21 describe how prakruti binds Purusha and in 22 and 23, the remedy to free him from this bondage is given. Here Bhagawaan also says, 'Prakruti' is all inanimate things in this world and Purusha i.e. Chaitanya are both without beginning. However, Prakruti produces derivatives like Raaga and Dwesha', attachment and aversion. In this world, Prakruti – Nature is the source of the cause, effect and duty – the work to be done. Still Purusha, being conscious, is the one who experiences happiness and unhappiness. He is the one who undergoes all this. For example a person sitting in a boat has to undergo the effect of imbalance (sea-sickness). In the same way, the effects of Prakruti, have to be borne by the Purusha also. However, it is clear that all this play of Prakruti is set in motion by the 'Kshetragnya-Purusha'.

In the words of Bhagawad Geeta:

'Upadrashtaa Anumantaa cha, Bhartaa bhoktaa Maheshwaraha |
Paramaatmaa iti cha Api Ukto Dehe Asmin Purushasha Paraha ||'
(13.22)

‘उपद्रष्टाऽनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन् पुरुषः परः ॥’ (१३.२२)

'He is Paramaatma, Saakshi. He is also one, who gives sanction and helps. Even, one who experiences is also He only. He is the best of all, 'Ishwwara' – the Great'.

Aachaarya Vinoba Bhave has explained this beautifully. He says that the spiritual journey home undertaken by everyone is depicted here. First, Bhagawaan looks on every person, simply as a 'Saakshi' – witness, with great expectation, just as a

mother looks at a child playing in front of the door. Or as if, the Sun rising in the east looking at the whole Mankind waking up for the new day. With passing time, each person in his mind saying to himself, 'Be good, behave well with others'. Discretion arises in his mind. Thus he decides to do so. Ishwara, inside his mind is pleased. He supports him and is pleased. Teacher-student relationship is established. 'Ubharoni Baahe I Vitho Paalavit Aahe II'

With time, he puts in more efforts in this spiritual path. Bhagawaan also supports him in times of trouble. Darkness is removed, and light pervades his mind. Now gradually God assumes the roles the roles of 'Saakshi' – witness. 'Anumantaa' – assenter, and 'Bharataa' – supporter! Lives of numerous saints are witness to this support, help from above. At the same time, the ego in his mind melts away. His mind he accepts the protection of Bhagawaan. This is 'Ishwar-Sharana-Vaad' or 'Ishawad'! Then he offers the results, fruits of all his actions to God. Then Bhagawaan assumes the role of 'Bhokta'! Just as Rama enjoyed the berries which his old devotee, 'Shabari' offered to Him when he visited her hut during his travel in the forest! Now onwards, such a devotee on the path of recognizes the god's presence in his own heart. He himself helps the devotee keep on the divine path! Then the devotee is sure that 'This is the 'Devaadhideva' – god of all gods. His whole life becomes full of the presence of God. In the end he comes to fully know and appreciate power of God's presence in his life and mind, on whom his life depends. Here ends this spiritual journey and he unites with God. 'Tukaa Zaala Panduranga I'

Near the end of the 13th chapter of Geeta, Bhagawaan says: 'O, Best of Bharata, anything in this world, whether stationary or moving, is produced from the mutual contact of 'Kshetra' – the body, and the 'Kshetragnya' – the Soul. 'Parameshwara' is present equally, in the hearts of all beings. Even if they come to the end of their lives, He does not parish.

He, who knows this Truth, truly knows the essence! This we should all understand.

‘Samam Bhutesh sarveshu, Tishthantam Parameshwaram |
Vinashyatsu Avinashyantam, Yaha Pashyati sa pashyati ||’ (13.27)

‘समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥’ (१३.२७)

Person who knows that, ‘Parameshwara’ pervades equally everywhere in this world, and who behaves on this basis of ‘Samatva’ – equipoise, is sure to be one with God! Similarly, one should understand that all action in this world is the work of ‘prakruti’ – nature! ‘Aatma’ is ever the non-doer. Again the ‘gnyaani’ – one who truly knows, understands that the different entities are produced from the one Aatma and are all united in the same Aatma – The ‘Param Aatma’ I

Bhagawaan says further: ‘O, Partha, Paramaatma is ‘anaadi’ – without beginning and ‘Nirguna’ - without attributes , and hence He is changeless. Even if He comes into contact with the ‘Kshetra’ – the body, He, the ‘Kshetraganya’ himself does not perform any action, is ‘Non-doer’. No action attaches to him nor he is bound by any ties. Like the Sky, He is Everywhere, in every living body. Being ever so minute, no impurity of the bodies, attaches to Him. In this context, Gnyaandev says:

‘Aho Ratra Jais I yeti Jaati Akaashi | Aatma Satte Taisi I Dehe
Jaana ||’ (13.1116)

Bhagawan says further, ‘O, Arjuna, Just as the only Sun, spreads light in the whole world, the One ‘kshetragnya’ Atmaa lights up all the Kshetras.

In this context, Gnyandev says:

‘Pari Haachi Antari | Viveka-Bhanuchiya Pari I Udaije Avadhaari |
Upaaya Bahuta ||’ (13.1035)

Actually, ‘Aatma’ has been compared with the sun in the Vedic literature.

‘Surya Aatma Jagatas Tathuschcha I’ (Rugveda – 1.115.1)

‘सूर्य आत्मा जगतस् तस्थुषश्च ।’

In the last Shloka of the 13th Adhyaaya of Geeta, Bhagawaan says: Thus, one who knows the exact difference between the ‘Kshetra’ and ‘Kshetragnya’ and exactly how with the eyes of ‘Gnyaana’ one can be free of their effects, and thereby attain ‘Moksha’ – Freedom and the highest – Param-Pada’ !

This is the ‘Kshetra-Kshetragnya’ Vivek’ Bhagawaan says:

‘Kshetra Kshetragnyaoho Evam Antaram Gnyaan Chakshushaa |
Bhuta Prakruti Moksham cha ye Vidhuhu Yaanti Te param ||’
(13.34)

‘क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।

भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥’ (१३.३४)

In short, to understand the difference between ‘Kshetra’ and ‘Kshetragnya’ is the process of cleansing the body; while going beyond ‘Bhta Prakruti’- Nature of the Living and nonliving, concerns the whole ‘Brahmanda’ -. There is also an element of adjustment, overlapping between these two Again 13th Adhyaaya of Geeta explains the difference between the ‘Kshetra – dhari’ – ‘Aatma’ and the ‘Kshetra Swami’ – Paramaatma’ to the seekers of ‘Param Artha’ – highest good in

the journey from 'Pinda' – the human body, to 'Brahmanda' – the universe.

In this journey one should keep in mind – Aham Brahma Asmi' – I am Brahma. 'अहं ब्रह्मास्मि ।'

“Trigunaateeta – the Highest Dtate”

Regarding the 14th Aadhyaaya of the Geeta, Sadashiv Shastri Bhide says, in his ‘Geetasaar’, that the human nature is a mixture of three parts, ‘Sattva’ – spirituality, ‘Rajas’ – Activity, and ‘Tamas’ – Inertia and negativity. This 14th aadhyaaya discusses the effect of these three traits, their assigned tasks, their relative importance. Further the state above and beyond these three, ‘Trigunaateeta’, its importance and its highest position are also discussed. Just as Aayurveda, discusses the three states of the human physique, ‘Kuff’, ‘Vaata’ and ‘Pitta’, the Adhyaatma Shastra’ – Spiritual science declares that in mental sphere of Human world, there is constant interaction of these three Gunas. All of us are subject to the constant action and interaction of these three traits. Howe to break the ropes of these Gunas, and go beyond them to the Trigunaateeta state, is described in the 14th Aadhyaaya.

Actually, the concept of the three traits was originally a part of the ‘Sankhya Shastra’. Geeta has accepted it with some changes. (This has been described in ‘Sankhya Yoga and Sankhya shastra earlier). Original Sankhya Shastra says that the human body or the creation is not an independent entity. All these are products made of the three Gunas, ‘arising from Prakruti’. This root Prakruti (whether call it Gunas, consisting of Satva, Rajas, Tamas. We call it Gunas, but these are the states. Sankhya philosophy accepts ‘Prakruti’ but not the ‘Ishwara’ behind it, who provides it the ‘chetana’ – Consciousness. Geeta does accept ‘Ishwara’ and hence here it is called ‘Sa-Ishwara (with Ishwara) Sankhya. One more thing to be noted is that according to Sankhya, the three Gunas arise from physical root, while Geeta considers them to be ‘Naitik’- both physical and mental.

One more special aspect of the 14th Aadhyaaya is that in this chapter, only one subject of philosophy is discussed continuously and thoroughly. Everywhere else, from 2nd Addhyaaya to 18th, several topics are touched upon, whether they arise from the current of presentation, or relevance, integral part of the main topic, or from doubts arising, but there is more than one. Not so in this 14th Addhyaaya. Here only one topic is thoroughly discussed.

In the beginning of the 14th Adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says, ‘We should have the correct understanding of the three gunas. Again whether there is balance of these three or imbalance is also important. They are connected with the creation and disappearance of the universe. The integral knowledge of these trigunas is the highest knowledge.

Having mastered this knowledge, the Rishi-Munis have realized ‘Mukti’, Freedom from this ‘Samsaara’ – Human bondage. Not only that, they have become one with Bhagawaan Himself, His own form. They no longer have birth or death in this world! How fortunate are these ‘Aatma-Gnyaanies?

In the words of Gnyaandev,

‘Je Mi Jevadhe Jaise | Techhi Te Zaale Taise |
Ghatabhangi Ghataakaashe | Aakaasha jevi || (14.54)

The similes appearing here in the 3rd and the 4th shlokas of the 14th Adhyaaya are related to ‘Kshetra-Kshetragnya’ in the 13th adhyaaya. Here, ‘Mahat Brahma’ is considered the seed and root source, and philosophically source of consciousness, soul.

Bhagawaan says, ‘O, Arjuna, My original nature, like Brahma, is the birthplace of all the beings as well as for the whole universe, I am their Mother and Father. This universe is

Me and I am the Universe! Here Gnyaandev's concept of 'Chidvilaasa' is found in this 14th Adhyaaya. He says,

'Mhanouni Jaga Parite | Saaruni Pahije Maate |
Taisaa Nohe Ukhite | Aaghave Meechi | |' (14.127)

Gnyaandev asks further, 'Tell me, is a Jewel destroyed when its luster diminishes? Or else, in the words of Bhagawaan, 'Taise Vishwa yenhe Naave | He Michi Pein Aaghave | Ghei Chandra Bimba Solaave | Na Lage jevee | |' (14.337)

‘तैसे विश्व येणें नावे । हे मीचि पै आघवे ।
घेई चंद्रबिंब सोलावे । न लगे जेवी ॥’ (१४.३३७)

This concept of Chidvilaasa, used by Gnyaandev, is very important. From this source only devotion to Bhagawaan, and 'Nonduality' is born, becomes feasible. Geeta clearly proposes in this 14th adhyaaya, this world is composed of three Gunas.

Bhagawaan says, "O, valorous Arjuna, know that the aatma, free by its very nature, is thrown in bondage of human body, by the three fold Gunas – Sata, Rajas and Tamas originating from Prakruti.

'Satvam Rajas Tama Iti Gunaaha Prakruti Samhaavaaha |
Nibadhananti Mahaabaho Dehe Dehinam Avyaayam | |' (14.5)

‘सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥’ (१४.५)

In this 14th Adhyaaya, further there is the description of the nature of these three Gunas, in Shloka Nos. 6 to 8 and 11 to 13 respectively. Further the effect of these three gunas is also clearly described in the Shloka 18. It seems to us that from these three, 'satva' is better, but it also leads to bondage. In the end, these gunas are hand cuff only, and it matters little if these are made of gold, silver or steel; they are hand cuffs which bind

us! Hence it is very important to go beyond the three Gunaas to the 'Trigunaatita' state. If we understand the original limitless nature of Paramaatma, we can attain the Tribunaatita State! Otherwise this threefold Prakruti, Maaya is sure to bind you, who are by nature, a spark of Consciousness which is free.

This is the reason why, the message of the 14th aadhyaya of Bhagawad Geeta for everyone is: 'Be Trigunaateeta'. Bhagawaan has explained to Arjuna, the latter half of this aadhyaya, the characteristics of a person who is 'Trigunaateeta', just as earlier He had explained the traits of a 'Sthita-pragnya'. Before that, he has described in detail the three Gunas, 'Satva, Rajas and Tamas'. He has also explained further that, a human being has to try to control Rajas, destroy Tamas and develop the Satva guna. Yet the final destination is to go beyond Satva guna also. One has to avoid being proud – Ahamkaara, ego! Final accomplishment is to be established in this state without any strain. This is the trigunaateeta state. Satvaguna is full of light, pure and free of any blemish.

Even so, this 'Satva Guna' also, along with 'Sukha' – happiness and 'Gnyaana' – Knowledge, can cause of Bondage. How can one know whether he has developed Satva Guna or not? When in all parts of body and mind and senses, there is light-clarity, thorough understanding of the philosophy of Satva and absence of stress, we can say that we have accumulation of Satva in ourselves. Shri Gnyaandev says:

'Aga Punavechyaa Divashi | Chandra prabha Dhaave Aakaashi |
Gnyaani Vrutti Aise | Fanke Saindha ||' (14.212)

When a lamp is covered with a clean glass casing, the light of the flame spreads everywhere around. Same is true, for a human being in whom, Satva Guna is dominant.

What is Rajoguna like? And Tamoguna? Rajas is characterized by too much concern with likes and dislikes.

There is keen desire for enjoyment of objects of the senses, and consequent bondage after the move. He craves for more and more of wealth, and fame, more everything. Thus Rajas in a person makes him a prisoner of desire, activity and ambition.

What, then, is a person of high Tamas like? Tamas arises from lack of true knowledge. It makes a person commit acts which prove to be against his own interest; makes him a prisoner of laziness and sleepy all the time. He is unable to free himself from these traits. A person with high degree of Tamas, is caught in the circle of laziness, sleep and misconduct when awake!

Gnyaaneshwar has described such a Tamas dominated person, in his Gnyaaneshwari saying:

‘Madiraa Na ghetto Dule | Sannipaate Vina Barae |
Nishpremachi Bhule | Pise Jaise | |’ (14.252)

What is the remedial measure to check the rajas and to destroy the Tamas? How to defeat both these enemies? It is, to increase our actions in performance of our ‘Swadharma’ and our duties. We need to focus our minds – individually and socially on such actions. While frivolity of mind is a curse, one pointed attention on performance is a boon! Just as one has to sow the seeds in a field, not just throw them at random. Many streams and falls make a river but thereafter river is contained between its two banks, and irrigation by its waters helps the farmers raise their crops! This is the importance of being one pointed. The question then arises, ‘What is the end result of all this discipline? What happens of such a ‘Trigunaatita’?

In answer, Bhagawaan says, ‘A person with strong ‘Satva’ goes to the pure state and company of Gnyaanis. (As mentioned in the 4th Addhyaaya, verse 41.42 of Geeta, he takes birth in a highly cultured family, pursuing parmaartha saadhana).

Then what is the fate of those with a high rajas or Tamas, after their death? Here also, Bhagawaan says, ‘ A person with high Rajas, upon his death takes birth among people with affinity for action. A person with Tamas, goes to the lower ‘moodha’ state of animals, docile with people or fierce in the forests.

In brief, Satva guna leads to ‘Gnyaana’, spiritual knowledge; Rajas leads to ‘Lobha’ – Greed and Tamas leads to ‘Agnyaana’ – ignorance . The fruits of satva are sweet, nourishing like the sweet banana, while Rajas yields bitter fruit like the neem berries. (Gnyaaneshwari (14.262). Tamas yields poisonous fruit! For all these people with different Gunas, what is their ultimate state? Once again, Bhagawaan says to Arjuna, ‘O, Partha, people with Saatvik behavior go to the higher sphere of ‘Deva Loka’. Rajasic leads to birth, here on earth, in the human society. And those with tamasic behavior go the underworld! There is no other way. Bhagawaan says: -

‘Urdhvam Gachhanti satvastha Madhye Trishthanti Rajasaaha |
Jaghanya Guna Vruttishthaa Adho Gachhanti Taamasaaha ||
(14.18)

‘उर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥’ (१४.१८)

This tri-coloured division can be alternatively described as the triad of ‘Sanskriti’, ‘Prakriti’ and ‘Vikriti’. This triad describes the present state as it is. But the Message of the Geeta underlines, the ideal of the ‘Trigunaateeta’ for Mankind. The ideal example is of the life of the Guru of Gurus ‘Shri Dattatreya’. Trigunaateeta should be like Shri Dattaguru! Shri Dattatreya was like the Spiritual Knowledge Personified! Guru of Gurus, Shri Gurudev Datta! The names of His parents are also significant.

‘Atri’, is his father’s name. (A-Tri, Trigunaatita- tva) and ‘Anasuyaa’ was his mother. (Anasuyaa – An asuyaa, Free of envy). Thus to be Trigunaateeta is to free ourselves from the concept ‘I am this body’! To drop the idea of the body and adopt the concept, ‘I am Aatmaa’!

In the second half of the 14th Addhyaaya of the Bhagavad Geeta, Bhagawaan has described the detailed signs of this ‘Aatmabuddhi’.

Before that, in the 14th Adhyaaya of Geeta, Bhagawaan has told in Shloka 19, who becomes Bhagawaan’s ‘swarupa’ and in Shloka 20th, who can achieve ‘Moksha’ – Freedom.

Bhagawwaan says, ‘Only such a person who recognizes the original entity beyond the three gunas, who exactly knows the original Karta and drashta, who knows the ‘aadi’ tatva’ behind the three Gunas, an achieve, see and be one with Bhagawaan.

What is the next step? Whoever crosses the three Gunas, satva, rajas and Tamas which arise with the human body, and goes beyond, separates himself from them and becomes indifferent to them achieves the ‘Atmabudhi’. Such a person achieves Moksha, freedom from unhappiness due to human birth, old age and death, i.e. immortality. In other words, he is ‘Trigunaatita’. In short, as we met before the ‘Sthitapragnya’ (Aadhyaaya 2) ‘Jeevan Mukta (Aadhyaaya 5), ‘Yogarudha’ or ‘Yogayuktaatma’ (Aayodhyaaya 6) and ‘Gnyaani Bhakta (Aadhyaaya 14) , so says Bhagawaan.

Bhagawaan enumerates eight types of pairs of opposites one has to overcome, as follows: Cold and hot (Physical), god and dust (momentary), Honour and Insult (Social), Friend and Enemy (Political), Praise and Criticism (Verbal), Likes and dislike (Mental), Good and Bad (judgemental) and final Happiness and unhappiness (Resultant).

Further, Arjuna asked Bhagawaan, as to what the exact attributes of the trigunaatita are? He said, “O, Krishna, the Prabho, how to recognize the person who as you told me, has gone beyond the three gunas – Satva, Rajas and Tamas’? What are the attributes of such a person? What is his behavior like? What is the exact process by which Trigunaatit state can be attained?

‘Kairlingais Trin Gunan Etan Atito bhavati Prabho |
Kim Aacharah Katham Cha Etaan Gunaan Ativartate || (14.21)

‘कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन् गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन् गुणानतिवर्तते ॥’ (१४.२१)

Thus, in reply to the above question of Arjuna, Bhagawwan relates these nine attributes of a person who has achieved Trigunaatit state quoting six verses. He said, “O, Partha, The trigunaatita remains totally indifferent to the three gunas – light of Satva, activity of Rajas and attraction of Tamas, even if they arise in him. He keeps away from them. He does not hate them nor does he wish them if they are absent. So also he is equally indifferent to the results of his Karma. Similarly he is not disturbed by the three Gunas. Knowing that these three gunas are the source of all activity, he is and remains unaffected. There is no place for fickleness in him.

In his eyes, happiness and unhappiness, both are equal. He is not disturbed by them. He is of a stable mind. ‘Sthirabuddhi’, and self-satisfied, ‘Aatma Trupta’. he considers both stone and gold equal. He is equal to both praise and criticism. He is firm in his resolve and patient. Describing such a Trigunaatit person, Bhagawaan says,

‘Sama Dukkha Sukhaha Swasthaha Sama Loshtashma Kaanchanaha |
Tulya Priya Aprioy Dhiraha Tulya Ninda Atma sanstuthi ||’ (14.24)

‘समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकांचनः ।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिंदाऽऽत्मसंस्तुतिः ॥’ (१४.२४)

‘Maana apamaanyo Tulya: Tulya Mitra Ari Pakshayoho |
Sarva Aarambha Parityaagi Gunaatita Sa Uchyate ||’(14.25)

‘मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥’ (१४.२५)

Bhagawaan says, ‘Gunaatita is the person who is unconcerned with either honor or insult, and is equal, with friend or foe. He is not selfish. Such a person is Trigunaatita. Proceeding further, when he one pointedly worships Bhagawaan, he becomes ‘Brahma-swarupa, - one with Bhagawaan.

Bhagawaan further says to him, ‘O, Arjuna, bear in mind that the foundation of both Brahma and Sanaatan Dharma, is Paramaatma! He is also the foundation of unmatched Happiness ! The Trigunaatita is absorbed in the service of that Paramaatma, and considers Him as the epitome³ of his life’s achievement.

We should also note that the concept of trigunaatita and its detailed presentation has begun right from the third aadhyaaya. (e.g. Adhyaaya, Verse 27 and 28, ‘Prakute Krimanani’, ‘Tatvavid tu Mahabaho... etc.). However, complete consideration with its corollaries etc. is seen in the 14th Adhyaaya only. The point is he state of Trigunaatita. What is it like?

Gnyaandev says:

‘Guna Kir Naatude | pari duruni Paahi Kode |
Tain Guna Dosha Saayikhade | Sabhu Jaisaa || ’ (14.343)

³ Epitome = essence, height.

Gnyaandev describes this nicely with beautiful illustrations. “Just as the sky remains the same in all the three seasons / once a serpent discards its skin, it is forever / the perfume of a lotus flower leaves it never to return / can a burnt seed grow? The sun has no concern for rising, Noon or setting / River Ganga when reaches the sea, does its water flow anymore? / Just as a parrot, once escapes the hunter’s net and reaches the tree, it is permanent Freedom! A Trigunaatit is similarly free.” Says Gnyaandev.

At the end of the 14th Adhyaaya, even for a Trigunaatit, the importance of devotion. ‘Bhagawad Bghakti’ is emphasized by Bhagawaan. Why so? Suppose out of the three gunas, we exercise control over Rajas and Tamas, and even the ego arises out of Satva Guna also, yet as long as, we have not had Aatma Gnyaan, Atma Darshan, till then this danger is there! Therefore, the help of Bhagwadbhakti – devotion, is indispensable.

Really speaking, Bhagawad Bhakti is the main support for reaching the Trigunaatit state, and then Brahma. Only by devotion to Bhagawwan, and through His blessing, we can reach beyond Trigunatit state to Brahma. Gnyaandev says on this subject,

‘Pai Mandaa Aani Chandramaa | Donhi Navati Suvarma |
Taisaa Maja Aani Brahma | Bhedu Naahi | |’ (14.405)

Thus, the fact that Trigunaatit can reach Brahma, Bhagawaan, is in itself, his greatness. ‘Every human being should whole heartedly try to reach it. ‘Says the Geeta.

XXI

“Purushottaama Prasaad”

The 15th Aadhyaaya of Bhagawad Geeta is known as ‘Purushottama Yoga’. Many people, who are on the path of Adhyatma, recite this adhyaaya every day. This chapter, they consider as most sacred. It is a tradition among devotees that before every sacred ceremony, recitation of this Adhyaaya should be done. Actually this Purushottam Yoga is ‘Purnayoga’ – complete Yoga. The vision of Bhagawaan, which has reached the whole Mankind, happens in this Adhyaaya. In a sense, the whole science of Human Life has been depicted here. It is the essence of Bhagawad Geeta. In a sense Bhagawad Geeta is itself, the essence of Veda and Upanishads and the fifteenth adhyaaya is the essence of Bhagawad Geeta!

In the words of Gnyaandeva,

‘He Shabda Brahmaache Mathite | Shri Vyasa Pragnyecheni Haate |
Mathudni Maadhile Aayite || Saara Aamhi ||’ (15.571)

In this 15th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan has described three Purushas.

‘Kshara Srushti’ is one Purush. Here the word Purusha is literal i.e. that which resides in the ‘Pura’ – the body, as its city. ‘There is no difference as men and women.

Second meaning of ‘Purusha’ is taken as ‘Akshar Purush’ – i.e. the indestructible ‘Atma’ – the soul. ‘Hiranyagarbha’.

Further, the higher entity, which envelopes both of these, is ‘Uttam’, the best, ‘Uttamottam Purush’ – means

Paramaatma! Purushottama. He is beyond the 'Kshara' and 'Akshara'.

Why he is called Uttam Purush? The thinking is, 'Tara' means better (uchchatarata), and then 'Tama' means the best (Uchchatarata) and then there is 'Ut' and Tama. 'Ut' means high and 'ut-tama' means highest.

He, the Paramaatma, is higher than earlier both, 'Kshara' and 'Akshara'. He is Ut-tama, 'Uttama'.

He is 'Uttama Purusha' – 'Purushottama' ! The fifteenth adhyaaya of the Geeta describes his picture and virtues and hence this adhyaaya is titled 'Purushottama Yoga'.

This adhyaaya is also important; it should be called essence of the scripture Geeta. 'Geeta sara' Bhagawan himself says, 'Iti Guhyatamam Shaastram Idam Proktam Maya' 'इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रं इदं उक्तं मयानघ ।'

It is so important. Shri Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, in his Geeta Saara, says about this adhyaaya, 'In all the various forms of Paramatma, 'Purushottam Swarup 'is described here in this 15th adhyaaya of th Geeta. By the knowledge of this purushottama, man completes his journey and the wisdom so attained makes him free from Bondage in this very life, 'Jeevan Mukta'.

Further J. S. Karandikar says, in his 'Geeta Manjari' – 'In earlier adhyaayas having dwelt upon 'Prakruti – Purusha' and 'Triguna', now this 15th adhyaaya describes the best form of Parameshwara. That is the intention. We can also say,

'Sankhya philosophy believed in original Nature and many Purushas.

The Vedanta philosophy proposed the concept of Only 'ONE' Purusha, who creates and inspires the Prakruti.

Geeta Gnyaan takes the concept higher, by explaining the highest form and position of Paramaatma as 'Purushottama'!

In this 15th adhyaaya, how is the subject divided in its various parts? Verses 1 to 3 describe the simile of an Ashvattha Vruksha (Banian Tree). Verses 4 to 6 give the picture of the state of 'Brahma' – 'Brahma-Pada', Verses 7 to 11 give picture of 'Jivaatma' – the soul, Verses 12 to 15, again discuss the Nature – Srushti, Verses 13 to 16 describe the threefold Purusha.

The 15th adhyaaya begins with the simile of the world as a Tree. Originally the Vedic literature also contains this simile termed as 'Varuna-Vruksha'. There, it is just a hint, while here in the Geeta, there is a fine description. Again, in the Kathopanishad, there is mention of 'Ashvattha Vruksha'. Bhagawad Geeta also describes the world as 'Ashvattha Vruksha'. Literally, 'Ashva' means, a horse, 'that' means 'to live'. Thus it means the tree under which horse can enter and rest a while. Such a large tree is either a Banyan or a Peepal tree. In a grammatical sense this is the meaning.

However, in the word 'Ashvattah', -'A' – is not, 'shva' – tomorrow, and 'tha' – to stay; All together the word means 'Impermanent'.

On the other hand, here 'Ashaavshvat' means 'Avinaashi' – endless, 'Sannatan' – What it is today, is not the same tomorrow.', changing constantly. Because 'Srushti' keeps changing from day to day. What keeps changing from day to day, only that can be everlasting.

An authority in the Sanskrit language, Yaskacharya, has said, 'Sanaatano Nitya Nutanatha' 'सनातनो नित्यनूतनः ।' Here in both the words 'tan' occurs. Tan means to pull, to elongate. It does not mean 'to break'. What is Nitya, Nutan is Sanaatana. The Tree of Sansaara – this world is 'Nitya Nutan'. Sanatan means also 'Ashvattha'. We also need to note that there is 'Kshartaa' i.e. 'Kshana Bhangurata', but it is not a weakness; it is strength. As it is said: -

'Kshane Kshane Yam Navataa Vidhatte Tadeva Rupam
Ramaneyataayaam |'

'क्षणे क्षणे यं नवता विधत्ते तदेव रूपं रमणीयतायाम् ।'

This World, 'Srushti' in this sense is Sanaatana. Immortal because it is 'Nitya Nutan', every new. Immortal. Again there is another special trait of this world. Its roots grow upwards – Urdhva Mulam', while its branches are eaves grow downwards. (Adhaha Shaakham). What does this mean?

The word 'Urdhva' has two meanings.

1. Urdhva means – the Best and
2. Urdhva means 'High' from the pair – high and Low
Similarly the word 'Moola' also has two meanings:
 - 1 Moola means 'Ugam sthaan', place from where something springs up, and
 - 2 Moola means roots such as roots of a tree.

Now, we have to examine the meaning of first two verses of the 15th adhyaaya.

'Urdhva Mooam Adhaha Shakham Ashvattham praahur Avyayam |
Chhandansi Yasya Parnaani Yasstam Veda Sa Vedavit ||' (15.1)

'ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।

छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥' (१५.१)

‘Adhaha Cha Urdhvam Prasrutas – Tasya Shakhaa Gunapravruddhaa
Vishaya Pravaalaaha |
Adhaha Cha Moolaani Anushantatanani, Karma Aunbandhini Manishya
oke || (15.2)

‘अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबंधिनी मनुष्यलोके ॥’ (१५.२)

Let us see what is the meaning of the ‘words’, and the intended meaning, ‘Bhava’ in the above two words.

Bhagawaan says, ‘That Ashvattha Tree’ which has its roots ‘above’ meaning in the ‘Satya Loka’ – sphere of Truth, Heaven’ and whose branches are spread down through the seven Lokas; the Tree , Vedas, are its beautiful leaves, in ‘Sanatan’ – without beginning as well as without end. Whoever learns the true meaning of this ‘Ashvattha’ tree, is the only true Knower of the Vedas, and is ‘Aatma Gnyaani’!

Further, Bhagawaan says, ‘Specifically this Sanasaara Tree has its root, place of beginning, above in the heaven. ‘Satya Lok’, but branches are spread in the lower Human Sphere – Manushya lok’. These branches are nourished by the threefold gunas, Satva, Rajas and Tamas and have ‘leaves’ of sound and touch. Similarly, the ‘Marmavipaak’ results of human actions are spread, above, below on all sides, in this world, like the roots of a banyan tree. After all it is the play of ‘Yoga Maya’ of Bhagawaan. This whole Sansaar itself is produced from ‘Aasakti’ – desire. Saints have already said,

‘Janma Ghenhe Laage | Vaasanechya Sange ||

Bagawaan says, in the 15th adhyaaya, ‘The Tree of ‘Sansaara’ has to be cut down with sharp edge of ‘Anaasakti’ – getting rid of attachment. It is quite difficult to understand clearly the strength and the roots of attachment, its beginning, extent and its end. We have to develop ‘vairaagya’ –

detachment, for success in our efforts. Bhagawaan has termed it as 'Asanga Shastra' – the weapon of Asanga. Gnyaneshwar calls it, the sword of 'Aatma Gnyaan'. (15.255-260) . We can understand better with the simile – Vairagya is a sword. 'Deha Bhava' is its sheath, pure Buddhi- intelligence is its handle, using the sharpener of Viveka, we have to prepare the sharp edge of 'Brahma Bodha'. Bhagawaan says, 'having this Ashvattha tree, once cut down with the sharp edge of the detachment, then we have to try and find the source of all this. It is Brahmapad! From there this ancient world has arisen.

Who can reach this root, 'Adisthan', immortal Brahmapad? 'Only the 'Aatma Gnyaani' – Knower of the 'Self' has this capacity.' Says Bhagawaan. 'O, Partha, only the persons, who have conquered their pride and removed ' Moha' – temptation, and 'Aasakti' – attachment, whose intellect is steady in Adhyaatma Gnyaana, all their desires have been calmed and who have left behind, the dualities of happiness and unhappiness, these 'Aatma-Gnyaani' persons succeed in reaching this state. (Purus is one who resides in the Pura, the body, - includes both men and women).Just as, when the sun rises, darkness disappears by the touch of a Paaras Mani, stone turns into a diamond, same happens here. These knowers of truth without doubt, reach the state of 'Nirdwandwa' – shorn of duality, 'Nitya Satvastha' – always in pure satva, 'Niryogakshema' – without acquisition and preservation, 'Trigunaatita – beyond the three Gunas, and 'Aatmavan' – Having the knowledge of the Aatma. (2.45).

Thus, Bhagawaan has told the details of the process of cutting down the Tree of Sansaara – this world. Then Bhagawaan speaking again, of the greatness of Brahmapada, in the 6th verse, says – 'Even Surya, the Sun, cannot make any more lighted, nor can Moon or Fire, and upon reaching that, there is no danger of returning to this world – "Punarjanma' that is my 'param-shreshtha' – the best abode. In the verse 12 of this adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says once again, 'The lights in the

Sun, Moon or fire is the Light of My 'Self' – Aatma only. ' So one who is Self-illuminated, who or what else can illuminate Him? Kathopanishad says:

'Tasya Bhaasaa Sarvam Idaqm Vibhati |' (2.1.15)

'तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति |' (२.१.१५)

The self-illuminated Bhagawwan's light, is reflected by the Sun and the moon.

Here on, in the verses No. 7 to 11, Bhagawaan has displayed Jivaatma darshan. He says:

'Mamaiva Amshaha Jeev Loke Jeev-Bhutas Bhava Arjua |
Manacha Shashthani Indriyaani Prakruti Shthani Karashat ||'
(15.7)

'ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानिन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानी कर्षति ॥' (१५.७)

This means that, a small but eternal part – 'Ansha' of Paramaatma becomes Jivaatma. It then attracts to itself, the five indriyas and Mind – Six elemental parts from the Paramaatma's original nature. This is the process. However the important thing in it is, that we should recognize in our self, jiva, the eternal essence of 'Shiva' – Paramaatma. Another equally important thing is to recognize that this essence is not an only a tiny spark, but entire divine power itself, as is the full moon's reflection in water. It is not inert but conscious Chitta. To be aware of this fact it is necessary since awareness activates the full power. We should know that this Aatma, after death goes in a new birth in another body.

'.... Tathaa Dehantara Prapatihi Dhiras Tatra Na Muhyati. |'
(2.30)

Gnyaandev says:

‘Pari Dehaache Motke ubhe | Aani Chetanaa Tetha Upaabhe |
Tetha chaavalicheni Lobhe | Janmalaa Mhanati ||’ (15.373)

When the Jivaatma, takes on a body, and when it leaves the body, it takes along, the five indriyas and the mind, just as the wind takes the fragrance with it while passing over a flower.

In the new body, he enjoys with the help of these indriyas. The ‘Agnyaani’ – ignorant do not know this but ‘Aatmagnyaani’ the knower of the Aatma, is fully aware of this process, recognizes it.

In fact a human being has before him two paths to choose from. One is to enjoy the objects of Indriyas, Bhoga. The other is to earn Freedom, Moksha. We should increase our tendency to turn away from enjoyment, ‘Bhoga’. Our ideal should be ‘yati’, master of his senses and not ‘Yayaati’ – a slave of ‘Bhoga’.

Further Geeta in the 15th adhyaaya says, ‘The Yogi who is meticulous in his efforts to recognize the Inner Aatma, succeeds. The purity of his heart and concentration of his mind facilitate and enable him to recognize the presence of ‘Ishwara’- God in his own self, and this recognition is extremely important. This is the message of ‘Paramatma’ God Himself. Geeta says, ‘The entire life of the individual is pervaded only by God’. (We know the importance attraction of the earth, but we are not able to recognize the importance of the spiritual force within it. Purushottam Yoga brings it to our attention)

The Geeta logically puts forward, what all is required to bring forth a living entity on this earth. First and foremost requirement is the warmth, light. It is the source of Life which springs forth from it. The earth supplies it. Next is nourishment, supplied by Vegetation. Wind, air is necessary. Yet all this is

not sufficient. Still real development does not happen. For this, three things are required. First, memory, then intelligence and third, discretion are required. It is the divine power which is behind all this. This is clarified by Bhagawaan in the 15th adhyaaya. He says, 'O, Partha, the light in the Sun, Moon or 'Self'. And again, I the moon also, it is I in the form of Soma Rasa, who supplies nourishment to all vegetation. Remember this.

Not only that, in all animal life, I am residing in them in the form of the fire, 'Vaishwaanara', through the inhaling and exhaling digest the food intake of the four types; (from that, seven 'Dhaatu', are manufactured, which help making and nourishment of all limbs of the body. The 'Jatharaagni', fire in the stomach; 'Vaishwanara'; in the ocean, 'Vadavaanala'; and in the sky, in the form of lightening. In the same way, I help digest the four types of food products.)

Bhagawaan says further, 'O Partha, I enter the hearts of all beings and reside there. Memory, intelligence and discretion arise from Me. In all the four Vedas and other books of knowledge, the object of learning is 'Parmaatma' i.e. Me only. And again I am the source, the producer of all philosophy and the Knower is also Me.

Bhagawaan says,

'Sarvasya Chaaham Hurdi Sannivishtho Mattaha Smrutir Gnyaanam
Apohanam Cha |
Vdedishcha Sarvair Aham Eva Vedyo Vedaanta Krut Veda Videva cha
Aham ||'(15.15)

'सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृत्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥' (१५.१५)

Now, adhyaaya describes exquisitely, the triad of Purusha; 'Jivaatma', (Impermanent Purusha), 'Hiranya

Garbha' (Indestructible Purusha) and 'Purushottama'. Truly speaking, starting from the external sources of light. The Sun, Moon and Fire, up to 'Antah Prakaash' – the inner light of the Vedaanta philosophy, the picture of whole Human life has been described in this adhyaaya. It makes us realize the fact that the whole human life is permeated and overflows with Paramaatma. The supreme object of human life should also be to secure 'Aatma Gnyaan' – knowledge of the 'Self', with the help of our faculties of Memory, intellect and discretion!

Shree Gnyaandev emphatically says,

'Aani Anaatma varganeer | Sanduni Aatma Rassache Kshira |
Charataati Je Savichaara | Raaj Hansa ||' (15.296)

Bhagawaan says, 'The Universe has two parts, subject to destruction and indestructible. 'The one without life is subject to destruction. And the internal secret element is indestructible!

'Kshara' means visible external destructible world and 'Akshara' means permanent, existent at all time, changeless 'Aatma' which is also Avinaashi. Thus 'Aatma Tatva' – the essence of Aatma is 'Avinaashi' or the third (beyond these two). 'Sarva Vyaapi' – who is present everywhere, and capable of every action, 'Uttam Purusha' – Purushottama ! Shri Gnyaandev says, 'Isn't the Sun different from its Rays and the Miraz'? In the same way, Purushottama is the Best. (15.530). Aachaarya Vinoba Bhave has called him 'Tija' the third. (Not Ija nor bija tar Tija)

This Purushottama is 'Vishmbhara' – filling the whole Universe, 'Vishveshvevara' – Lord of the Universe, and 'Vishwaatma' – The Universal soul.

Hence Bhagawaan says,

'Uttamah Purushastu Anyah Paramaatma iti Udhahrutah |
Yo Loktravyam Aavishya Bibharti Avyaya Ishwarah ||' (15.17)

‘उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥’ (१५.१७)

The Purusha who is spread the most, more than both the Kshara and Akshara Purusha, who is everywhere is known as ‘Paramaatma’. He, by his supreme status, spread everywhere in the three spheres, provides for and maintains all. Thus He, the Paramaatma, is supreme, beyond both Kshara and Akshara. Thus He is known, popularly as well as in the Vedic context, by the name ‘Purushottama’.

‘O, Partha, the person who clearly, knows Me as Purushottama, that Aatmagnyaani understanding that ‘everywhere I myself is present’, always worship me in his heart. Bhagawaan says:

‘Yo Maam Eva Asmmudho Jaanaati Purushottamam |
Sa sarvavid Bhajati maam Sarva Bhavena Bhaarta ||’ (15.19)

‘यो मामेवमसंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥’ (१५.१९)

Gnyaneshwar says,

‘To Gaami Nirupaadhiku | Kshara Uttamu Eku |
Mhanhoni Veda Mhanhe Loku | Purushottamu ||’ (15.557)

Truly, this concept of Three Purusha is the highest peak of spiritual philosophy. Further in this 15th adhyaaya emphasizes special place of devotion to Bhagawaan. Thereby this 15th adhyaaya is like ‘Triveni Sangam’ merger of three streams of supreme philosophy of Gnyaana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga just like,

‘Deva Devula Parivaaru | Kije Koruni Dongaru |
Taisa Bhaktichaa Vyavahaaru | Kan na Vhaava | |’
(Amrutaanubhava 9.41)

Or else,

‘Je Je Bhete Bhuta | Te Te Maanije Bhagavanta |
Haa Bhakti Yogu Nishchita | Jaana Maazaa | |’
(Gnyaneshwari 10.118)

This is the Advaya Bhakti, adwita Bhakti, Paraa Bhakti,. It is Paraa Bhakti. It concludes Samatva Buddhi. Bhagawaan says: This is Purushottam Yoga’s innermost secret teaching which I have imparted to you is so important and valuable that one who studies it with concentration and thoroughly understands it will be highly accomplished in Aatma Gnyaan and satisfied.

‘Iti Guhyatamam Shaastram Idam Uktam Mayaa Anagha |
Etad Buddhwa Buddhimaan Syaad Kruta Krutuyash Cha Bhaarat | |’
(15.20)

‘इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ ।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥’ (१५.२०)

It means that all of us should consider this world in a proper perspective. Further we should adopt the attitude of devotion in all work. The wooden Boat cannot be piled on a rock but the same can be piled in water. In the same way, our life’s boat should have the stream of Bhakti, devotion for us to happily cross the ocean of Sansaara and reach our destination – Freedom! The carrier of such a message / lesson for us, this 15th Adhyaaya is the high peak of spiritual teaching of the Geeta!

“Divine Merits and Demonic Traits”

The 15th Adhyaaya of the Bhagawad Geeta presents to us the entire philosophy of an ideal human life. It gives us sacred darshan of Purushottama and enables us to have total awareness of ‘Parmaartha’ – the highest state of Freedom. It teaches us to recognize the Paramaatma in the heart of every living being as well as in the inanimate objects! How are we to assimilate the knowledge to attain this state of ‘Purushottam’?

As explained in addhyaaya 13th, only if we imbibe the equation: ‘Aatma Gnyaan = Sadguna’, i.e. virtuous behavior! (13.7 to 13.11 – Amaanitvam.. Yatadonya’). If experience of our own ‘Self’ is like the rising Sun, then aura before the sunrise, can be compared with the light of the divine virtues leading us to ‘Aatma Saakshatkaar’ – Realization of our own ‘Self’. This Divine Wealth is so important.

Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, in his short commentary ‘Geeta Saara’, says: How should we go about cultivating the divine qualities in us after understanding both divine and demonic qualities in Human life? Bhagawan has discussed both good and bad qualities and explained in this 13th adhyaaya how we should cultivate the good and destroy the bad qualities in ourselves.

In the well-known ‘Aarati’ – the song worship the Geeta, we repeat,

‘... Aasursura Bhaava Vinaashini, Naashini Tama Rajani |
Daivi Sadguna Daayini Hari Rasika Ranjani ||’

‘आसुरभाव-विनाशिनि नाशिनि तमरजनी |
दैवी सद्गुणदायिनी हरिरसिका सजनी ॥’

Truly speaking the 'Daivi Sadguna' – Divine virtues teach us 'Tyaag' – to let go of our attachment, service to others, while 'Aasuri Durgunas' – demonic vices make human beings to struggle, only to fulfill our desires and aspirations for selfish ends all the time. In a sense, the Battle of Kurukshetra is also being fought in our own life and mind continuously! Here too, the battle just like Kaurav – Pandav war, is being fought all the time and here too we should be on the side of Pandavas. Similarly if we be truly 'Adhyaatmik' – spiritual, we have to develop and presence divine virtues in our minds and life. Just as if the farmer labours in his farm, he reaps the crop, in the same way, if we cultivate the divine virtues in ourselves, then only our 'sadhana' – efforts for spiritual life, will be successful!

Bhagawaan, towards this end, in the very beginning of the 16th adhyaaya of the Geeta, in three verses, introduces us to the twenty six divine virtues. What are these virtues? The leader of this army is 'Abhay' – fearlessness and the next, his helper, is 'Humility'! Being 'Fearless' is only possible if one is free from selfish desires. This is why all the great personalities have acquired the strength to face extreme difficulties in their lives. For this reason Bhagawaan has paid the honour of 'Agra Puja' – putting 'fearlessness' as the front runner of the twenty six virtues. From the higher spiritual view point, if one has 'Advaya Bhava' – the outlook of Non duality, then only fearlessness can be reacquired. In the 'Yagnyavalkya – Janak Samvaad' – discussion between King Janak and Sage Yagnyavalkya, there is a quotation- 'Abhayam vai Janaka Praptosmi I' 'अभयं वै जनक प्राप्तोऽसि ।' such is the greatness of the virtue of Fearlessness. At the tail end is 'Humility'. This is the highest virtue in spirituality.

The reason is, without blotting out completely the obstacle of egoism, there is no entrance to the temple of

‘Mahadeva’ – the Supreme Deity. Saint Naamdev asks a boon from the ‘Mahaadev’,

‘Ahankaaraachaa Vaaraa | Na Lago Raajasaa |
Maazyaa Vishnudasa | Bhaavikaansi | |’

In our daily life, we observe that when Ahankaar increases, even success may turn into failure! Then how much more important is Humility in spiritual life?

In this context, Sant Gnyaaneshwar has written about the two traits ‘Abhay’ and ‘Namrata’. About Abhay he says,

‘Paani Budvu ye Mithaate | Tavan Meethachi Paani Aate |
Tenvi Aapan Jaaleni Advite | Naashe Bhavy | |’ (16.72)

Or, what is the definition of ‘Namrataa’? What is namarataa like?

Then,

‘Aani Shambhuchiyaa Maathaa | Pavoni Sankoche Jevi Paartha |
Tevi Maanyapane Sarvathaa | Laajane Je | |’ (16.205)

This is why at the time of the descent of River Ganga; Bhagirath had to request Shiva once again. This is how great, these virtues, ‘Abhay’ and ‘Namrata’ are! (Note Nos. 1 & 26)

Apart from these two, what are the remaining twenty four virtues? What is their description? Along with ‘Abhaya’, Satvik mind, ‘Saatviktaa’ is necessary; then ‘Aatma Gnyaan’ and ‘Karma Yoga’. This is the ranking as per the principle of ‘Tara and Tama’ – Tar-Tamyā! These three are Divine Gunas – Praatavya’ – Those are really important in human life.

Then the balance twenty three (23) traits to be cultivated (‘saadhavya’) are, as follows: Daan- Vrutti, Indriya Nigraha,

Yangnya Vrutti, Swa-kartavya Paalan, Tapashchiaryaa, Saraltaa – (Sau-janya), Ahinsaa vrutti, Satya Buddhi, Akrodha, Tyaaga Vruttit, ‘Sansaara Aiptataa, ‘Shanti’ avoid dushtbuddhi, Daya, ‘Not miserly, rujuta (softness), ‘Lajjaa’ (to be ashamed of; ‘miserliness’ and ‘not doing Parmartha’), Achanchaltaa or ‘Sthirbuddhi’, are the 20 divine virtues.

Apart from these, what are the additional divine gunas”
Then,

‘Tejah, Kshmaa, Dhruitihi, Shaucham, adroho, Na Atimaanitaa |
Bhavanti Sampadam Daivim Abhijaatasya Bhaarata || (16.3)

‘तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥’ (१६.३)

It says, Tejaswitaa, Kshamaa-Vrutti, Dhairya- Vrutti, Shuchi – cleanliness, Not to bear hostility for anyone, and ‘Namrataa’, - not having ego feeling, these additional six, make a total of twenty six divine virtues. In this context, it is also said that, leaving aside these three divine virtues, rest twenty are all , simply the alternatives of ‘Satya’ and ‘Ajhinsaa’! Only, in this interpretation, ‘Satya’ – should be interpreted as ‘complete honesty in adhering to the ‘Truth’ without exception’, and ‘Ahinsaa’ – as ‘not hurting anyone in thought, speech or action’!

It is instructive to know what Gnyaandev says on this subject:

‘Maziya Satyavaadaache Tapa | Vaacha kele Bahu Tapa |
Tayaa Falache Mahaadwipa | Paatali Prabhu ||
(Gnayneshwari – 16.32)

Gnyaaneshwar provides a unique definition of the divine virtue of ‘Ahinsaa’. He says:

‘Aani Jagaachiyaa Sukhodeshe | Sharia Vaachaa Maanase |
Rahtane Te Ahinse | Roopa Jaana | |’
(Gnyaneshwar – 16.114)

This is the broadest interpretation and unique analysis of the divine virtue of Ahimsaa. While admiring the Divine virtues, Gnyaneshwar’s verses have been highly illuminating.

He says, “How is it possible for me to describe the importance of the divine virtues that Bhagawaan told Arjuna? What words can effectively express it exactly with the same effect? These divine virtues are like the gift of twenty six villages situated near the abode of Brahma Gnyaana by the King ‘Moksha’, as a prize! Or the goddess Mukti is offering a garland of twenty six glittering diamonds in honour of the Virakta Purusha! Again as if, Sati Geetaa is offering Aarati to her lord Purushottama with the lamp with, twenty six flames! So great is the importance of these twenty six virtues.

This is the picture of ‘Prakaasha’ – Aruna in the 16th adhyaaya! In stark contrast is the dark picture of vices! Bhagawaan says, “O, Arjuna, now be aware of the darkness of the demonic vices that one has to avoid assiduously! These vices are – Pretense, display of superiority, Pride, Anger, Mercilessness, and Ignorance, ‘Shad Ripu’ – a bundle of six enemies! (Later on Bhagawaan has mentioned two more vices- Sexual desire (Verse -10) and abusing god (Verse 18)

Further Bhagawaan says: ‘O, Partha, Divine virtues leads one to ‘Moksha’ while Aasuri vices bind the person into the chains of ‘Janma-Maran’ – rounds of birth and Death, but as you, Arnuna, by nature honour the divine virtues, need not worry.

Further, in the 16th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan also says:

‘Dwau Bhutasargau Loke Asmin, Daiva Aasura Eva Cha |
Daivo Vistarashaha Prokta, Aasuram Partha Me Shrunu ||’ (16.6)

‘द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च ।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥’ (१६.६)

Bhagawaan says: ‘O, Partha, in this world, People with divine virtues and Assuri vices continue to take birth. I have, earlier described to you in detail, the divine virtues. Now, listen about ‘Aasuri traits’ – vices. Here a question arises, why Bhagawaan says that He has described ‘in detail’. Actually He has covered divine virtues in only three verses of 16th adhyaaya and that too, only in the beginning! Then why does He say so? The answer lies in the earlier adhyaayas. ‘Sthitaapragnya’ is described in 2nd adhyaaya, ‘Jeevan Mukta’ in adhyaaya 5th, ‘Yogarudha’ or ‘Samaatva Yogi’ in Adhyaaya, Gnaayni Bhakta in Adhyaaya 12th Trigunaatita, in Adhyaaya 14th all of these have description of Divine virtues! This must have been the intention of Bhagawaan!

Gnyaandev says:

‘Tenvichi Vistaruni Devi | Gnyaana Kathanadi Prastaavi ||
Maadil Granthi Baravi | Sangitli ||’ (16.274)

Having described in detail, the divine virtues, which Arjuna has listened to carefully, now, Bhagawaan describes the Aasuri vices in a similar manner. The purpose is to enable Arjuna to clearly understand what should be discarded. In our daily life also, we need to spread light of divine virtues and recognize and remove the Aasuric vices. Once we have experienced pain, the taste of Happiness is sweeter!

The Aasuric Persons’ desire for happiness, their wishes and hopes are amazing. They want unrestricted power, and

plenty of wealth. They wish that others should welcome with happiness, their ever changing whims and fancies. The persons with true Sattva guna, find all the three above mentioned tendencies, but Aasuric people do not care for that.

Describing in detail, these tendencies, Bhagawaan says, 'O, Partha, persons with these Aasuric tendencies do not at all understand what, should be done, and what should not. Purity is not their forte; what to talk of decent behavior or idealism?

They wish to satisfy their desire for happiness by any means. Further, they do not have anything to do with, 'Aatma', 'Paramaatma', 'Adhyaatma' 'Aadhyaatmikta', wider Humanism, and fulfillment of this human life. They have no idea of 'Parmaatma'. They are 'Dehaatma vaadi' – understand only their bodily needs. They vilify even 'Ishwara', and deny his very existence.

Bhagawaan says, 'They proclaim this world is not based on Truth. Nor does it have any other basis. In this world there is no place for Ishwara-God. The world is produced on the basis of 'Kaary Kaarana Bhava', Cause and effect Principle! Desire and fulfilling the desires are sources of this world, nothing else. This is what these Aasuric people believe and proclaim. Now, what is to be said of this circus''

Truly speaking this world is standing, functioning on the Principle of Truth, 'Rita', proclaimed by 'Ishwara' – Satyena Surya Tapati II, 'सत्येन सूर्यो तपति ।'. There is immense evidence that there is a Creator-Director of this visible universe. In the same way there is need for a principle based grand culture for the success of the Human Endeavour. This logical principle, confirmed by centuries of experience is denied by the Aasuric forces.

Bhagawaan says, ‘The Aasuri people who swear by this deadly philosophy have no inkling of Aatmagnyaan. These selfish people with narrow outlook are as if born to destroy humanity in this world. They are victims of lust and sexual desires which can never be satiated and are victims of egotism, and all such destructive traits. They are victims of ignorance, and adopt any crooked means to achieve their end. Their self-righteousness is like a high iron pillar!

(Gnyaaneshwari – 16.379)

Similarly the Aasuri people afflicted with vices, pursue their desires right up to their graves. They measure their own greatness in satisfying their lustful desires. This is their total philosophy of life. Their entire life is devoted only to ‘Artha’ and “Kama”, and as a result they are like ‘bonded labour’, bound by their own greed and lust and anger. To satisfy their assure desires they adopt any means of earning more and more money. Bhagawaan describes their nature and plight as:

‘Aashaa Paash Shateir Baddhaaha Kaama Krodha Paraayanaha |
Ehante Kaam Bhogartham Anyaayena Arth Sanchayaan ||’
(16.12)

‘आशापाशर्तैबद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसंचयान् ॥’ (१६.१२)

To understand the thoughts, their behavior, mentality and motivation, their psychology, and value system is the main theme of the 16th adhyaaya of the Geeta. Here these aspects are dealt with integrally, explained in detail. This is truly a special merit of this presentation! What should be accepted or discarded is given here. Bhagawaan has analyzed the thinking of these Aasuric people. He says, ‘Such people with Aasuri mentality think in their mind, ‘Today I have secured this, tomorrow I will achieve the other! Today I have this much wealth, tomorrow I shall have even more to satisfy my

ambition! Today I have defeated this one, tomorrow it will be the turn of that other.’ Such is the expression of their pride!

These Aasuric people say in their mind, “In the whole world, I am the ruler. I am happy. And I am successful. I am also highborn, I am strong. All this only I am. In the whole wide world, who can compare with Me?

They think, ‘I will perform Yagnya to get, in regard things for my happiness, and also give alms showing my generosity and greatness. I will live in luxury. That is all! What else is there in this world? Now, the question is, what in the end is, is to happen to these people? In this respect the Geeta says, in sharp words, that these people fall to the lowest level! They suffer all round destruction because they are victims of spiritual ignorance, misunderstanding and caught in the net of ‘Moha’ – temptation. Hey are full of lust. In the end what can they get except the inauspicious hell? This is all about “Dehaatma Vaadi’ – those who do not know anything beyond their body. Another type is those who deny the existence of God. They also meet the same fate in the end. The reason is that they are unable to see God in anything. They do not see the Creator anywhere in the entire world; neither in the inanimate sphere nor in the living and conscious entities.

Not only that, they actually deride the very idea of God. They ignore God incessantly. What is the final fate for these merciless people who hate Ishwara? Only, ‘Amangal’ Narak’ – the inauspicious Hell. This is why Bhagawaan says,

‘Tri vidham Narakasya Idam Dwaaram Naashanam Aatmanaha |
Kamaha, Krodhas Tathaa Lobhaha Tasmad etad Trayam Tyajet ||
(16.21)

‘त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तमादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥’ (१६.२१)

Gnyaaneshwar has said,

‘Narakaachaa Daaravantaa | Trishanku Haa ||’ (16.430)

These are the ‘Trishanku’ – three wide open gates of Hell; ‘Karma’ – desire, ‘Krodh’- Anger and ‘Lobha’ – greed, which inevitably destroy Human beings. ‘Vadavaanal’ – Forest fire, ‘Vidyut’ – Lightning, and ‘Pralayaagni’ , will these not destroy the whole world? If a man contracts three diseases together, who can save him?

Bhagawad Geeta’s answer to this is, ‘We can defeat these three enemies, Kaama, Krodha, and Lobha; for that we have to understand their root, from where they arise. ‘Kaamanaa’ – desire, arises from expectation and also produces worry. Because of worry we start hoarding things, ‘Sangraha’, ‘Parigraha’. This is what is called ‘Lobha’ – Greed. If anyone comes in the way, whoever he may be, we are then angry! How can we break this chain? The answer is, with the help of the triad. ‘Daman’, ‘Daan’ and ‘Dayaa’! Daman means control, suppressing; ‘Daan’ consists of ability to give up, part with what we like to hoard; and ‘Dayaa’ means to have sympathy for the suffering of others, humane feeling, with which we can overcome our anger!

We recollect here Geeta’s teaching, in this respect,

‘.. Uddharet Aatmanaa Aatmaanam I ‘उद्धरेत् आत्मना आत्मानम् ॥’. This is the essence of Geeta Shaastra Balance, Self-control, Morality, Principled behavior, Non-attachment., to be unaffected like a lotus leaf, developing those positive trait in ourselves is the way to overcome these enemies and rise in our character, save ourselves! This is the true philosophy of Life.

Bhagawaan says,

‘Tasmaad Shastram Pramaanaam Te Kaarya Akaaarya Vyavasthitau |
Gnyaatvaa Shaastra Vidhaanoktam Karma Kartum Iha Arhasi ||
(16.24)

‘तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तृमिहार्हसि ॥’ (१६.२४)

‘O, Partha, for deciding what should be done and what should not be, you should consider ‘Shastra’ as your standard. What is recommended there should be adopted as standard in your life. Acharya Vinoba Bhave says (Geetartha Chintanika – 114), ‘Bhagawaan has given in the Geeta, the standard for men in the world, namely action with restraint, without attachment, as Karmayoga, with devotion to God.’ Shri J. S. Karandikar says, ‘Geeta shastra means Karmayoga- Action without attachment’. ‘Nishkaama’ Karma. Indeed it leads us to ‘Moksha’ – spiritual Freedom. This is why Geeta is a practical science of Brahma Vidya. It is ‘Jeevan Geeta’ – Life Science, ‘Samatva Yoga Shastra’ – science of equipoise. It teaches us to acquire, practice, Divine virtues and thus become ‘Divinity’.

XXIII

“Satviktaa – Ideal of Human Life”

The sixteenth adhyaaya of Bhagawad Geeta describes Geeta ‘Daivi and Aasuri Sampatti’ – divine and demonic characteristics, while seventh adhyaaya, ‘Shraddha tray vibhag Yoga’ or Divine Practices in our human life. In the sixteenth, the conflict between divine and demonic natures and the seventh describes human life style indispensable for an aspirant of ‘Paramaarth’ – highest achievement. Sadashiv Shastri Bhide, describing the 17th adhyaaya of Geeta, says that just like the threefold Gunas, the human faith is also threefold and whatever type of faith one has, he reaps the benefits accordingly. How should a person lead his life? One has to understand correctly the threefold classification of yagnya, austerity, alms giving, food etc., and behave accordingly in the Saatvic way. This is explained in the 17th adhyaaya.

At the conclusion of the 16th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan says to Arjuna, ‘O, Partha, when the question arises, ‘What should or should not be done, you have to take the ‘Shastra’ as the standard and do as told in the ‘Shastra’ described there. (Tasmat shastram pramaanam Te....’ (10.24) ‘तस्मात् शास्त्रं प्रमाणम् ते ।’

At the beginning of the 17th adhyaaya Arjuna asks, ‘O, Bhagawaan, What about the people, who carry out the work with faith, but either do not perform these in the prescribed manner, or are unable to do so? What is the state and movement of their mind? Here also are there three types, Saatvik, Rajasik and Taamasik?

To this question of Arjuna, Bhagawaan replied, ‘Yes! All the human beings have their thoughts and faiths, as per

their nature, Saatvik, Rajasik or Tamamsik. (What is needed is that our objective should be to make our ‘Saadhana’ – practice, Saatvik.)

Bhagawaan says,

‘Trividhaa Bhavati Shraddhaa Deshinaam Saa Swabhavajaa |
Satvikee, Rajasee chavia Tamasee cheti Taam Shrunu ||’ (17.2)

‘त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥’ (१७.२)

Gnyaandev comments on this subject as,

‘Praaniye Tanva Swabhaave | Aanaadi Maaya Prabhave |
Trigunaacheni Aaghave | Valyile Aahaati ||’ (17.56)

Later on the Gnyaaneshwari, there are examples that show that even ‘Shraddhaa’ is also, of three types. Take for instance, water. It is life, is it not? But when added to poison, it kills. With chili, it tastes bitter and with cane it tastes sweet! (17.74). This is all the play of ‘Maaya’, effect of three gunaas. That is why there are three types of human nature, and faith is also of three types and actions too, in this world. (However there too one has to keep in mind that the ideal of ‘Saatviktaa’ has to be our guiding Pole star!)

Bhagawaan says further, “All beings and all human beings have their faith according to their inclinations and their own nature. This is the reality. Originally everyone has some faith? (Only this faith needs to be rooted in ‘Bhakti’ – devotion, and not in ‘Bhiti’ – fear. Otherwise true spiritual faith will be aside, and only blind faith will replace it.) In reality in this world, Saatvik persons worship Gods, Rajasik people pay respect to Yaksha-Raakshas, and the taamasik worship ‘Bhuta-Pretas’, goblins. Those

who are full of pretention and egotism, and are slave to their craving for sex and are victims of lack of discretion, they are 'Aasuric' – demonic by nature. They are the cause of pain to 'Parmaatma' – God seated in their hearts. Again those who practice tortuous forms of Tapas, also belong to the 'Aasuric' category.

In this respect the view of the Geeta – Shastra is that, 'Parmeshwara, present in the hearts of all living beings as well in the inanimate nature, deserves our one pointed devotion. This is the best worship. The saints have always preached worship of 'Saguna Nirgunaatmak' – Devaadhidev Shri Vitthala and forbid the worship with expectation of reward, involving violence. Saint Tukaram has descried worship of 'Jakhai, Jokhai, Mesai, Mariaai' and such other idols. Further he goes on to describe greatness of Vitthal Bhakti in words: 'Taisaa Navahe Naaraayan I Patit paavan Jagajjivan II'. The conclusion is we should have faith only in generous, lofty, human concepts representing gods. Bhagawad Geeta accepts only these modes of worship with the attitude of devotion. Next Bhagawaan has described Aahaar, Yagnya, Tapa, different systems based on threefold faith, so that people know the exact reality and what should be the pole star, the ideal of 'Saatviktaa' – spirituality, guiding their life.

Bhagawaan begins with three types of food: first 'Saatvik Aahar'! What is it? Food that gives – long and healthy life, strength of body and mind, it is tasty and mild effect, easily digestible, increases the feelings of love and happiness is Saatvik. It is also the favourite of Saatvik people.

‘Aayuhu Satva Bala Aarogya Sukha Priti Vivardhanaaha |
Rasyaah Snigdhaa Sthira Hrudyaa Aahaarah Saatvika Priyaaha ||’
(17.8)

‘आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥’ (१७.८)

‘On the contrary, except the above mentioned merits, rest of the food is Rajasik and Tamasik. For example too salty, Khatta, very hot or producing burning in the body, or causing pain and diseases in the body should be avoided! Similarly cold, tasteless and stinking food should be avoided.’ Similarly cold, tasteless and stinking food should be avoided. ‘Said Bhagawaan.

In this 17th adhyaaya, of the Geeta, Bhagawaan commends Saatvik Buddhi as the best attitude, in the matters of Food, Yagna, Tapa and Daan. Now the question is, how this Saatvik buddhi is to be cultivated. The answer is, ‘We need to perform all our works with ‘Nishkaama’ attitude, without being overanxious about results, focusing our attention fully on the work at hand’ It means to perform our duty, offering the results to Bhagawaan, ‘Ishwararpan buddhi’ has appeared before in the 9th adhyaaya. ((yad karoshi, yad Ashnasasi ... 9.27) . ‘यत् करोषि, यत् अश्नासि...’. Same thought is presented here in the 17th adhyaaya, in detail. The idea of threefold aspect based on the three Gunas is stressed here. Only the main concept in our mind, in all our actions should be the Saatvik attitude. Only then, we can offer it to Bhagawaan! The ‘Naivedya’ – offering of food, should be pure! While offering the ‘Naivedya’ – pure food, to Bhagawwan, we repeat the Shloka ‘Vadan kaval ghetaa....’. With the same attitude.

Along with Food, the three important aspects of human existence are 'Yagnya' – sacrifice, 'Tapa'-austerity, and 'Daana' – giving Alms, have been discussed by Bhagawaan in the 17th adhyaaya in detail. What is the background, and the purpose? Aachaarya Vinoba Bhave has made important comment on this issue. He says, 'The 17th adhyaaya of the Geeta is, in a way, a program to be adopted by the aspirant. If we want to keep our mind happy and free, then the daily schedule of our life should be of regular and definite schedule, just like the river which flows freely and yet is contained within its two banks! The Sun is also independent and free, and yet, he is without fail, punctual in rising and setting! This, in fact, is the sign of being independent!

The further discussion is focused on our life style. If we wish to live our life without feeling any burden, then we have to have definite and clear rules for ourselves. Above all we have to have a clear and noble purpose of our life on this planet! There should be a contract with ourselves in our life.

Our life should not be scattered, without any focus. This is the basis on which, in the 17th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan has described the three fold actions based on Aatma Gnyaan, and Saatvik Yagnya, Tapa and Daan. Here Bhagawaan talks about the program of life of a spiritual aspirant. The human being is born with specific threefold agenda. First is the body with which we function, requires 'Tapa'. The society in which we are born is the second, for which we need to practice 'Daan', while the third is the vast universe, in which both the above units function. We have to perform 'Yagnya' as an offering. We are using these three institutions every moment of our life.

It is our duty to refill, rebuilt what we utilize. We should perform our duty properly.

How are we to fulfill this duty? Aachaarya Vinobaa says, that Bhagawaan has prescribed the three fold scheme for this purpose which is based on; 'Yagnya', 'Tapa' and 'Daan' Yagnya is based on 'Tyaag vrutti' – willingness to sacrifice, on our part. In the 3rd adhyaaya of Geeta, verse 10, it is said; (Sahayagnyaaha Prajaa Srushtwa Purovaach Prajapati 'सहयज्ञाः प्रजा सृष्ट्वा...' (३.१०). Yagnya is also based on the idea of service, purity, to create something new!

'Daan' means repaying our debt. It does mean we oblige somebody, it is clearing our debt! With our body, mind, money or any other means, we have to perform selfless service to society. It also means sharing. Everyone should receive his due share.

Similarly 'Tapa' – exertion for the society, for the Srushti, is also important. With the passage of time there is a depletion of matter or energy, institutional health, which needs to be replenished. It is necessary to supply energy for this purpose. Tapa fulfills this need! The body does not suffer with Tapa; on the contrary it is nourished by Tapa. Hence Bhagawaan prescribes threefold Tapa, of body, mind and speech.

Now for this purpose also, we need to strengthen spiritual aspect of Saadhanaa. Earlier in the 14th adhyaay, it is described how one can spiritualize one's life, thoughts and actions. Now in the 17th adhyaaya it's 'Viniyog' ('विनियोग') is suggested. What is the meaning? Everyone is

required to perform service as integral part of 'paarmaarthik saadhanaa'. Then again, it has to be offered to Parameshwara, God. Then only it is truly 'Saatvik'. Therefore Bhagawaan has equally emphasized all the three, 'Saatvik Yagnya', Saatvik Tapa and 'Satvik Daan'.

About the Saatvik – Yagna, he says, 'yagnya should be performed, without desire for its fruit, as one's duty and with a quiet, balanced mind and according to the process prescribed in the scriptures, all these together are accomplished then only it is a truly Saatvik yagnya.

'A fala akankshibhir Yagnyo Vidhi Drushto ya Eejyate |
Yashtavyam Eva Iti Manah Samaadhaaya Sa Saatvikaha ||' (17.11)

‘अफलाकांक्षीभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्विकः ॥’ (१७.११)

The condition, 'Without expectation of result is a far difficult condition. Shri Gnyanedev asks: 'When we plant a 'Tulsi' – Basil seed with devotion, do we expect any fruits, flower or cool shadow, for our effort? 'Yagnya' should also be performed in the same way, 'Afalaakankshi' – without expecting any fruit. Only then it will be 'Saatvik'! Similarly regarding 'Saatvik Tapa', Bhagawaan says, the austerity performed without expecting any fruit, with no attachment, with strong faith and equipoise can be considered 'Saatvik Tapa' -. Again there are three kinds of 'Saatvik Tapa' – Physical, Verbal and Mental! They are as follows: Physical tapa includes, respect for God, knowers of Brahma, Guru and the learned, cleanliness of body and mind-thoughts, simplicity, humility, 'Brahmacharya' and nonviolence, all these traits constitute Saatvikta of the body.

Not to hurt the feelings of anyone, being entirely truthful, sweet and benevolent in speech, and regular study of the scriptures constitutes 'Satvik Speech'! In the same way to maintain happy frame of mind, gentleness, to observe silence, meditation on the 'Self', self-control, and purity of mind and heart constitutes Saatvik Mental Tapa.

Bhagawaan says, in his regard,

'Anudevgakaram Vaakyam, Satyam, priya Hitam cha yat |
Swaadhyaaya Abhyasnam Chaeva Vangmayam Tapa Uchyate ||'
(17.15)

‘अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥’ (१७.१५)

What is Saatvik Daan? The alms, given with the belief that to give alms is our duty, to help even those who have not helped us, at right time and place, keeping in mind whether the receiver is fit for this 'Daan' or not, constitutes 'Saatvik' Daan.

Elaborating on the 'Saatvik Daan', Bhagawaan says:

'Daatavam iti Yat Daanam Diyate Danupakaarinhe |
Desha Kaale cha Paatre cha Tad Daanam Saatvikam Smrutam ||'
(17.20)

‘दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिन्गे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥’ (१७.२०)

Now, Bhagawaan has described the behavior of even those who have no trace of 'Saatvikta' in them, whose behavior is full of Raja and Tama. However, he has done this with a view to inform us as to 'What should be avoided and what should be discarded'. The same basis was seen in the 16th adhyaaya while describing the details of 'Aasuri traits', which is now seen here.

Then what kind of Yagnya, Tapa, Daan should be avoided by us all? These are, those rituals done, with desire for the fruits, for one's own glorification, without paying attention to the instructions in the shastras, leaving aside the Anna daan, carried out without faith; such Rajas Yagnya and Tamas Yagnya should better not be undertaken!

In the same way, the Tapa that is undertaken, for self-glorification, with the idea that people should offer their worship to me, or to deceive others, in scattered and unstable manner is Rajasik Tapa, which should be avoided. Further, Tapa, which causes torture to one's own body, or undertaken with inflexibility or with the intention to destroy others, is Taamsik Tapa which should be avoided.

The unique feature of the Bhagawad Geeta's teaching is that it does not advocate the Aghori practices that torture one's own body.

The Alms-'Daan' , which is given in return for an obligation, or which causes pain while giving and which is giving in expectation of some return is Raajasik Daan which is improper and should be avoided. Again, the alms given at inappropriate time to people who are unfit to receive, or given without respect for the receiver, or even with contempt, is 'Taamasik Daan' and should be avoided. This is what Bhagawaan says in the 17th adhyaaya of the Geeta.

In this way, in the 17th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan has described the triad of 'Sewa' – service, 'Sadhana' – spiritual practice and offering to 'Ishwara', god. This is mutually complementary in the objective. These enable us to realize one's own good while serving others also. To this end, Bhagawaan recommends three types of cleansing,

‘Aahar shuddhi’, ‘Vichaar shuddhi’ and ‘Manas Shuddhi’. It is our duty; everyone should cultivate ‘Saatvikta’.

Bhagawad Geeta recommends, for this purpose, ‘Samarpan’ – mantra of comprehensive gifting. It is ‘Om Tat Sat’!. ‘ॐ तत् सत्’! In this short triad, there is the Vedik name of Bhagawaan, ‘Om’, and also his short description, ‘Tat Sat’. At the beginning of any ‘Karma’ – enterprise, if this short Mantra is recited, then it is believed to be dedicated to supreme deity, ‘Brahma’. This mantra seems to be short, but in these three words, it points to three things, ‘Vyaapakta’ – all pervasiveness, ‘Saatatya’ – continuity and ‘Nishkamamata’ – absence of desire. The act done with these three virtues, is truly ‘Saatvik’ and is suitable for offering to Bhagawaan. About this mantra, it is pointed out in the 17th adhyaaya, that ‘Om Tat Sat’ ‘ॐ तत् सत्’ indicates Brahma, or Brahma Tatva in these three ways. Accordingly in the beginning, Prajapati created ‘Brahmagnya’ – i.e. Knower of Brahma, ‘Veda Vangmay’ i.e. Vedic literature and the Ritual of ‘Yagnya’.

Among these three, the symbol ‘Om’ is highly important. It should be noted that those who were followers of Brahma, recited it at the beginning of every ritual.

‘Tasmaad Om iti Udaahrutya Yagnya Daana Tapah Krihaaha |
Pravatante Vidhaanoktaaha Satatam Brahma Vaadinaha ||’(17.24)

‘तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥’ (१७.२४)

In this context, Gnyaandev says:

‘Tari sarva Mantryanchaa Rajaa | To Pranavo Aadi Varnu Buzaa |
Aani Takaau To Dujaa I Tija Satkaaru | |’ (17.342)

This mantra has the strength of ‘Brahma Gnyaan’. Truly, the cream of the Upanishad literature has been given in this short ‘three word’ mantra. The first, ‘Om’ is, in fact, the name of Bhagawaan, dear to Him. Literally this symbol ‘Om’ means ‘Is’. It represents ‘Being’, or positive aspect. It also implies ‘Purnataa’ – totality, sufficiency; ‘Parama Tatva’ – The eternal highest essence; The ‘Parama Aatmaa’ – ‘God’ who exists today and will be there tomorrow also, eternal! ‘Sa Eva Adya, Sa Eva Shivaha’ ‘स एव अद्य | स एव श्वः |’. This Saatvik faith is enlightened, not blind. Continuous chanting of ‘Om’ with full faith leads to its spreading to every pore of the mind of the devotee.

The next word is ‘Tat’. It actually signifies freedom, ‘Moksha’. When persons striving for moksha perform acts such as Yagnya, Tapa, Daan without any expectation, they begin with the word ‘Tat’ – which means ‘He’ that ‘Paramaatma Tatva’. ‘Not Me, He!’, this phrase is indicative of the state of mind in which absence of desire, attachment, separation from the same. In ‘Anaasakti’ state of mind, Parabrahma, i.e. ‘Tat’ descends in the life of the aspirant. He is able to be completely free from the desire for any reward-fruit, for his actions, karma. Similarly, the word ‘Sat’ or ‘Prashasta’ also means both being and goodness. Adhyaaya of the Geeta tells us that ‘Sat’ is the tirade of truth, goodness and beauty, in your actions being good, beautiful and beneficial. (Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram). ‘सत्यं शिवं सुंदरम् |’ We also use the term ‘Sat’ to express respect as, for example, in ‘Satsang’, ‘:Satguru’ and so on. In the full term ‘Om Tat Sat’, the part ‘Om Tat’ express the goodness of ‘Sat’!

In short, the 17th adhyaaya of the Geeta tells us:

‘Yagnya Tapasi Daane cha Sthittihi Sad Iti cha Uchyate |
Karma chaiva Tadarthiyam Sad Iti Eva Abhidhiyate ||’ (17.27)

‘यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥’ (१७.२७)

To remain free from the desire for fruits of our actions while performing ‘Yagnya’, ‘Tapa’ and ‘Daan’ is termed as ‘Sat’. And the term is also indicative of all the three types of actions taken for the same. Contrarily, whatever actions are performed for the opposite and, e.g. yagnya, tapa and Daan, carried out without faith, are known as ‘Asat’. Such ‘Asat’ actions are neither useful in this world, nor after death in the other world! Hence we should adopt ‘Saatviktaa’ as the main criterion in our personal life as well as in our social and religious works. Thus Geeta in the 17th adhyaaya, puts ‘Saatviktaa’ as the ideal before us in our personal life, as in the collective social life.

XXIV

“Avibhaktam Vibhakteshu”

The eighteenth adhyaaya of the Bhagawad Geeta is the Epitome of the Geeta's Teaching. From this adhyaaya we are able to learn clearly, the ideal direction of our life. The traditional name of this adhyaaya is 'Moksha Sanyas Yoga'. We should understand the exact meaning of this term. It is not 'Moksha and Sanyaas', but 'to abandon the desire, 'Sanyaas' of 'Moksha' itself' is the correct meaning of 'Moksha Sanyaas Yoga'.

Shri J. S. Karandikar has suggested the name 'Arjuna Uttahaan Yoga'. The background of this suggestion is that the first adhyaaya is named 'Arjun Vishaad Yoga'. Some have looked at this 18th adhyaaya as 'Sampoorna Nishkaam Karmayoga'. Again others have seen it as 'Sampoorn Ishwar Sharan Yoga', i.e. the view that advocates 'Bhakti Yoga' of 'Isha Vaad'.

Shri Gnyaandev, underlines the importance of this adhyaaya in the words:

'Jo Geeta Ratna Prasaadaa chaa + Kalasu Artha Chintaamanichaa |
Sarva Geeta Darshanaachaa | Paadhau Jo ||' (18.30)

Paadhau meanse 'Vaataadyaa', one who shows the way. The concept is, 'When you have seen the kalash at the top of the temple, you have the benefit of the darshan, bowing to, the idol in the core of the temple. Garbha Gruha. This is also reflected in this verse.

Sadashiv Shastri Bhide in his 'Geeta Saar' says that this 18th adhyaaya of the Geeta can be also called 'Moha Vinaash Yoga', i.e. Yoga destroying 'Moha'- temptation. The summary

conclusion of the whole Geeta is seen here. 'Sanyas', 'Tyaag', Observing 'Swadharma', 'Aatma Sanyam' – Self-control, devotion based 'Bhakti Yoga', Gnyaan Yoga and 'Nishkaam Karma Yoga', all these aspects of the Geeta are seen here as a summary discussion. Similarly, to offer all actions to Ishwara, which is true Sanyaas, results in 'Moksha', is the conclusion offered here. The aspirant is advised that, he can adopt any path, that he finds suitable for his own temperament out of the many paths mentioned in the earlier chapters,. Hence this concluding adhyaaya is of great importance. This analysis by Bhideshastri is highly useful.

We can also say that this concluding chapter contains 'Sinhaavalokan' – review of the discussion on all the topics in earlier adhyaas. Some scholars have aptly named it as the 'One adhyaaya Geeta'. The reason is that all the topics mentioned in this adhyaaya, are discussed in some or the other of the earlier adhyaayas. In the very beginning of this adhyaaya, Arjuna asks, "O, Bhagawaan, I want to understand the true meaning of the two terms, 'Yoga' and Sanyaas'. Please explain those to me'

Bhagawaan said, 'O, Partha, Gnyaanis say that 'Sanyaas is 'to discard the works rooted in desire', while those who emphasize 'Vivek' – discretion, consider Sanyaas as – 'to discard the fruit of all the actions'.

Thus the important thing is 'To offer the fruits of action' and not simply to discard all actions. The main topic of argument is, 'any work is tainted with some or the other defect, so should it be discarded? Clearly, the answer is 'No'. The reason is, any Karma involves some or the other defect. Fire is always accompanied by smoke. Similarly some defect always accompanies each action. There is no remedy to it. While working in the field, if we are hurt by thorns, can we abandon it altogether? If we do so, then people will starve to death! What about that?

On this point of Behaviour and action, there is a continuous debate between those who emphasize, 'Gnyaana' and those who favour 'Karma'. Bhagawaan has made it lighter by converting it into a 'Samvaad' – smooth discussion, in his advice to Arjuna in the Geeta.

The 'Gnyaani' says all the actions, being tainted and hence, discard them. On the other hand, 'Karma-Nishtha' people hold that since Yagnya, Daan and Tapa are merit worthy, these should be undertaken by all. In addition, we have seen in the 17th adhyaaya called 'Shraddhaamaya Yoga', that actions are also of three kinds, 'Satvik, 'Rajasik' and 'Taamasik'. Then what is the solution of these different viewpoints.? How can they be harmonized? On this issue, Bhagawaan clearly says, 'Acts of yagnya, Tapa and Daan are a must, because these acts purify even the persons with discretion. But the main point of contention is that even all these 'Best' karma also, we have to carry out without expecting the fruits thereof. This is the clear opinion of Bhagawaan. He says,

'Etaani Api Tu karmaani Sangam Tyaktvaa Falaani Cha |
Kartayaani iti Me Partha Nishchitam matam Uttamam ||' (18.6)

‘एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥’ (१८.६)

This means that 'Fala Tyaaga' is the most important point and the true renunciation. 'Falatyaag' is the crucial test. Shri J. S. Karandikar emphatically says in 'Geeta Manjari' 'The bite of 'Karma' is not merely non-poisonous, but on the contrary, it can be turned into beneficial, by 'Nishkaam karma Yoga". We all should take note of this."

Bhagawaan says in this 18th adhyaaya, 'To abandon the actions enjoined by our 'Swadharma' by becoming a victim of

confusion is 'taamasic Tyaaga'. If one leaves them fearing bodily pain, it is 'Rajasic' Tyaaga! But when acts are done without attachment and desire for the results, then it is the real Tyaaga, the true 'Saatvik Tyaaga',. This is the clear answer by Bhagawaan in reply to Arjuna's question, in the 8th adhyaaya of the Geeta.

Gnyaandev also says:

'Aani Janare Savyasaachi | Murti Lahoni Dehaachi |
Khanti Karichi Karmaachi | Te Gaondhe Gaa ||' (18.218)

Further, Bhagawaan has described the seven fold river of seven virtues as along with this Satvik Tyaga, Gnyaan, karma, karta, Buddhi, dhruti and the resulting 'Sarva Sukha' – Total happiness. Along with this He has added their Rajas and Tamas classification which occurred in the 17th adhyaaya, here in 18th adhyaaya also. However, the teaching Bhagawaan wants to provide to Arjuna is of 'Satviktaa'. Because, once 'Satviktaa' arises in a person, then only he can drop attachment, offer the fruits of his action to Bhagawaan. Only then Human beings can experience contentment, and progress further!

In the 18th adhyaaya, having described the seven streams of Satviktaa, and tyaaga, Bhagawaan, goes further to 'Satvik Gnyaan' and 'Satvik Karma'. Before this, He has discussed three fold Karma and threefold Gnyaana and five causes of karma. This is also very important from the point of view of the journey of 'Paramaatha'. It offers philosophical details and also shows the way to reach the goal.

Before that Bhagawaan says, 'Person who does not offer the fruits of his actions, receives three types of results, good bad and mixed. Other one who has renounced the fruits, is not bound by any of these. This is the greatness of renouncing the results.

Hereafter, Bghagawaan describes the five reasons why karma arises for any person. Every action of a Human being, whether it is Saatvic, Raajasik, or Taamasik, is caused by any one of these five reasons suggested in the ‘Sankhya’ philosophy,. These are important.

What are these five important reasons behind the rise of Karma, for a human being?

‘Adhishthanam Tathaa Kartaa Kaarnam cha Pruthakvidham |
Vividaaha Cha Pruthak Cheshta Daivam Chaiva Atrqa panchakam ||’
(18.24)

‘अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पंचमम् ॥’ (१८.१४)

It means ‘Adhishthana’ – a place is necessary for any action to happen; it may be a physical place or even human body. Then the subject, the doer of this action ‘Kartaa’ has to be there. Instruments of different types like knife, for etc. – or he senses – ‘Indriyas’ like Gnyaanendriya, Karmendriyas such as eyes, hands, mouth etc. are required for this action. Various aspects ‘Vyapaar’ for this action are there. The fifth, last but most important is God’s wish, “Ishwerecohaa’. These are the five causes required for any action to take place! This is what this shloka says.

From the point of Economics, there are the requirements to establish and manage any new business; like the entrepreneur, land, capital, labour and risk management etc. This is well known and accepted. However, in the case of Paarmarthik effort, the first four instruments are well accepted, but, what is the exact meaning of ‘Daivam cha atra Panchamam’? ‘दैवं चैवात्र पंचमम् ।’. There are differing views on this. The most common meaning of ‘Daivam’ is fate. But that meaning is basically not applied here. In the Bhagawad Geeta, the word ‘Daiva’ in the phrase ‘Daivi Guna Sampadaa’ means

the Godly virtues, good character. This has been clarified before. Thus, the term 'Daiva' has been interpreted as God's wish or God's play.

Shri Gnyanaadev has explained 'Daiva' as, many gods corresponding to our five faculties, Sun, Wind, four directions and so on. (18.350). These five factors have come from the Sankhya philosophy. Sankhya accepts 'Prakruti'- Nature, and many Purushas. But it does not believe in or accept the existence of God. Bhagawad Geeta has added in Sankhya, the concept of God, as the factor which gives inspiration to Prakruti. Hence the exact meaning of word 'Daiva' in this verse can be 'Ishwarvaad' or 'Ishwaad'.

Saints believe that by reciting the name of Hari, having strong faith in Ishwara, devotion to Him we can win his favour! Sant Eknaath puts it clearly:

'Aavadine Bhave harinaama Ghesi | Tuzi Chinta Tyaasi Sarva Aahe ||

and

'... Ekaa Janaardani Bhoga Prarbdhaachaa | Harikrupen Tyaachaa Naasha
Zaala ||

This is what Saints have to say. From here on we should add to the practice of chanting Hari's name, service to him, which is best carried out by inclusion of service of 'Janata-Janaardana' i.e. service to people as a form of god. This practice will indeed win the blessings of God! "Service to Maanav" – man is service to 'Madhav' – god! Aachaarya Vinobaji, in his 'Geeta pravachane', says, we should have the attitude, 'Tvameva', 'Tvameva' 'Tvameva' 'त्वमेव' 'thou alone' – at all times. 'Saamya Yoga's 108 sutra, 'Aham Muktihis Shabdaat' 'अहंमुक्तिः शब्दात्' is important!

We should have the attitude of being the protection of 'Ishwara' – god. We should think while undertake any task, 'Will my work be approved by God? Is it truly 'Saatvik? And

then, we should offer tis results that work also to Bhagawaan! The conclusion of this offering of the results, should be seen in seeking the protection of God' 'Ishwar Sharan'. Further, we should consider God's wish as our own wish. Our actions should reflect God's wish. All of this is in this quote. 'Daivam Cha Atra Panchamam I' 'दैवं च अत्र पंचमम्'

Bhagawaan says further: 'While this is the situation, the uncivilized, ungrateful, confused man thinks himself to be the 'Doer'. (1816). The word 'Durmati' here should be taken to mean what is called 'Dehaatma vaadi' as mentioned in the 18th adhyaaya. On the contrary, we should not have egoism in our mind. We should not be attached to the fruits of our actions. Then only we shall be at ease with both performance of the work without desire for the fruit thereof.

Now Bhagawaan clarifies the concepts of threefold knowledge and threefold work, in the verse:

'Gnyaanam Gnyeyam Parignyaataa Trividhaa Karma Chodanaa |
Karanam Karma Kartaa iti Trividhah Karma Sangrahaah ||' (18.18)

‘ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥’ (१८.१८)

It means knowledge, the subject and the Knower, are the three aspects of the inspiration for action, and the tools of work, actual action, and the worker are the three limbs behind the implementation. Again these three- Knowledge, Action and the Doer, are each further affected by Satva, Rajas or Tamas. Logically there are two triads, Knowledge triad and the action triad, which were separate. However, Bhagawad Geeta has considered Knowledge as the source of action, 'Karmabeej', and thus the difference is eliminated. Bhagawad Geeta's prefers coordination, unification of the two.

In this respect Gnyaandev says:

‘Etha Gnyaataa Gnyaan, Gnyeya | He karmaache Pravrutti Traya |
Taisechi Kartaa Karana Kaarya | Haa Karma Sanchyo ||’ (18.512)

Shri J. S. Karandikar says that ‘Gnyaataa, Gnyeya and Gnyaan, these three are converted in the tirad of ‘Kaartaa, Karana and Karma’ to produce the resultant Karma. (Geeta Tatva Manjari – P. 553) Further we can also say that Bhagawad Geeta has envisaged the combination of Gnyaan and resultant way. Hence Geeta suggests the concept of ‘Saatvik Gnyaan’ and ‘Satvik Karma’. Actually ‘Kaamaanaa’ – expectations, makes for the ‘Kaamyaa Karma’. If it is accompanied by offering of the fruits, does not affect the Kartaa, because in the absence of craving for the fruits, such prohibited ‘Rajasik and taamasik Karma’ are rendered ineffective! Only the Saatvik karma is all that remains!

The remaining danger in the above effort, we are told, can be eliminated by performing these with the attitude of detachment! There should be no ego in the action. One should not have pride even in the ‘Falatyaag’ – renouncing the fruits. Otherwise what will happen?

Saint Tukaram says,

‘Tyaage Bhhoga Mazyaa Yetil Antaraa | Mag Mi Daataara Kaay
Karu ||’

In short, according to Geeta’s philosophy, the attitude of ‘Fala Tyaag’ and nurturing Saatviktaa, are the most important for everyone. This ‘Saptasaritaa of Saatviktaa’ is the main topic, Bhagawaan deals with in the 18th adhyaaya of the Geeta.

The seven topics are, ‘Tyaaga’ – renunciation (verse -9), ‘Gnyaana’ – Knowledge (verse -20), ‘Karma’ – action (verse -23) , ‘Karta’ – Doer (verse -26), ‘Buddhi’ – Intellect (verse -30),

‘Dhruti’ – Patience (verse -33), and ‘Sarva Sukh’ – Resulting Happiness for all (verse – 37). Among all of these ‘Saatvik Gnyaan’ is the most important. About this ‘Gnyaana’ i.e. ‘Atmagnyan’, there is discussion in several chapters in the Geeta. As for example, ‘This Aatmaa is eternal, indestructible, inconceivable (2.18), or else ‘Only He can bring Unity in diversity’ (13.16), such as,

‘Sarva Bhuteshu Yena Ekam Bhavam Avyayam Iekshyate |
Avibhakatma Vibhateshu Taignyaanam Vidhadhi Saatvikam ||’
(18.20)

‘सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते |
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ||’ (१८.२०)

This means ‘Sarvam Khau Idam Brahma I’ This is the epitome of ‘Saatvik Gnyaan’ – spiritual knowledge. Similarly there are other streams of ‘Saatvik Gnyaan’. For example, what is ‘Saatvik Karma? When a person, without slightest attachment and having no desire for the fruits thereof, performs his ‘Niyat Karma’ – appointed actions, without any performance or dislike, it can be called ‘Saatvik Karma’. Appreciating the ‘Saatvik Karma’, Shri Gnyaandev says:

‘Sonyaasi Jodle | Saurabhya Jaise ||’ (18.558)

‘सोनयासी जोडले सौरभ्य जैसे |’

Now Bhagawaan discusses what is ‘Saatvik Kartaa’? What is he like? What should he be like? Such a Saatvik Karya – Kartaa’ in in fact, a ‘Karma Yogi’ only!

Bhagawaan says, ‘One who is ‘Anaasakta’ – without attachment, egoless, Patient, who is full of enthusiasm and who does not let reputation or Blame affect this equanimity and his work, can be called a true Saatvik Kartaa’!

‘Mukta-Sango Anaham Vaadi Dhruiti Utsaaha Samanvitajha |
Siddhasiddhyor Nirvikarah Karta Saatvika Uchyate ||’ (18.26)

‘मुक्तसंगोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥’ (१८.२६)

Now Bhagawaan discusses ‘Saatvik Buddhi and Saatvik Dhruiti’ – These two streams are important from every point of view. Shri J. S. Karandikar says, in his ‘Geeta Manjari’ (p. 563) , ‘In the Bhagawad Geeta, everywhere the emphasis is more on the attitude with which the work is done, instead of the external features of the Karma. For example, a mother scolds her child to improve his habits, for his better future only. It is not anger but love that leads her to do so! Geeta considers, Buddhi as ‘व्यवसायात्मका’ ‘Dhruiti’ means capacity to execute a proper decision right upto its logical conclusion; firmness of mind.

Bhagawad Geeta takes both the triads, Saatvik, Rajasik and Tamasik, of ‘Gnyaana’ as wellas of ‘Karma’, together. (18.18). It says, ‘The Buddhi, the origin of ‘Gnyaana’ and ‘Dhruiti, the capacity to take the right decision and to take it through execution and conclusion, should both be Saatvik!

About the ability to take proper decision, ‘Samyak Nirnyshakti’ or ‘Saatvik Buddhi’, Bhagawaan says, ‘O, Arjuna, the ability to decide as per religious tenets, what is proper or not, what should be adopted or avoided, and what leads to bondage or to spiritual freedom, is ‘Saatvik Buddhi’! Similarly the ‘Saatvik Dhruiti’ is the ability to practice ‘Samatva Yoga’ – equipoise! Basically, this ‘Dharanaa Shakti’ is most important in human life – ‘To be stable in our thought and actions’. Upon this stable foundation we can erect a strong structure of our life.

As a result of all of the above instead of the short lived happiness of usual social interactions, we can secure, ‘Saatvik Sukha’ – divine total happiness!

Shri Gnyaandev says, ‘Sarva Sukhaasi Patra Gheijaa.’ Or his Pasaaya Daan “Kim Bahunaa sarva Sukhi’. Again, ‘Sarva Sukhaache Aagaru I Baap Rakhmaa Devi Varu I” Such is this Saatvik happiness in the Bhagawad Geeta. Repeating in the same vein, Bhaagwaan says in the 18th adhyaaya:

‘Yat Tadagre Visham Iva Parinaame Amruta Upamam |
Tat Sukham Saatvikam Proktam Aatma Buddhi Prasaadjam ||’
(18.37)

‘यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥’ (१८.३७)

It means, ‘That which is unnpatatable at start, but in the end, tastes like nectar, is ‘Saatvik Sukha’! This is obtained when ‘Aatma Nishths Buddhi’ – intellect rooted in the ‘Self’ is activated!

Describing this person who is guided by his Aatma Buddhi, whose mind is always happy, Sant Tukaram Says,

‘Man Karra Re Prasanna | Sarva Siddhiche Kaarana ||

‘मन करा रे प्रसन्न । सर्व सिद्धिचे कारण ॥’

Bhagawad Geeta, describes the importance of this ‘Saatvik Buddhi’ in the 18th adhyaaya, up to the 40th verse. Such happiness can never be secured by the sense – enjoyments. Neither can it be obtained from sleep or laziness. It can be secured only from one pointed mind which is rooted in the ‘Aatma’! By the realization of Unity in diversity in this world! This is why, we have to adopt as the guiding principle of our life. ‘Avibhaktam Vibhakteshu I ‘अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु ।’. By this mindset, rooted in the ‘Self’, we can definitely secure abiding happiness, i.e. ‘Saatvik Sukha’.

XXV

“Yatra Yogeshwarah Krishna”

What is the constant thread in the Bhagawad Geeta, the main point of its philosophy? It is threefold:

- 1) The immortality and indivisibility of the Atmaa – the Soul.
- 2) Perishable nature of Human Body.
- 3) Inevitability of ‘Swadharma’, one’s own responsibility.

On this point of ‘Swadharma’, in the 18th adhyaaya, verses 41 onwards, Bhagawaan has described the concept of four ‘varnas’ and the duties of each Varna. These duties are to be discharged by each one of us throughout our life! How is this swadharma decided? It is based on the natural qualities of each person, and responsibility given by society. The swadharma may be - education of the society, or defense, business-agriculture, service, science Research, Sports or Artistic Contribution. Each of us has to discharge our debt to the society through our occupation according to our nature.

The system of four Varnas in the society, with their duty to perform different types of work as per their own nature and capacity, is aimed at the whole society’s welfare and happiness and prosperity.

Bhagawaan has described this system in the verse on 45, in 18th adhyaaya of the Bhagawad Geeta. He has made it clear that these four varnas are based on the nature and capacity of each of them. He has further clarified that these are based on gunas, and not on their birth in a specific family, Jaati or Gnyaati. These Varnas are – ‘Guna-Karma Vibhagashah’ – based on Gunas and nature of work.

‘Chaatur Varnyam Mayaa Srushtam Guna Karma
Vibhagasha...’

This system is not at all, ‘Gnyaati Adhikaar’ based. Achaarya Vinoba, in his ‘Gitaai Chintan’ – says, that in this system there is also allowance for movement from and to different categories based on the development of the capability of people. What are these four Varnas, described in the Bhagawad Geeta? (p. 216). These four categories are:

- 1) Braahmagnya
- 2) Kshatriya
- 3) Vaishya and
- 4) ‘Sevavarti’.

Braahmagnyaa – means knower of Brahman who pursues knowledge. Kshatriya is one who provides protection. Vaishya with Agriculture or Business as their occupation and finally, Sevagrati – is service provider one who works for society.

According to Bhagawad Geeta, what is expected from these people in four respective categories? In the first case, Gnyaan – knowledge, this requires control of the senses, ‘Tapas’ – Penance, Purity of body and mind, forgiveness, simplicity, spiritual knowledge, worldly knowledge, sciences and finally faith in God. Those of the second category ‘Samarkshak’ are, valour, brilliance, patience and alertness, fighting sincerely for Dharma, generosity and good governance. The vaishya is required to attend agriculture, tending to animals, business and trade and manufacture good needed by the society. The services category people are required to necessary skills to attend to the services required for the families and society in general. Brhad Aaranyaka calls this category of people ‘Samaaj Poshak’, supporters of the society, engaged society, engaged in small and village industries.

Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta says further clearly and firmly,

‘Swe Swe Karmani Abhiratah Samsiddhim Labhate Narah |
Swa Karma Nirastah Siddhim Yathaa Vindati tat Shrunu ||’
(18.45)

‘स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥’ (१८.४५)

It means, performing one’s actions according to ‘Swadharma’ – duty, with full involvement, necessarily leads to success in one’s life. Because,

‘Yataha Pravruttir Bhutaanaam Yena Sarvam Idam Tatam |
Swakarmanaa Tam Abhyarcha Siddhim Vindati Maanavah’ ||]
(18.46)

‘यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥’ (१८.४६)

The first element ‘ ‘Aadi Tatva’ – ‘Paramaatma’, from whom this universe has arisen, and who pervades it completely, by offering self-duty and total devotion to Him, one earns the supreme success- ‘Siddhi’!

Well known journalist, Shri G. V. Ketkar is of the opinion that the verse 46th of 18th adhyaaya of Bhagawad Geeta contains the acme of Geeta’s teaching. This message of Geeta is meant for the entire Humanity, for its welfare and progress. It inspires us all to offer our service for human welfare. It puts before us the integral philosophy, which is contained in this above quoted verse 46th of 18th adhyaaya.

Gnyaandev also assures as quoted below:

‘Tayaan Sarvaatmaka Ishwaraa | swakarma Kusumaanchi Viraa |
Pujaa Keli Hoy Apaaraa | Toshaa Laagi ||’ (18.197)

‘तेयां सर्वात्मकां ईश्वरा | स्वकर्मकुसुमांची वीरा |
पूजा केली होय अपारा तोषालागी ||’ (१८.१९७)

Earlier Gnyaandev has also said,

‘Arjunaa Jo Yaapari | To Vihita Karma Swayem Kari |
To Mokshachya Alla Dwaari | Paithaa Hoya ||’ (18.396)

In a later _____, he assures us,

‘Aga Je Vihitaa | Tei Ishwaraache Mangoataa |
Mhananuni Keliyaa Nibhraanta | Saanpadech To ||’ (18.911)

It is necessary to note that:

‘He Vihita Karma Pandavaa | Aapulaa Anaanya Bolaavaa |
Aani Hechi Param sewaa | Maja Sarvaatmkaachi ||’ (18.906)

Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta in the second half of the 18th adhyaaya, says specifically how, one should follow ‘swa kartavya’, one’s duty with sincerity and correctly. ‘Guna Karma Vibhaga shaha’ says the Geeta; which means according to the merits the action, and which are enjoined on us in the interest of the society should be accomplished even if it is difficult. To indulge in other’s work just because, it is easier or pleasant to perform, in the end, clearly injurious to ourselves and others.

‘Shreyaan Swadharmo Vigunah | Paradharmaat Swanutisthataat |
Swadharme Nidhanam Shreyaha | Para Dharmo Bhayaavahah ||’
(3.35)

In short, Bhagawaan says, everyone should follow his own Swadharma, his own duty with sincerity and accurately throughout his life. This very advice Bhagawaan has given to Arjuna in the same words , in the 3rd Aadhyaaya, verse 35 (3.35).

‘Swabhaav Niyatm Karma | Kurvan Na AApnoti Kilbhisham | |....’
(18.47)

‘स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन् न आप्नोति किल्बिषम् ।’ (१८.४७)

If we attend to our ‘Kartavya’ – responsibility for action (many and varied), then the ‘Karma Vipaaak’ does not accrue to us, nor harm us. This is the promise Bhagawaan gives emphatically to every one of us in the 18th adhyaaya of Geeta.

Bhagawaan then proceeds to describe the person who is ‘Gnyaan nishtha’ – emphasizes ‘Gnyaan’ or ‘Aatma Gnyaan’ – Knowledge of the ‘Self’, one’s own ‘Self’ in this 18th adhyaaya, from Verse 51 to 57. But before that, in a few verses, He has clarified some aspects of the philosophic background. The devotee who is detached, with appropriate behavior, greedless, and who has put aside fully any desire for fruits, is a ‘Naishkarmaya’ – a person truly devoid of Karma. He does not suffer any ‘Karma Vipaaak’ – adverse effects of any of his actions. Thereafter, he attains full understanding of his own, ‘Self’ – becomes ‘Aatma Gnyaani’, ‘Samatva Yogi’ in 6th adhyaaya, ‘Gnyaani Bhakta’ in 12th adhyaaya, ‘Trigunaatita’ in 14th adhyaaya, which are all similar to these.

So what and how is this ‘Gnyaana-Nishth’? What are his characteristics?

He is ‘Vishuddh Bhdhi’ – has purity of Mind; (18.51), is ‘Dhyaana Yogi’ – a Meditation Yogi (18.52). He has developed the treasure of divine virtues; (18.53) , He has experienced Equanimity and is a science devotee of Bhagawaan; (18.54), He is a treasure of Gnyaan – Vignyaan combined with Unity with the Divine, (18.55), He has combined Bhakti with Nishkam Karmayoga (18.56), These are the seven characteristics of a ‘Gnyaan – Nishtha’.

‘Brahma Butah Prasannaatma Na Shochati Na Kaankshati |
Samah Sarva Bhutesh Mad Bhaktim Labhate Paraam | |’(18.54)

‘ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥’ (१८.५४)

Such a person, who has himself become like the Brahma, is happy in all situations and times, and he does not crave for anything, nor is he unhappy. He is a science devotee of God and is equal to all beings. Such a person is true ‘Gnyaani’. Shri Gnyaandev, has described how Bhagawaan feels about such a gnyaani person:

‘Swakarmaachaaa Chokhouli | Maja Pujaa Karuni Bhali |
Tene Prasaade Aakali | Gnyaana Nishthetan | |’ (18.1247)

Such a person is Nishkam Karma Yogi. He is equal to all. Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta considers samtva yogi person as nearest and next only to God due to his attitude of equality to all beings. ‘Samatva’ attitude results in Saamyaa Yoga which is indispensable for attaining God-Realization, ‘Ishwar sharana’ in this world. For an aspirant of ‘Parmaarth’ – the highest spiritual attainment, performing one’s actions with Devotion rooted in Knowledge is indispensable.

Bhagawaan says further, ‘O, Partha, do not be a victim of egoism rooted in body consciousness, seek the protection of ‘Ishwara’ – God. Later, at the end of the 18th adhyaaya, Bhagawaan clearly tells Arjuna, ‘O. Partha, you are saying, “I shall not fight in this war’, based on your ego is wrong. Your body is a part of your nature which will force you to take up arms and fight.(18.59)

In this context, Gnyaandev says,

‘Tarhi Na Zunjhe Aise | Nishtankisi Ja Maanase |
Te Prakruti Anaarise | Karavilachi ||’ (18.1285)

Gnyanaadev quotes, Bhagawaan on the previous occasions in Arjuna’s life: ‘O, Arjuna, had you not spent 12 years in the city of Viraat under disguise as Brihannalla? At that time when Prince Uttar refused to fight, who had taken up weapons but you to vanquish the Kaurava Army? (18.1295). Remember all this and stop behaving under the influence of ‘Prakruti’ – nature. Is it not best to pursue Swadharma with your inner Freedom-‘Aatma swaatanrya ‘? Instead of behaving under the influence of ‘Prakruti’ nature, take-refuge in Paramaatma, and go on with your Swadharma, Is it not the best course for you?

Here Bhagawaan draws attention of Arjuna, Tishthati
Bhraamayan sarva Bhutaani Yntraarudhaani Maayaayaa || (18.61)

‘ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यंत्रारूढानि मायया ॥’ (१८.६१)

‘Hence, ‘O, Partha, seek the protection of the Paramaatma sitting in your own heart so that by his mercy, you will get supreme peace and eternal abode in Him. I have given you the highest spiritual knowledge. Contemplate on this and then do what you think best.’ Yatha Ichhchaasi Tathaa Kuru’ (18.63)

Essentially, instead of being dependent on the confusion caused by ‘Maaya’, everyone should take help of Ishwara, the Lord of ‘Yoga-Maaya’, gain Tranquility with independence of the Aatma. Thereby he can rise to high spiritual state. If one has this attitude of being in the protection of ‘Ishwara’, he also gains the benefit of ‘Falatyaag’ – offering the results to God. It

is necessary to have devotion for God with awareness of being one with god.

This is what Gnyaandev says in a quote of Bhagawaan himself.

‘Suvarnamayi Soniya | Ye Kallol Jaisaa Paaniyaa |
Taisa Maja Dhananjaayaa | Sharana Ye Tu ||’(18.1400)

Here clearly there is the background of independence of the mind and intellect.

Achaarya Vinoba Bhave says in his ‘Gitaai Chintanika’, (pg. 223):

‘This ‘Independence of thought’ is the special feature of Vedic path of devotion. We should understand ‘Appta Vakya’ – what the ‘learned’ have said from their experience in the past, but also test the same with our own intelligence and understanding. Vedic path of devotion, gives this freedom as well as responsibility to every seeker offer Truth. It is important for us to note this fact.

There is complete unanimity on this point, in ‘Prasthaan Trayi’ – all the three standard spiritual traditions.

The philosophy of the Geeta, taught to Arjuna by Bhagawaan, is the most important ‘Secret’ of all times.

‘Other philosophies can dispel one’s ignorance, but only Geeta Philosophy reveals to us the presence of God within ourselves. ‘ Says Gnyaaneshwar (18.1240).

Again elsewhere in the 18th adhyaaya Bhagawaan says to Arjuna, ‘O, Partha, listen carefully this most important secret that I am revealing to you. You are my most dear devotee. That is why I am repeating this again, for your benefit, for the upliftment of your soul – ‘Aatmodhaar’; so listed to it

carefully. Leave aside all other paths and study the Geeta with total attention. Then come to Me., knowing me as 'Parameshwara' – the highest God! Perform all actions with the attitude of 'Fala – Tyaag' – offering the results to me. Attend to your Swadharma, so that, there is no danger of adverse effects of any of your actions. You will be free from unhappiness and gain 'Aatmananda' – eternal spiritual happiness. Bhagawaan says,

'.... Aham twaam Sarva Paapebhyo Mokshyishyaami Maa Shuchah || (18.66).

... 'अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥' (१८.६६)

Then Bhagawaan says – 'O, Partha, do not share this most secret doctrine with those who have no idea of the importance of this Geeta Shastra as well as who do not have any devotion.

The reason is that this is the correct philosophy, but very few know its importance and greatness. Only the true devotees know it! Shri Gnyaandev says:

'He Geeta Naam Vikhyaata | Sarva Vangmayaache Mathita ||
Aatma Jene Hastagata | ratna Hoye ||' (18.1323)

'Tari Tunvaa He Je Partha | Geeta Shastra Labhale Ashthaa ||'
(18.486)

Bhagawaan says further: 'O, Partha, if you share this great secret doctrine I have explained to you, with other devotees, then their devotion will also keep increasing so that they will also be united with Me. In this whole universe, there is none whom I like more than one who spreads the knowledge contained in this philosophy of Geeta! This Geeta shastra is the sacred dialogue of Dharma, between you and Me. Everyone

should celebrate it as a ‘Gnyaan Yagnya’ regularly on a fixed schedule.

‘Gnyaan Yagnya means – to study Geeta regularly, with deep thinking on its meaning’

Achaarya Vinoba Bhave in ‘Geetai Chintanika’ (p. 226)

Bhagawaan asks Arjuna, ‘O, Partha, did you hear with due attention, what I told you now? Are you now clear in your mind and free from ignorance and confusion, about the meaning of Geeta and your own Dharma? This question put to Dhananjaya, by Bhagawaan is highly important. Because, the whole purpose of ‘Geeta shastra’ is to clear the confusion caused by ‘Moha’ – Agnyaana, and attachment in the mind of Arjuna and through him in the mind of all mankind!

Arjuna promptly replies, ‘yes, Bhagawaan Shri Krishna, the confusion caused by ignorance and attachment, has been fully cleared by your grace. I am now fully aware of my duty/ ‘kartavya Karma’ and ‘Swadharma’. Now I shall carry out my ‘Kartavya Karma’ – duty. (I shall fight this Dharmya Yuddha).

‘Nashto Mohah Smrutir Ladhaa Twat Prasaadat Mayaa ‘Achuta’ |
Sthito Asmi Gata Sandehah Karishye Vachanam tava ||’18.73)

‘नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥’ (१८.७३)

The word ‘Achuuta’ used by Arjuna here, to address Shri Krishna is also significant. (Achuta means ‘flawless, constant, and free of deviation’.) He , ‘Achuta’, completely cleared the cob webs of confusion in the mind of Arjuna. Similarly by the grace of God ‘Ahankaar’ – egoism in the mind of Devotee is also removed. He clearly knew now that ‘I am only ‘Nimitta’ – a tool’ in the hands of God! Truly by the grace

of Bhagawan, upon hearing the complete 'Geeta gnyaan' – Knowledge of Geeta, Arjuna received the treasure trove of the three and a half components of Geeta like the those of ;'Omkaara'. These are 'Moha – Naash' – destruction of ignorance, 'Aatma smurti' – Recognition of aatmaa, becoming a 'Sthita Pragnya' – anchored in intellect, and 'taking refuge in God'! In the 2nd adhyaaya of Geeta it is mentioned, 'To forget who 'I' am, and what my duty is, amounts to 'Sarva naash' – total destruction!

(.... Sammohat Smruti Vibhramah |
Smruti Bramshaat Buddhi Naasho || Buddhi Naashaat
Pranashyati || (2.63)

By the grace of Bhagawaan, Arjuna recognized his own 'Self'; own 'Aatma' and his 'Duty'. Thus in fact, the science of Geeta came to fruition!

Thereafter, Sanjay who had seen the whole episode by his television faculty, was overjoyed and proclaimed the praises of Geeta, and its importance. He has also passed on a summary and the exact meaning and conclusion of the Geeta. In a sense, the first student of Geeta Shastra is Arjuna while first devotee is Sanjaya! Sanjay said, 'I am truly blessed because I have witnessed the extraordinary dialogue between Bhagawaan Shri Krishna and the best of students, Arjuna. It was possible for me to do so by the grace of Shri Vyassa. Expressing profusely his feelings, Sanjay said, 'O, King, Dhritarashtra, What shall I say? As I recall again and again, this extraordinary sacred dialogue and particularly the 'Vishwa Roop Darshan', I feel highly elated, and my hair stand erect! Sacred feelings overflow in my heart and mind. It is truly my great good fortune that I was able to hear this Geeta Shastra from the vibhuti no less than Bhagawaan Shri Krishna !

Further he said, 'O, King, I feel sure that wherever Yogeshwar Krishna and Dhanurdhara Arjuna are, there follow 'Shree' – universal welfare, 'Saatvik Vijay', spiritual benefit. These two together constitute 'Abhyudaya. Together with these, 'Vibhuti' – presence of Bhagawaan in the heart of all beings and 'Dhruvaa Niti' deep sense of humanity constitute 'Nihashreyas'. This is my firm conviction.

With heartfelt devotion Sanjay said:

'Yatra Yogeshwaraah Krishno Yatra Partha Dhanurdharah |
Tatra Shrir Vijayo Bhutir Dhruvaa Nitir Matir Mama ||' (18.78)

'यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥' (१८.७८)

This concluding Samaarop' 'समारोप' of Bhagawad Geeta is extremely important.

According to Sant Gnyaaneshwar, in this one verse contains the essence of Bhagawad Geeta and the whole Mahabharata. (18.1660). describing the greatness of Geeta shastra, Gnyaaneshwar quote Bhagawaan:-

'Aishaa Bhaktaalayi Chokhati | Geetaa Ratnesharu Haa Pratishti |
Mag Maaziya Samvassati | Tukasi Jagi ||' (18.1509)

And again:

'Ki He Geeta Saptashati | Mantra Pratipaadhya Bhagawati |
'Moha' Mahishaa Mukti | Aanandali Ase ||'
- Gnyananeshari (18.1666)

Hence we can say with confidence, that Mother Geeta teaches us how, we can free our mind from 'Moha' – temptation, and 'Swa-Kartavya Paalan' – to discharge our duty.

Similarly we learn from Geeta, the source of our happiness and inspires us towards the welfare of all mankind. This is the great teaching of Mother Geeta.

----- The End -----

समाप्त