

ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ INTERPRETATION SUMMARY

Chapter 4: Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga

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The Yoga of Dharma: Awakening of an Ancient Wisdom

The 4th chapter of the Bhagavadgītā is the **Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsa-Yoga - The Yoga of Knowledge and disciplines of Action and Knowledge**

The session began with the offering of prayers to the gurupaprampara followed by the lighting of the lamp..

Due to the grace of Bhagavān we all have the fortune of reading and learning the Gītā. This could be due to the 'good deeds' collected in our past life or this life itself or it could be due to the good deeds of our ancestors or it could be due to the benevolent gaze of great saints resting on us, that we all have taken it upon ourselves to read, listen and understand the Gītā and also implement it in our lives.

We have been fortunate enough to elevate our lives by implementing and experiencing the beauty of the Bhagavad-Gītā. This would not have been possible without the benevolence of Bhagavān. Many saints and great men of wisdom have often stated that there is no other sacred scripture that is as socially relevant, beneficial and easily adaptable as the Gītā. The more we study it and dwell upon it, we realise that it is a vast treasure which provides us with new insights that are relevant to our day to day activities.

While some scriptures talk about the welfare of either the paraloka or the earth, the Gītā talks about the welfare of both the *paraloka* and the *Bhuloka* (the earthly plane and those beyond it)

This chapter is about - **Yoga of Knowledge and Disciplines of Action and Knowledge.**

We learnt about the third chapter in the past few weeks. Today we will dwell on the fourth chapter. The fourth chapter is an appendix of third chapter. When Bhagavān began speaking about Karma-Yoga, Arjuna posed a query in the 36th Shloka of the third chapter,

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ 36॥

Arjuna asked: Why is a person impelled to commit Pāpa (actions against Dharma), even unwillingly, as if

by force, O descendent of *Vrishni* (Krishna)?

This query was of vital importance, and so Bhagavān did not avoid it. Just as a father who while teaching some thing important to his son is posed with a question on Covid by his son; does not dismiss it as irrelevant but goes on to answer it and returns to the topic that he was originally explaining.

So also Bhagavān responded when Arjuna poses a query as it is more valid and is more relevant to us than it was to Arjuna.

We are all under the belief that we're Sāttvika people who read the Gītā, follow the diktats of the gurus, observe our Dharma, perform the *Naam Japa*, *Dhyāna*, *Pujarchana* (chanting, Meditation, Worship) and even try to meditate on Bhagavān. Yet, our misdeeds, or Pāpa increase, and we're not able to fathom why it is so? None of us want or desire to perform any wrong acts. Yet, we end up committing them.

Arjuna had the same predicament and wanted to know who it was that was so forcefully pushing to perform a sinful act. So Bhagavān responded and gave him the answer from Shlokas, 37 to 40. HE said that Kama, Krodha and Rajogunas are responsible for this. When this question was asked, there ensued a slight deviation from the topic that Bhagavān was talking about.

So Bhagavān brought Arjuna back to the topic he was elaborating on, as he considered Karma-Yoga to be the most important of all. Then, to bring Arjuna back to the original topic. Bhagavān had to re-establish it. Yet, to do so he had to manifest HIS *Divyaswaroopa*, Divine Form

Therefore, the fourth chapter has been rightly referred to as the biodata of Bhagavān. HE manifested his superhuman power and explained to Arjuna all about Himself. This wonderful chapter is therefore a treasure of Yogeśvara manifestation where Bhagavān also referred to the importance of yajñas and Gurus. There are many more such gems in this chapter...

4.1

śrībhagavānuvāca imaṃ(m) vivasvate yogaṃ(m), proktavānahamavyayam, vivasvānmanave prāha, manurikṣvākave'bravīt. 4.1

Śrī bhagvān said: I revealed this imortal yoga to Vivasvān(sun-god); Vivasvān conveyd it to Manu(his son); and Manu Imparted it to his son Ikṣvāku.

Bhagavān said, HE described this indestructible Yoga to Surya who in turn told his son Manu and Manu conveyed it to Ikṣvāku of the lineage of Raghus. The first word a '**Imam**' which is a pronoun meaning "this" is amazing. It is not possible to give multiple meanings to nouns but pronouns can be taken to refer to many things. Therefore, when many saints gave the meaning to the word '**Imam**' it caused many debates.

The debates were healthy and interesting. Some said the word a '*imam*' meant 'this' while others said it referred to to Karma-Yoga. Some countered it by saying that it would refer to the Bhakti Yoga because Bhagavān speaks about Devotion. Few others said that Bhagavān is a Jñāna Yogi therefore, the word **imam** referred to Jñāna-yoga. Thus, many Acharyas and Saints came up with different meanings for the word '*Imam*' based on their ideologies and understanding.

Yogeśvara said, "is Avinashi Jñāna". The indestructible Jñāna,

But which Avinashi Jñāna was Bhagavan referring to?

In the process of trying to solve this, the various Acharyas and Jñānis said that the Avinashi Jñāna refers to

the Karma-Yoga and the Jñāna-yoga, while some said it referred to the Bhakti Yoga; but when we think about it by ourselves it dawns on us that Parameśvara is referring to Karma-Yoga. HE says that he described the Avinashi yoga to Surya. Vivasvān or Surya was one of the 12 sons of Aditi. Surya conveyed the words of Bhagavān to his son Manu.

Before Brahma ji created the human being or Manushya there were only five jatis. They were the Devatās, the Daivas, the Yakshas, the Gandharvas and the Kinnaras. The son of Brahma ji was Manu. The children of Manu are referred to as Manushya. We were born to Manu and therefore are referred to as Manushya. Bhagavān stated that he gave this Jñāna to Surya dev so does that mean earlier to this there was no Jñāna? Surya is eons old so does it mean that there was no Jñāna prior to this? This is not so. One has to analyse it properly.

A day of Brahma contains 14 Manus. Satyuga, Dwapara yuga, Treta yuga and Kali yuga are the chatur yugas. The 4 ages. We are now in the Kaliyuga. Prior to this was the Dwapara which came after the Treta yuga which followed Satyuga. 4320000 years forms one Chatur yuga. 71 such Chatur yuga's form one Manu. 4320000 x 71 is called a kalpa. And every kalpa has a Manu.

One day of Brahma has 14 such Manvantars and similarly one night of Brahma are 100 years of his life. The we are living in is the 7th Manvantar. Each Manvantar has its own Manu, who is the progenitor of the Manushyas of that Manvantar. The current Manu is the 7th one which is referred to as Vivasvān Manu. Six of them have already transpired. Those which will occur after this are referred to as the Sanvanya Manu.

Bhagavān gave Jñāna to Surya who in turn gave it to Manu. Does that mean that the knowledge did not exist before this? One must think it through properly and not jump to hasty conclusions.

A story was illustrated to explain this further,

Once upon a time a poet sang Raag Savari on the stage and was profoundly praised. One of the fans went upto him and asked him if he had sung it earlier or was it the first time. The poet replied that he had sung the same raaga 40 years earlier. Just because he had sung the raaga 40 years earlier, it does not mean that the raaga had not existed earlier to that. The raga is thousands of years old.

Bhagavān first instructed this knowledge to Vivasvān, the sun-god, who then instructed Manu. Manu in turn gave these divine instructions to Ikṣvāku

Thus, Bhagavān was referring to that knowledge which has been existing since time immemorial. One has to understand the context of speech before drawing conclusions.

There once was an antique shop. An old customer came to the shop and asked the son of the shopkeeper if he had anything new. The shopkeeper's son said that the person had come to the wrong shop as it was shop that sold old antiquated items and not anything "new"! The old customer told him that he had misunderstood his words. He wanted to know if any item had been newly put up for sale since his previous visit to the shop.

This is what HE was trying to tell us that Surya gave this knowledge to his son Manu who in turn gave it to his son Ikshvaku and this knowledge was handed down generations in this way.

Thus, the knowledge was eternal and ancient, it just that it was again being talked about

4.2

**evam(m) paramparāprāptam, imaṃ(m) rājarṣayo viduḥ,
sa kāleneha mahatā, yogo naṣṭaḥ(ph) parantapa. 4.2**

Thus transmitted in succession from father to son, Arjuna, this Yoga remained known to the Rājaraṣis

is (royal sages). Through long lapse of time, this Yoga got lost to the world.

Here, Bhagavān addressed Arjuna as a *Tapasvi*. HE explained that the knowledge HE was about to impart, this Yoga was received in disciplic succession and the saintly kings understood it through that process, but after a prolonged lapse of time, it almost become lost to the world.

Thus, the system of disciplic succession, or guru-paramparā, is an ancient and reliable tradition that ensures the continuation of the sampradāya, or lineage. By it, Divine knowledge has been preserved to the present day. Whenever this line is broken, Śrī Bhagavān again arranges for it to manifest in the material world.

Bhagavān addressed Arjuna as Rajarshi. Arjuna wanted to become Saṁnyāsi and live in the jungle, begging alms; such was his immense dilemma regarding this war. But Bhagavān said that Arjuna was going through a wrong thought process. HE reminded Arjuna of his illustrious lineage, which had great personalities like Manu, Ikṣvaku, Valmiki, Harishchandra, Bharat, Pandu; all these belonged to the rajarshi succession and Arjuna was now part of this great lineage. All these person despite being grihastas were referred to as rajarshi, as they had mastered the technique of controlling their senses and also had performed their kingly duties diligently. Hence, they were called Sage Kings.

It is not necessary to live in the the forest and adorn yourself with saffron coloured clothes to become a Saṁnyāsi. One can be a family man and yet be like a Saṁnyāsi if one maintains "**Sammatva**" equanimity in his outlook. A person who doesn't consider himself to be the doer and goes about performing his duties with a detached attitude is a true Rajarshi. HE further stated that all these illustrious personalities mentioned here, were those who attained Mokṣa despite being *grihastas* or family men. HE reminded Arjuna that he belonged to that illustrious lineage.

During the Satya Yuga, many people engaged in *tapas* (*severe austerities*). Both good and evil minded performed it. Nowadays, one does not come across these things. In the next Age, the Dwapara yuga, *Tapas* had lost its sheen due to lowering of societal morality and spiritual power.

Each era has its own compulsions, the mode of worship and seeking of Reality to changes its form.

For example, In the age of the Buddha, there was a lot of focus on renunciation; Many gave up their karmas/duties and became *bhikshuks*, or Monks. One could see them everywhere. This created a totally different ambience.

Thus, different aspects acquire importance and then they fade out.

During the era of Bhakti movement, people resorted to *Naam japam* or Name chanting which was not common seen in other ages.

In the present times, Goenka ji who established the Geeta press is regarded as a Grihasta Saint. I believe that we are percieving a enlightened Prime Minister who will in future be referred to as a Rajarshi. He who has lived 40 yrs of his life like a Monk and follows strict fasts, will definitely be called a Rajarshi 50 yrs hence.

4.3

**sa evāyaṁ(m) mayā te'dya, yogaḥ(ph) proktaḥ(ph) purāṇaḥ,
bhakto'si me sakhā ceti, rahasyaṁ(m) hyetaduttamam. 4.3**

The same ancient Yoga, which is the supreme secret, has this day been imparted to you by Me,

because you are My devotee and friend.

Arjuna was puzzled. He asked that this knowledge was extremely great as it was given by Bhagavān to Surya Dev who gave it to Manu who in turn gave it to Ikshvaku and so on. He was perplexed as to why such an ancient and secretive knowledge was being passed on to him? Bhagavān responded by saying that Arjuna was no ordinary person. He was HIS devotee as well as his close friend. That is why he was given the knowledge which was supremely confidential and ancient.

Arjuna says that Bhagavān was fooling him. The timescales did not match!! HE was just 4 or 5 yrs older than him? How was this possible?

4.4

arjuna uvāca
aparaṁ(m) bhavato janma, paraṁ(ñ) janma vivasvataḥ,
kathametadvijānīyāṁ(n), tvamādaḥ proktavāniti. 4.4

Arjuna said: You are of recent origin, while the birth of Vivāsvata dates back to remote antiquity. How, then, am I to believe that You imparted this Yoga at the beginning of the creation?

Here, he was thinking of HIS form that stood in front of him. Arjuna was questioning "Śrī Kṛṣṇa", considering His previous statement to be impossible. "You were born recently (**aparam**), and Sūrya, the deity of sun, was born long ago (**param**), so how can I believe that You instructed him in this yoga in ancient times?"

Arjuna reminded HIM, "Your birth is recent compared to that of Sūrya who has been around since ages. I find it difficult to understand and digest that you have given this (as per You) confidential knowledge to Sūrya Deva. You are only 89 yrs of age; yet, claim that you have educated Sūrya who is an ancient! How is that ever possible?"

Yogeśvara was amused at this outburst, Arjuna was thinking in terms of HIS appearance, which was only limited and thus, HE gently rebuked him.

4.5

śrībhagavānuvāca
bahūni me vyatītāni, janmāni tava cārjuna,
tānyahaṁ(m) veda sarvāṇi, na tvaṁ(m) vettha parantapa. 4.5

Śrī Bhagavan said : Arjuna, you and I have passed through many births; I remember them all; you do not remember, O chastiser of foes.

Parameśvara reminded Arjuna that, "You and I have had multiple births. I am not saying that I (in my current form) gave Sūrya Deva this knowledge in My current birth. I have taken multiple births. You are not aware of all those, but I know about all of them."

"I remember everything while you remember nothing! You don't know many things. You have forgotten the earlier incidents. If you have forgotten it, it is because I have made you forget everything. I have given you the ability to forget your past lives. If I had not done this, it would have been extremely difficult for you to survive."

We hardly give a thought to the benefits of the fading of memories with time; **Its importance could be gauged through the following story...**

There once lived a merchant called Ramprasad who was extremely rich and had a flamboyant life in his village. He was extremely virtuous and would diligently cater to any sages who came to the village. He would arrange for discourses but he was distressed about the fact that he did not have any children. For this, he had consulted many doctors and taken many treatments yet, he had not been successful in getting children.

One day a very proficient Sadhu came to the village. Ramprasad in accordance to his nature, took great care of the Sadhu and served him well. Many days later, the sadhu said, "Sethji, you are very rich and have served me so well. Yet, you seem to be troubled by something; your face reflects your distress within. Please tell me what is troubling you so much?"

The merchant who had suppressed his feelings for so long poured out all his sorrows the moment the Sadhu spoke in this manner. The saint was a *Siddhapurusha* and therefore, he urged the merchant to express his sorrow and tell him the reason for it so that he could help him. When the merchant revealed the reason for his distress the Mahatma told him not to worry and gave him some remedies like performing *pujas* (worship) and following a strict regimen, he instructed the merchant's wife too and promised him that he would beget a son within the year.

The merchant followed through with the instructions and sure enough, by the end of that year he was blessed with a son. Ecstatic! the merchant celebrated the birth of his son in a grand manner! But, Alas! As luck would have it, within 3 days, his dear wife expired on account of excessive bleeding during birth and left him with a little infant to take care of. Undeterred, he cared for the infant like a mother would and brought him up very well.

Fate was not kind though...the boy kept crying throughout the first year and a half. He hardly ever smiled or laughed. This troubled the merchant. He consulted various doctors and it was discovered that the little boy had a degenerative disease in his spine which caused him so much agony. The merchant was devastated when the doctor further told him that there was no cure for this condition and the boy would never be able to walk. He urged the doctor to do something. He said that he had enough money to spend. But the doctor said that a cure had not yet been discovered for such conditions. He said that he could at most give the child some medication to relieve the pain. So the desolate merchant returned to his village and took good care of the child.

18 years passed by with the merchant taking care of every single need of his child. When the boy was 18 years of age, the doctor called the merchant and informed him of a groundbreaking discovery that he had heard of! He told him that a doctor in London had found a cure for the condition that the boy was suffering from. He further said that he had sent all the details to that doctor in London who was now prepared to operate upon this boy to help him recover. He advised the merchant to leave for London immediately. In all these years, the merchant had spent hordes of money in treatment for his son. He had even neglected his business. He therefore, did not have much money left with him. Yet, the merchant without further delay made all required arrangements. He sold his property and his business. He went along with his son to London for the operation. The operation was successful and the boy was able to walk after a few months.

The merchant returned home with his son and now felt relieved that his son was independent and could walk. He felt very happy. After a few months the merchant felt it was time for his son to get married. So with the help of a few pundits he found a virtuous bride for his son and got him married to her. The merchant was extremely happy. Eventhough he did not have a lot of money, he organised a feast for the entire village and celebrated with great joy and gusto.

On the sixth night after the wedding the merchant heard the bride knocking urgently on his door, screaming out for his help and telling him that his son was not responding to her or saying anything. He

went to check what was up and found the boy lying senseless on his bed. Immediately, he went to call the doctor. The doctor checked the boy and checked his pulse. With great sorrow he told the merchant that the boy was no more and that he was dead. he had suffered a heart attack and nobody could save him now. The merchant was shocked he could neither speak nor cry he did not know what to do. He wanted to cry out loudly but he just could not shed even a tear.....

His life seem to appear like a huge mountain of sorrows. With a heavy heart he performed the last rites of his son and while returning home, he heard that the sadhu who had helped him acquire a son was now back in town after 19 years. He had been travelling through out the country and hence could not visit the town earlier.

The merchant went to him immediately and fell at his feet and cried his heart out. The sadhu consoled him and asked him who he was. The merchant reminded him of how he had advised the merchant and his wife with remedies to help them acquire a son. The puzzled sadhu asked if did not get a son. The merchant went on to tell that he did indeed get a son but the son was disabled and after years of care had managed to recover due to the operation that he underwent. He further in formed the sadhu that he had got his son married but unfortunately, his son suffered a heart attack and passed away just 6 days after marriage!!

While relating his tale, he cursed both the Sadhu and Paramesvara! he accused the Sadhu of giving him the blessing of a son, when he knew that he was not entitled to have one. He demanded to know why the Sadhu had been so inconsiderate and had put him through so much of trouble!!

The Sadhu also was terribly moved by what the merchant said and was troubled at his distress. So he closed his eyes in Dhyāna to figure out why the merchant was being troubled in this manner. When he opened his eyes it seemed like the Sadhu was burning with rage; his eyes were a flaming red and with a loud voice he said, "how dare you pretend before me you pāpi! Tell me what your name is!!" He thundered!! The merchant as well as the villagers became astounded by this the behaviour of the sadhu.

Everyone felt that the sadhu need not have yelled at the merchant who had suffered so much pain throughout his life and had just lost his son. But the force and the intensity of the Sadhus voice affected the merchant and he hesitantly said that his name was Ramprasad. The sadhu enraged, yelled at him, "liar you are name is not Ramprasad! your name is Suresh." On hearing the name Suresh, The merchant was astounded!

He wondered how the sadhu got to know this name as he himself had forgotten every thing associated with that name. This was a name that he used when he was a young man in his earlier village. No one knew about his past life he had very successfully hidden his old identity so he was wondering how did this he was wondering how this Sadhu got to know about his past. But now, he recalled his entire past.

The past comes forth

In his younger days, he was named Suresh; he was the son of a farmer who grew and cultivated turmeric. This merchant would work in his father's farm. He had a friend called Ramesh, who was the son of a boat builder. He was extremely well off as he would build large vessels and rent them out to sailors who would sail abroad. Ramesh and Suresh were very good friends. One day Suresh said to Ramesh, "I have a large turmeric farm and you make huge boats. We sell our wares everywhere."

"Why don't we get together and start a business together? "Let's travel by your boat to foreign countries and sell the turmeric that I grow over here. This will give us a lot of profits.!"

Ramesh agreed and they loaded the next harvest of turmeric onto one of the ships that he had made and sailed to the Arab countries. They sold the turmeric for a considerable profit. Suresh suggested that instead of carrying back the money, they should invest the money in dry fruits, which are not available in India. They could sell these dry fruits on returning to India.

Ramesh agreed and they purchased many dry fruits and brought it to India. They sold these dry fruits for a huge profit. They had earned lakhs of rupees in just one trip, so they now decided to continue this scheme of selling turmeric and bringing back Dry fruits to sell in India. Now instead of growing the turmeric themselves they started buying turmeric from other farmers and taking it to the Arab countries. They sold the turmeric for a considerable profit and invested the profit in Dry fruits to be brought back to India. On the way back, Ramesh fell seriously ill!!

On reaching the shores of India, Suresh immediately ran to locate a doctor. He found a lady doctor and urged her to take a look at her at his friend. He told the doctor that Ramesh had been suffering for the past 10 to 12 days with very high fever and was now extremely delirious.

When she agreed to check on Ramesh; Suresh, who now had vicious thoughts coursing through his head, told her to inject him with poison that would kill him. The doctor refused to do this so he offered her a large bribe of Rs.50,000. Overcome with greed, the doctor agreed to inject Ramesh with poison. Ramesh died and now Suresh became the owner of all the money that was earned over the two trips that they had made abroad. He performed the last rites of his friend and collected all his money and shifted to another village. There he changed his entire identity. He change his name to Ramprasad. he started a new life afresh in the village. Nobody got to know about his past.

He conceded so well that he himself forgot all about it. But today when the sadhu forcefully demanded to know, if his name was Suresh every single detail came back to him. He had forgotten this incident as if it had been an incident from his past life. But the words of the sadhu brought the memory of that incident back into his mind he started trembling.

The sadhu angrily said that this is not an ordinary matter and it was not the result of the wrongdoings of his ancestors; It was the result of his own erroneous actions. he further said that his Son was none other than Ramesh himself who had come to avenge his death. Being born and invalid he ensured that every single pie that Suresh had earned was spent on Ramesh and his treatment. Ensured that Suresh suffered throughout his life. After he had made sure that Suresh had spent every bit of wealth on Ramesh in his treatment, he died and left him. The merchant was astounded and was amazed at the ways and justice of Bhagavān.

At this point, the merchant said that he accepted his punishment but was puzzled as to why the young girl who was the bride of his son had to suffer so much. She was newly married. In fact she's been barely married for six days and was already rendered a widow. She had a whole life ahead of her which she had to spend in widowhood. He found this extremely unfair. The Sadhu looked at the young bride and said that she was the lady Doctor Who had accepted the bribe from the merchant and had injected Ramesh with poison.

We all have to face the consequences of deeds both good and bad. According to psychology we have circles of associations with us; one is the circle of 10 people and the other is a circle of who we are associated with. These 10 people comprise our close relatives like parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts etc. We all have a significant role in our lives. Whatever they do for us or we do for them has to be accounted for. And then there are the other hundred people with whom we interact with for various transactions. These are the people with whom we have had some transaction either good or bad in our past life and which have to be accounted for.

If the merchant could remember that the person born as his son was indeed Ramesh, would he take care of Ramesh so selflessly? He would never be able to do so. If Bhagavān had not made us forget our past life it would have been extremely difficult for us to survive. The memory of our past deeds and those of others would make it extremely difficult for us to conduct ourselves sensibly. That is why HE has given us the ability to forget everything. There are a few Yogis who do remember the past. But, they also have complete control over their senses and are able to perceive things objectively. We do not have such abilities and are therefore given the gift of forgetfulness.

Yogeśvara said, "Arjuna, you cannot remember. But I remember". This ability to forget is essential for human beings. When we travel by train, we meet people who become friendly with us and offer us food etc. This is definitely a transaction from our past life. Whenever we undertake some activity to which we associate our ownership, it becomes a transaction that has to be accounted for. One cannot avoid such activities. But those who aim at moving ahead the adhyathmic way have to control their senses and actions.

Parameśvara told Arjuna that he does not know any of them, but HE is aware of everything.

From the 6th to the 10th shloka, Bhagavān revealed the mystic knowledge that he had not revealed to anyone else. This Bhagavān does not reveal this to the Jñānis but does so to the Bhakta.

Swami Ramsukhdas ji Maharaj has termed these 5 shlokas as Nithya Pathneeya panch shlok (5 shlokas for daily reading) He says that those who cannot do anything else, should read these five shlokas everyday.

4.6

**ajo'pi sannavyayātmā, bhūtānāmīśvaro'pi san,
prakṛtiṃ(m) svāmadhiṣṭhāya, sambhavāmyātmamāyayā. 4.6**

Though birthless and immortal and the Lord of all beings, I manifest Myself through My own Yogamāyā (divine potency), keeping My nature (Prakṛti) under control.

Śrī Bhagavān was explaining the tattva, or reality, of His birth

HIS body is imperishable, whereas the body of the jīva is perishable. As the Supreme Controller, HE is non-different from HIS body, and consequently, HIS quality of being both born and unborn is perfectly natural. Such a nature, which is impossible to find elsewhere, is wonderful and beyond the scope of logic and reason. Even though HE is the Supreme Controller of the jīvas, being free from the control of karma, still HE incarnates..

Bhagavān said, "Arjuna, I do not have to be born, I am indestructible, I am the Ishvara of all living beings. I manifest through my Yogamāyā. You cannot choose where you will be born, which gender you will belong to, which region you will be born in, which sect you will be born into, which economic and health status you will have. I will be the one to choose. I also choose who my parents are going to be, where I will be born, what I have to do etc. I do not emerge from the womb, I manifest myself."

Thus, HE takes birth only to manifest HIS eternal form, which is categorically distinct from the whole universe."

This being the case, one may inquire, "What is the nature of HIS body?" In response to this, Śrī Bhagavān says in the second half of this verse, "**prakṛtiṃ svām adhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmy ātmamāyayā**-"I appear through My yogamāyā potency in My original form of eternality, cognizance and bliss."

Yogeśvara discloses his manifestation and continues it right up to the 18th chapter. HE further explains why HE manifests himself in the very famous and often heard 7 th shloka.

4.7

**yadā yadā hi dharmasya, glānirbhavati bhārata,
abhyutthānamadharmaṣya, tadātmānaṁ(m) sṛjāmyaham. 4.7**

Arjuna, whenever righteousness is on the decline, unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then I body Myself forth.

Bhagavān said, "Arjuna whenever Dharma is in danger or harmed, I manifest myself among the people."

In a jail, one will find the prisoners as well as the jailer. When taking count, the jailer and the inmates are counted together. But the jailer and the inmates are not of equal status. The inmates are like servants. They have to follow the rules and regulations laid out for them. The jailer is free and can go in and out of the prison premises as and when he wishes. But the inmates are not free to walk or move around as they wish. But both the jailer and the inmates appear the same as they both are in the prison premises. When accounted for all, the jailer is also taken into account. Similarly, Parameśvara will appear like one of us when HE manifests Himself.

Manu and shataroopa performed a tapas asking for a child like Parameśvara. Bhagavān said, "A child like me will be Myself. It is not possible to for a similar child to exist. So if you want a child like me, I will come to you. Wait for me. You will become Dasarath/Kaushalya and I will manifest as Rama in Ayodhya on such and such date at such and such time."

Bhagavān said that He would make the entire environment his subordinate and then manifest himself. HE further says that he would manifest to destroy adharma and establish dharma. Both dharma and adharma are subjective and relative. They do not have a fixed definition. For example, the difference between fair and dark complexion is relative. We Indians appear fair when compared to Africans/ West Indians but appear dark when compared to the white skinned Europeans.

Valmiki ji stated,

**रामो विग्रहवान् धर्मस्साधुस्सत्यपराक्रमः।
राजा सर्वस्य लोकस्य देवानां मघवानिव।।**

Marichi had counselled Ravana against his act, he the told him it was because "Ramo Vighrahan Darmaha" meaning Bhagavān Rama is dharma incarnate" that he still alive, as HE was fully in control of HIS senses, neither harsh nor ignorant, it was foolish of him to abduct Ma Sita and she was fully protected with HIS might.

One has to protect the sadhus to protect the dharma and destroy the papis to get rid of adharma. Bhagavān says that those who control their senses, desires and longings are sadhus and not those who wear saffron clothes. The words sadhak and Sadhna come from the word sadhu. Sadhana is the process of controlling one self and one who endeavours to do so is the sadhak. The one who succeeds in controlling him/ herself is a sadhu.

The Ramcharitmanas too affirmed this in this couplet in the Baalkand,

**बिप्र धेनु सुर संत हित लीन्ह मनुज अवतार।
निज इच्छा निर्मित तनु माया गुन गो पार॥ 192॥**

Bhagavān takes the human Avataar for the Bramhanas, cows, Devatās and saints. HE transcends the 3 gunas and is beyond the Maya which reflects ignorance, along with the senses. HIS divine body manifests itself, through its own desire and not to fulfill any karmic obligations.

करहिं अनीति जाइ नहिं बरनी। सीदहिं बिप्र धेनु सुर धरनी॥
तब तब प्रभु धरि बिबिध सरीरा। हरहिं कृपानिधि सज्जन पीरा॥

These evil harm and serve injustices to the Bramhanas, cows, Devatās and the earth to such an extent that the merciful Prabhu, again and again manifests Himself in bodies to remove their pain..

We say that Bhagavān has 10 avatars or 24 avataars. That is not so. Parameśvara has countless avataars.

The Baalkand of Ramcharitmanas described it as,

हरि अनंत हरि कथा अनंता। कहहिं सुनहिं बहुबिधि सब संता॥
रामचंद्र के चरित सुहाए। कलप कोटि लागि जाहिं न गाए॥

The Hari is eternal and so are HIS stories, they are told by the sages and saints in several different forms; Yet the story of Bhagavān Rām is such that it does not end even if one is telling several *kalpas*.

This is an amazing thing. Bhagavān is always there for HIS Bhakta. HE was the robe that shielded Draupadi's honour; where Narayana became Mohini for the sake of the Devatās during the Ocean churning; Parameśvara appears any myriad forms for the sake of HIS devotees.

4.8

**paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām(m), vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām,
dharmasaṁsthāpanārthāya, sambhavāmi yuge yuge. 4.8**

For the protection of the virtuous, for the extirpation of evil-doers, and for establishing Dharma (righteousness) on a firm footing, I manifest Myself from age to age.

"To protect the sadhu purushas and to destroy the sinners, and to establish dharma properly, I will manifest in every yuga as required."

We might feel that a lot of unfairness and adharma is occurring around us and wish that Bhagavān should manifest to straighten things out for us. But this has to and will be decided by Yogeśvara.

4.9

**janma karma ca me divyam, evaṁ(m) yo vetti tattvataḥ,
tyaktvā dehaṁ(m) punarjanma, naiti māmeti so'rjuna. 4.9**

Arjuna, My birth and activities are divine. He who knows this in reality is not reborn on leaving his body, but comes to Me.

Yogeśvara stated, "Arjuna I do manifest but my birth and deeds are not ordinary ones. They are divine, wonderful and non worldly. A person who understands the very essence or tatva of this will be able to give up his worldly body and merge with me."

When Bhagavān set out on his vanavas or exile imposed upon him by Dhasharath Maharaja, HE went to Valmiki's ashram and respectfully asked the sage where HE could stay. Valmiki seeing through the guise of Bhagawan said," oh so you are pretending before me? Do you think I really do not know who you are?

Tulsidas ji stated,

राम सरूप तुम्हार, वचन अगोचर बुद्धि पर।

अविगत अकथ अपार, नेति-नेति नित निगम पाह॥

Your form is beyond mundane understanding, Oh Rām! No one can understand your actual form, for it is indescribable, nor can they go beyond it. You are which the Vedas claim to be Neyti Neyti (not this, nor that)

Tell me where can one not find you, then I'll tell you where to go".

Bhagavān pleaded with Valmiki not to reveal the truth about him.

The most amazing thing is that Ishvara hides from the Jñānis like Valmiki who try very hard to try to get Bhagavān to reveal the true identity of HIMSELF, but Bhagavān Rām refused to do so. Shabari and Arjuna were both devotees and did not make any effort. Yet, HE manifested before them.

मम दरसन फल परम अनूपा। जीव पाव निज सहज सरूपा॥

कहु रघुपति सुनु भामिनि बाता, मानउँ एक भगति कर नाता।

मम दरसन फल परम अनूपा, जीव पाव निज सहज सरूपा।।

HE told Shabari, "Suni bhagini mein Manav eka bhagathi kayanatha"

Bhagavān Rām manifested before Shabari. Even Arjuna did not ask for Yogeśvara's identity. Yet, HE manifested before them. Valmiki tried very hard. Bhagavān hides from the gyaanis but manifests willingly before the Bhaktas.

"Kaha Raghupathi suni bhamini Maanvi eka kar bhagathi kara natha"

And when a person understands this, then the person will not have anymore births. He or she will become mine and merge with me.

4.10

**vītarāgabhayakrodhā, manmayā māmupāśritāḥ,
bahavo jñānatapasā, pūtā madbhāvamāgatāḥ. 4.10**

Completely rid of attachment, fear and anger, wholly absorbed in Me, depending on Me, and purified by the penance of wisdom, many have become one with Me even in the past.

Arjuna asked, "How can this Swaroop be obtained? How can a person know you?" Bhagavān replied, "countless people have known me. Three things have to added and three have to be removed and you will know me! They are veetharaga, Bhayya , krodha. Get rid of these three"

Raag refers to the feeling me and mine- ie possessiveness about position, property, name, relations etc

Bhaya refers to the fear of losing one's possession.

Krodh refers to the anger that is the result of losing one's possessions.

If one gets rid of these three things, then one will come under the shelter and protection of Bhagawan

and merge with Bhagavān. This will lead to the person becoming pure and sacred by the benefits of Jñāna and tapas. Such person will be naturally drawn to Paramēśvara. As long as one holds on to possessions, will depend on those possessions. The person will depend on intellect, wealth, acquaintances, relatives, and so on, as the person feels that they are his or her possessions. But a person who feels a sense of belonging to HIM, will get HIS shelter and protection.

“Koi Ye vasi jo Ram rachi rakha, ko kare taraka bade trasa”

“Hamarae saath Sri Raghunath phir kisbaath ki chinta,

Charan me Rakhi Diya sar phir kids Ba’ath me chintha”

The more one rids oneself of raag, bhaya and krodh, one gets closer to Bhagawan and the closer that one gets to Bhagawan, one’s mind will merge with HIM. When this happens, the person becomes pure and sacred. This will win over HIS love and affection.

On hearing this, Arjuna asked, "How does one win over your love and affection?"

Questions:-

Sunita Tagadji

Question: As a person ages, experience also gets enhanced. Everyone will have some problem or the other. I feel that one has to face the consequences of one’s actions in that particular birth itself.

Answer: That cannot happen! we will have established a relation either good or bad with numerous people and it is not possible to clear our dues of debts of everyone. Those whose dues remain will have to be repaid and this will happen when we get connected to that person again in some other janma.

Question: We have to be careful will performing deeds in this janam?

Answer: That’s exactly what we have to do. The previous dues have to be settled by us living through them. But we can try to ensure that we don’t collect anymore negative dues. If at all we do associate with deeds, let us associate with good deeds

Question: I have another question, maushya was born to Manu. Then why are there varieties like Kinnarietc.

Answer: They are varieties or jathis which have something special.

Bajarang ji

Question: When a mad man commits a murder, our courts forgive him in view of his mental state. Is it the same in the court of Dharma?

Answer: Yes it is the same. In Karma, Bhāva has more credence than kriya. The result of the karma is identified by the associated feeling or Bhāva. What we get to see in our courts is similar to what happens in the court of Chitragupta.

Question: So when a mad person commits a crime he will not have to reap the fruits of his deeds!

Answer: If he does get the fruits of his deeds it will not be so severe as he would not be aware of what he has done.

Kamalesh ji

Question: have two questions. I have always been worshipping Bhagavān Krishna from a very young age - from 5. Or 6 yrs of age. Then I got involved in studies and activities like marriage, bearing children etc. Now since 5 to 6 yrs, I have started Gītā paath. Earlier I would worship Krishna, but nowadays I do the naama japa of Govind. At night I do the jap of "Hari om". But when I need the help of Bhagawan, I find myself uttering the name of Rama!

Answer- Why do you find it objectionable?

Question: So there is nothing objectionable in this ?

Answer- Absolutely none! We are perceiving Bhagavān in different forms or names as this I'd the limitation of our minds. For example, I could address you as the bespectacled matha, or Kamalesh didi or Kamaleshji, it does not matter as it does not change your entity. You are still the same. So whether we say Krishna or Ram or Govinda, it does not affect Bhagwan as they all refer to the same entity. If our mind is focused on Bhagavān, it does not matter what name we call HIM by. Ultimately, more than words it is the Bhāva or feeling that is important. If you have Bhagavān in your Bhāva, then the words don't carry any significance.

Kamaleshji

Question: I think it was due my past Karmas that I could not according to my wish. But now I have started worshipping according to my desire but I am not able to find a Guru to guide me? I live in Pune.

Answer:- Its like living in Gangotri and asking for the whereabouts of Ganga! Poojya Guru ji can be found in Pune itself. So you don't have to look for a guru.

Rashmiji

Question: You just now said that humans have the vismruthi shakthi or the ability to forget. But, there are a few who can recall their past life.

Answer: Yes, there a few people who can remember a bit of their past life. This could be on account of a blessing.

Question: So that is a good thing?

Answer: It's neither good nor bad. They just have that ability. Those who can recall are able to recall only bits and pieces of their past life. The Yogis on the other hand can recall their past lives and have the ability to control their feelings.

Question: You said that we are associated with two circles of persons- one comprising the 10 close ones and the other comprising 100 others. So we sometime develop very relations with some persons but after a while thoughoue feelings do not change, the other person's feelings change. Why is this so?

Answer: This does happen and will happen. It could be in account of the past life or the present life karmas.

Question: So what should we do?

Answer- As far as possible we must ensure that we're as detached as possible. We must try to be as saathvik, forgiving, seeking pardon, levelheaded, and detached as possible. What the other person thinks or feels is not in our hands.

Brijmohan Paliwalji

Question: I had read in the Geetha press Kalyan, recited by Bheeshma Pithamaha, "Om Narayan param dharma, om Narayan param tapa, om Narayan sarva devaha, om sarva Narayaa sada." When he said this the Pandavas were also there. So was he praising hagawan or was he telling them of Bhagawan's importance? I am a bit confused about this.

Answer: Throughout, Bheeshma pitamaha has been praising bhagawan and he would go to meet the Pandavas on a daily basis and would discuss about dharma with them. Many times he has sung the praise of Bhagawan. So it could mean both - praising Bhagavān as well as telling the Pandavas about HIM.

Abhilasha Bajpaiji

Question: You said that we are living in the 4 yugis and many such yugas have gone by and many are yet to come. So does that mean every time Ramayan and Mahabharata are repeated?

Answer: Yes, they are repeated and that is the reason we see slight differences in the various stories of Ramayana. They are on account of the occurrences in the different Kalpas. Some incidents do not take place in some Kalpa while they occur in the othe kalpa. Therefore w see a difference in the incidents described in Ramacharith Manas and l'amimie Ramayana.which again is different from the Kadambh Ramayana.



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You have enjoyed this vivechan writeup! In spite of intense editing and proofreading, errors of grammar, as also of omission and commission may have crept in. We appreciate your forbearance.

Jai Shri Krishna!

Compiled by: Geeta Pariwar – Creative Writing Department

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