

BHAGAVAD GITA TALK CLASS 7
CHAPTER 8
THE TOPIC OF IMPERISHABLE REALITY
{ON THE MOMENT OF DEATH}

END OF PREVIOUS CHAPTER – CH. 7, ON VINJNANA
TOPIC OF MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE {OF ISHWARA}

BY THE END OF CH. 7, THE TOPIC OF **BHAKTI** {DEVOTION} IS INTRODUCED. KRISHNA DISCUSSES THE CONCEPT OF DEVOTION TO ISHWARA IN THE FORM OF A DEITY VS **PURSUIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE FORMLESS ISHWARA** {WHICH IS THE SUPREME PURSUIT} – IF A DEVOTEE SEEKS LIMITATION THEY WILL GET IT, BUT IF THEY SEEK ME {THE TRUTH BEHIND THE FORM}, THEY BECOME ME {ISHWARA} – VS, 23

CH. 8, ON IMPERISHABLE REALITY

At the beginning of chapter, 8, asks a list of deep questions, and then Krishna responds, as quickly, save for the last question, to which Krishna responds for the remainder of chapter 8

Bhagavad Gīta, chapter 8

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं

Brahman is supreme, imperishable.
akṣaram brahma paramam

स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

One's own nature, atma is called.
svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate

भूतभावोद्भवकरो

Causing the origin of all things,
bhūta-bhāvodbhava-karo

विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥३॥

the creative force is called karma.
visargaḥ karma-samjñitaḥ

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः

The world is perishable existence.
adhibhūtam kṣaro bhavaḥ

पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।

The divine being is the gods.
puruṣaś cādhidaivatam

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र

I am the rituals
adhiyajño 'ham evātra

देहे देहभृतां वर ॥४॥

in the body of the embodied, O Arjuna.
dehe deha-bhṛtām vara

Arjuna asks very profound questions...

- What is God?
- What is the individual self?
- What is Karma?
- What is the world?
- What are the Gods?
- What is ritual?
- What happens when we die?

What is Brahman?

Brahma is akshara.

Not subject to decline or change; indestructible; does not die

Brahma is parama

Supreme, nothing is outside of it or beyond it. Nothing greater than it. It is not subject to limitation.

What is Karma?

Karma is that which produces results.

What is the individual?

*Brahma's Svabhava {nature} is **adhyatma** – centered on the Self.*

The nature of the individual is that brahma. The individual, called adhyātma is the supreme presence {Brahma} expressing itself as an individual.

What is the world?

The world is kshara – perishable, changeable, subject to birth and death.

What are the Gods?

They represent Ishwara's order; natural principles

Daiva from div, to light up. Daiva means the consciousness that the order enjoys.

Ishwara is the intelligence that is manifesting in the form of different laws. Thinking of a God that controls all aspects of your life is a very primitive way of thinking of it. It is much more complex.

What is ritual?

Ishwara is ritual.

The real question is the last one.

Remember the context of the gita. This is a pressing question right before an 18 day battle. Krishna answers all the other questions quickly - one sentence each. Because he knows what the real question.

Now he addresses the question of what happens to the soul at death.

"Thinking of me only, as you give up your body, one who does so reaches my state / abode. There is no doubt." - Krishna

Do not take this literally or mechanically. This will not happen unless one lives a yogic mind. You can't live an evil life and then say Krishna at the time of death.

How you live your life determines the state of your mind.

The state that is at the end of life is the state to which one goes. That state thrusts you into the next. The bhava at the time of death is the bhava you are thrust in to. It's not the last word. It's the bhava. The condition of your mind.

This is Karma yoga

"Therefor, remember me and fight". - Krishna

At all times appreciating Ishwara's presence while engaged in worldly activity.

"For that person... whose intellect is devoted to me... will reach me, certainly." - Krishna

How?

Being aware of everything in life as a gift from ishvara. See how Bhakti {devotion} is intrinsic to Karma yoga. See how these can not be separated into different practices or lifestyles.

"To pray without ceasing" - the Bible

Krishna offers a means for advanced yogis

- Who? This instruction is not meant for most of us. Such a person is rare. Advice is given here not meant for everyone. Just as the advice given to Arjuna regarding the battle must be understood in context. It is for HIM. This instruction is for an advanced yogi.
- What? Such a yogi will take his prana and concentrate it between the brows at the moment of death. Bringing the prana up through the chakras sequentially. Chanting om

Then we see about the rest of us.

- Karma yoga

This is the easier way!

- If your plan for death depends on complete control over your mind and senses is not achievable for most. Instead of that complexity and intensity. Instead remember me continually throughout life and you will remember me in the moment of death.

Let's call it the easeful way.

"I am easily obtained" for this one whose mind is focused on me throughout life." - Krishna

Heaven is not eternal. Brahma is eternal.

- All the lokhas require you to return again.

This is NOT the idea of moksha. Moksha is free from time. From the perspective of satchitānanda ātma – your true self... your essential nature is unchanging, eternal, unbound by time and space... boundary less and all pervasive. There is no start to ātma. There is only recognition of that which is eternal.