



Shrimad Bhagavata Sandesh, Talk 14
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In the Śrīmada Bhāgavata, the messages (teachings) that have been imparted in relation to *yoga*, we are currently seeing them. We have seen the first definition in relation to *yoga* in the message which was told by Sage Kapila to his mother Devahuti.

Śrīkapila uvāca:

*etāvān eva yogena samagreṇeha yoginaḥ |
yujyate'bhimato hi artho yad asaṅgastu kṛtsnaśaḥ ||(19)
(Śrīmada Bhāgavata 3.32.27)*

The first goal to be attained through the practice of *yoga* (spiritual practices pertaining to the chosen path be it *karma yoga*, *jñāna yoga*, *bhakti yoga* or *aṣṭāṅga yoga*) is complete (*sarvaśaḥ*) and absolute dispassion and detachment; that is, no trace of any kind of attachment. Upon hearing this itself, a little fear starts to sink in but one should keep trying.

Another learning herein pertains to the nature of mind. It is the mind's innate tendency to always hold on to something or the other. If it has to be diverted from a certain topic then its attention should be directed towards something that yields more joy. Such an object should be shown to the mind.

There is a small and simple generic rule. When a small child is not letting go of something sharp from his hands, if a chocolate is shown to him, he drops what is in his hands and holds on to the chocolate as he is familiar with that. Even though we may be grown-ups, the principle applies equally to us as well. Our mind, which is wandering in constant search of happiness, gets attached to what fills that void and then it is difficult to disassociate the mind from it. But enduring all pains and troubles, a seeker should disassociate from the lower by introducing the mind to higher joys. When the mind would keep getting glimpses of higher joys, it would go in their direction.

In the next verse from Uddhava Gītā, Lord Krishna is saying the same thing; that dissociating the mind from the lower is one thing but the mind should also associate itself with the higher.



Śrībhagavānūvāca:

*etāvān yoga ādiṣṭo mat śiṣyaiḥ sanakādibhiḥ |
sarvato mana ākṛṣya maiyyaddhā"veśyate yathā ||(20)
(Śrīmadā Bhāgavata 11.13.14)*

In the episode of Uddhava Gītā, Uddhava once posed a question to the Lord. He asked, "Since man is aware that worldly objects don't bear the joy he is in search of - and rather are infested with a plethora of troubles - why does he not stop short in his habituated track?"

To this, the Lord replied, "Indeed! What you say is right. This is because of his identification with the body (born of ignorance) and the resultant attachment to it. But one must gradually alleviate the mind from such lower entanglements."

So firstly one should withdraw the mind from worldly objects and then establish it in Brahman, which is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. This is indeed *yoga*. The Lord says, "This *yoga* was taught by me to the *mānasa putra* (thought-manifested sons) of Brahma - Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanatakumāra - and they imparted it further (through the *Guru śiṣya paramparā*)." In general parlance they are addressed as the Sanata kumāras.

etāvān yoga ādiṣṭaḥ: Thus *yoga* is to detach the mind from one place and then attach it to something higher. It is easier said than done. It is not as easy as lifting a watch and keeping it at some other place. The whereabouts of the mind itself is difficult to locate, as it can't be seen in a gross form. Yet what has been said here can be achieved.

Within the world itself we remove our mind from a particular place and deploy it to another place continuously. We did withdraw our mind from our childhood occupations and involve it elsewhere. This means that we have the power to do this. Nobody has ever been excited about going to school for the first time; but gradually one starts liking. Then a group of friends is also made and an interest in studies develops. This is to indicate that one does have the capacity to make it possible (with respect to the mind also), as in our daily worldly interactions we are doing this at present. Without trying, we will never be able to move ahead and grow in life and therefore one should put in all possible efforts (to train and align the mind as per *yoga*).



etāvān yoga ādiṣṭaḥ mat śiṣyaiḥ sanakādibhiḥ: “My disciples Sanakādi passed on the knowledge of *yoga* (given by Me to them) to others.” But what is this *yoga*?

sarvato mana ākr̥ṣya: “We should avert the mind from the body as well as all body related objects, people, situations, enjoyments, etc.”

mayi āveśyate: Having removed it, “Establish it in Me”.

yathā: To facilitate this is *yoga*.

addhā: The mind should be directly established in Brahman (attribute-less Lord).

I am repeatedly mentioning that such capability is available with all of us and we are tapping into this capability in our transactional life. The achievements of an individual in any field are resultant of this capacity of the mind to withdraw from its preoccupations here and there and then focus.

But what is currently happening with us is that we withdraw the mind from one worldly aspect and direct it towards another worldly aspect. Instead, after having withdrawn the mind from the lower, if we gradually start turning the mind towards higher things or aspects, then one day it will turn towards the highest - the Lord Himself.

So the more the mind is purified by implementing Dharma, the more uninterrupted will be the flow of *satsaṅga* towards me, through which (after listening) I will be introduced to Brahman, of the nature of absolute Bliss (*ānanda svarūpa Paramātmā*). Then through one’s efforts, establishment of the mind in Brahman is also possible. Therefore an important take away is that we should never say, “This is impossible.”

When we keep committing prohibited actions, why can’t we instead put efforts to do what’s right? We ought to do this, as the capability is available with everyone. When we can direct our power, capability and wisdom to do certain kinds of activities that we choose, then this is also possible! If one can indulge in enjoyment (*bhoga*), then why can’t we practice *yoga*?



The Lord declares, "I am of the nature of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, therefore direct your mind towards Me." With this, we conclude the topic of *yoga*. So far we have seen the topics of Dharma, knowledge of the Self and now *yoga*. Now the remaining topic is Bhakti (devotion), which is the bestower of ultimate good and there are no two ways about this, nor any doubts.

If we would read the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata and the Bhagavad Gītā simultaneously, we would feel very joyous because of the consonance between the topics and the way that they have been portrayed in both texts. And also because we are more familiar with the Bhagavad Gītā, so we would experience even greater joy.

Now, the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata is a nectarine treatise of supreme-most, love filled devotion, wherein devotion has a unique grandeur. Here, devotion is not just laden with emotion(s); it is endowed with the knowledge of the Truth and even the ultimate knowledge (*tattvajñāna*) is spelt out suffused with devotion. Therefore the *tattvajñāna* herein has been rendered sweet through devotion and the devotion contains more depth being associated with knowledge. Such is the hallmark of the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata. The two streams of knowledge and devotion run parallel to each other through the text, and there will be a similar observation while reading the Bhagavad Gītā.

It is possible that on seeing the next verse, which relates to devotion, one feels that it relates to knowledge of the Self. But please remember, as I had previously mentioned, that in the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata devotion is embedded with knowledge. How is that possible? For that we will see what has been mentioned in the next verse, which is the 63rd verse of the 16th chapter of the 6th canto.

It is said **Śrībhagavānuvāca** - Which Lord is being referred to here? There is only one Lord but sometimes, having assumed other forms also, He imparts teachings. So sometimes *Śrībhagavānuvāca* means 'Lord Narayana said this' and sometimes it means 'Lord Krishna said this'.

Here, *Śrībhagavān* is referring to Lord Sankarshana. Who is Lord Sankarshana? He is the thousand-hooded Lord Shesha (Sheshanāga), also called Ananta Shesha. In accordance with His name (Sankarshana), He draws everyone to Himself. One *Bhāgavata paramparā* (lineage of devotees) commenced from Lord Sankarshana too. He alone assumed the form of Lakshmana when Lord Rama incarnated and of Balarama when Lord Krishna incarnated. Glory to Lord Sankarshana!



In the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata this story is very elaborate but I will only mention the relevant part here. Therein comes the story of King Chitraketu who was very disheartened, as he didn't have a son. He was a very noble and prosperous King, with all comforts available at his slightest desire. Kritadyuti was one of the many wives of the King. Once, the King's palace was blessed with the arrival of Ṛṣi Angira as well as Ṛṣi Narada. On their arrival both were warmly welcomed with due rituals and great hospitality, after which the King put forth his sorrow in front of the Ṛṣis. They blessed the King to beget a son. The King was curious to know how his son would be, to which they replied that he would be a source of joy as well as sorrow for the King.

The story thereon is very strange. So a son was born to the King (and Kritadyuti) but the other queens became very unhappy and jealous about it as they felt that Kritadyuti, who gave birth to the son, will now have more importance and they will not have a say in anything. This is called *sautiyā dāha*. The other queens did some planning and poisoned the child. So the King, who was very pleased upon the birth of the son, was now immensely sorrowful over his loss.

At that time again Ṛṣi Narada arrived and seeing the King crying he said, "We had warned you in advance about this happening." The King pleaded, "Please bring that *jīva* back." Narada said, "Calling him back is fine but at least enquire whether he wants to return or not." Ṛṣi Narada was endowed with all the powers of *yoga* and through those he invoked the *jīva* and said, "O *jīva*, return back to your parents who are in great grief and are crying, come back!" The *jīva* said, "I have lost count of how many births I have taken, and how many sets of parents and relations I have had. Now I have no relationships with anyone." And having said this the *jīva* disappeared.

On hearing these words, some wisdom dawned upon the King and he became dispassionate and then Ṛṣi Narada gave him further knowledge and instructions in relation to the spiritual practices to be undertaken. By performing that *sādhana* he duly attained the position of Vidyādhara and then he approached Lord Sankarshana.

His heart had transformed entirely. He had become a devotee. I narrated the story to you very briefly but the teachings and messages in this episode are indeed very beautiful. Now the forthcoming portion is full of devotion.



Having approached Lord Sankarshana, he was very elated and at that time Lord Sankarshana imparted knowledge to him.

From the context of these teachings in the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata, one aspect has been covered by the following verse, which we will be seeing. What did the Lord say to Chitraketu who had now become a Vidyādhara?

Śrībhagavān uvāca:

*etāvān eva manujaiḥ yoganaipuṇābuddhibhiḥ |
svārthaḥ sarvātmanā jñeyo yatparātmaikadarśanam || (21)
(the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata 6.16.63)*

I had mentioned previously that herein the devotion is endowed with the knowledge of the Self.

etāvān eva: The Lord says, “Listen, Chitraketu! This alone is to be obtained by all men. Man does not know where his benefit (*svārtha*) lies. *Svārtha* is a word that has generally come to be equated with ego and selfishness, as in ‘he is a very selfish (*svārthī*) man’. *Svārtha* is made up of *sva* and *asya* – *svasya* – meaning ‘of oneself’; and *artha* means ultimate aim or objective. In life, what should be the main aim or objective of man?

What is considered as fortune in the world? We consider the accumulation of wealth to be the greatest fortune. I feel ‘may I gain wealth, position, status, name and fame, great enjoyments (*bhoga*), a lot of praise from all and a lot of followers!’ Is it not? We think the gain of these accomplishments is a great achievement. But none of these are going to last nor will they give us joy. In fact they will create a lot of enemies for us!

The genuine goal and resultant welfare is in attaining the Lord.

Therefore it has been said here:

This alone is the greatest attainment for a human being (*etāvān eva svārthaḥ*)

In his Marathi composition, the great saint Samarthā Ramdas has said that the world is a big supermarket where everyone is engaged in earning profit, and the idea of profit here is the accumulation of worldly wealth.



The wise man, however, knows that the highest gain in the worldly market is the attainment of the Lord. The one who has understood this is a man of discrimination and realisation.

Further it has been said here:

manujaiḥ: All human beings, be it man or woman. How are they?

yoganaipuṇabuddhibhiḥ: *yoganaipuṇabuddhibhiḥ* is an adjective of *manujaiḥ*. It means human beings whose intellect has dexterity (*naipuṇabuddhibhiḥ*) by practicing *yoga*.

sarvātmanāḥ svārthaḥ jñeyah: and such people should know their ultimate objective with their entire mind and intellect.

yatparātmaikadarśanam: Realizing the oneness of *para* (the Lord) and *ātma* (me) is the greatest achievement of human birth.

We saw that the intellect should have dexterity but it should also have purity and subtlety.

Kathopanishad says:

dṛśyate tu agrīyā buddhyā sūkṣmayā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ ||

Our vision is used to seeing external objects and we know them to be gross. A gross intellect is one that sees gross objects and tries to find fulfilment in them. Even with reference to subtle worldly topics, those people who study and are able to interpret literature, grammar, philosophies like *nyāya*, *mīmāṃsā* and science are very few and in fact they are reducing in number as time passes by.

Haven't you noticed a decrease in the number of students as one progresses from primary school through to college, post-graduation, research and doctorate? This is because a progressively subtle intellect is required to grasp these subtler subjects.

The Self is not an object of perception and to know it a strong desire and thought composition is required, which is a subtle and pure intellect in this case.



Thus those who have purified their mind through *karmayoga*, have discriminated between the Self and not-Self under *jñānayoga* and have also practiced the *yoga* that has been mentioned earlier (single-pointedness), will be established in Brahman – the Lord.

So here it says:

parātmaikadarśanam: Here devotion means vision of the Lord, realization of the Brahman – the realization that I am not a finite *jīva* but pure Brahman. Devotion is in the form of love and in love one starts experiencing oneness with the beloved. Therefore supreme-most devotion is an experience of absolute oneness with the Lord. Earlier I said that one should see the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata and the Bhagavad Gītā simultaneously. The following verse is from the Bhagavad Gītā.

Lord Krishna says:

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvānyaścāsmi tattvataḥ |
tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśate tadanantaram ||*

bhaktyā mām abhijānāti : “The one whose heart is overflowing with devotion; due to that love he desires to know more about those who are dear to Me.

mām abhijānāti : and then because of that devotion towards Me, he starts getting to know Me.

yāvān yaśca asmi : Who am I? How pervasive am I? How is my Virāṭa form and my attribute-less Self?” This means he knows the Virāṭa Lord, which comprises of all the names and forms of creation, and also the absolute Brahman (*tattva rūpa*), which is beyond all names and forms.

tato mām tattvato jñātvā : “and having known Brahman, my *tattva rūpa*

viśate tadanantaram: he becomes one with me.”

This is what is being conveyed through this verse. *Yoganaipuṇābuddhibhiḥ* is a very beautiful word.



manuṣyaḥ: The one who has, through the practise of *yoga*, made his intellect pure, subtle and single-pointed and qualified to absorb the ultimate teaching

jñeyah: he should understand without any kind of doubts that the ultimate goal of one's life

sarvātmanā: is to experience the Self (Brahman) and there is nothing greater than that.

niḥśreyasa: Once this happens then one certainly attains liberation and, through that, the ultimate good fructifies.

So Lord Sankarshana told this to Chitraketu, but if we keep thinking that it was only told to Chitraketu and that the teachings of Lord Krishna were only for Uddhava or Arjuna and not for us, then reading the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata and the Bhagavad Gītā will be in vain.

We have to understand that the Śrīmadā Bhāgavata is meant for us! If not, then since you are reading the 'Bhag'-avata (bhag means 'run') then 'bhag yahan se!' – run away from here! Then you are not eligible for this knowledge. Always remember that all the teachings and knowledge are being told to me for the improvement of my life.

We shall conclude here today and we will consider more verses for our contemplation tomorrow.

Om Tat Sat