

Bhagavadgeetha

17th Chapter

Sradhatraya Vibhaga - Division of Faith - swabhava

Arjuna's question to Krishna "what is the situation of those who do not follow the principles of Vedic scriptures but do yagna(worship) according to their shraddha(own interest - Jeeva Swabhava)?" Here the question about the people who suppose to read Scriptures (trivarnikas) but did not understand Vedic Scriptures or who never read vedic scripts. Basically its about ignorance of Vedic knowledge yet perform Karmas with faith and interest.

Krishna says, there are three divisions of faith - Satvika, Rajasa, Tamasa, that arises from the Jeeva svabhava only. The very nature of faith is an indicative by the manner and way in which they worship.

Though they do not understand principles of Vedic scriptures, Satvic shraddha Jeevas always worship Gods and DemiGods, Rajas Shraddha Jeevas worship demons and tamas would worship ghosts.

The Agniveshya scripture states that those endowed with the divine nature are exclusively in sattva guna or the mode of goodness and study the Vedic scriptures and are receptive to Lord Krishna. While those that are of the demoniac nature are a combination of raja guna or mode of passion and tama guna or mode of ignorance and they never study the Vedic scriptures and even if by chance they get an opportunity to hear from them they cannot fathom the values contained therein because they are inimical to the Supreme Lord.

Satvika Guna- Those who are of purified senses and spiritually evolved perceive that Lord Krishna is the ultimate reality and the Supreme Lord of all other lords are exclusively in sattva guna. They will achieve moksha in their lifetime.

Rajasa Guna- Those who are in doubt about the Supremacy of Lord Krishna and are wary of surrendering to Him and do not understand that He is the Supreme Lord, and who do not understand the gradations or TAratamya involved, are rooted in Rajas guna and engage in worship of demoniac entities accepting them as their supreme being. In their next life they must suffer interminably in the foulest of hells.

Tamas Guna-

Those who consider the omnipresent Supreme Lord who pervades all existence and resides within the etheric heart of all living entities as less than other gods will go to obscure worlds of darkness. They will be born as pischasas or goblins and raksasas or demons.

Lord Vishnu known as OM Tat Sat. Anyone pronouncing the word OM without initiation, without faith and without knowing the meaning thereof is also situated as an asura.

From observation of the food that one eats it can be determined which of the three gunas a jiva is situated in. The same observation holds true for the type of worship one engages in and for all activities one's position can be established.

Satvic food: Eating foods that are of sattva guna the mode of goodness are pleasurable. Joyfulness is the immediate result. Whatever continues to be pleasurable is joyous to the heart. Even if all foods are cooked they all do not get digested the same. Ghee and honey are absorbed into the body directly, fruits take an hour to digest and vegetables and grains up to six hours. Hridayam is that which is pleasing to the heart and makes one desire for more. "Priyam" is what is pleasing for the moment. "Sukham" or happiness is that which continues to keep one joyous long after the activity has ended.

Rajas food : Foods are excessively bitter, spicy, salty, sour, pungent, etc. and result in discomfort and misery culminating in sickness and disease they are of raja guna the mode of passion.

Tamasa Food : The food which is eaten more than three hours after it is cooked is known as yatama. When the food is tasteless it is also called yatayama. Food that once was flavourful but later becomes later has no taste is known as gatarasyam. Food that is tasteless or has bad odor, food left out after eating, food eaten by others and food prepared without cleanliness(ashuchi) are liked by Tamasa swabhava.

If Yagna is performed with no desire for any fruitive rewards and is ordained by the ordinances and injunctions of the Vedic scriptures and performed out of devotion to the Supreme Lord are known as Sattva guna.

If Yagna is performed with desire of Swarga or performed out of pride and prestige with desire of results is known as rajasa guna.

If Yagna is performed without Vedic mantras, without devotion to Lord Vishnu, without distribution of food and dakshne (money) is known as tamasa guna.

worship of the vedic authorized deity form of the Supreme Lord, the brahmanas, the spiritual master, men of wisdom, external and internal cleanliness, simplicity, brahmacharya and non violence are said to be tapah or austerity of the physical body.

Lord Krishna speaks of the austerity of speech as the recitation of the Vedas, Puranas, Upanisads, Ramayan, Mahabharata and others along with the chanting of Vedic mantras. Also speaking words that are totally truthful yet causes no offence to those addressed while speaking words that are pleasant to be heard as well as beneficial and gives satisfaction. All these are austerities of speech in sattva guna the mode of goodness.

Lord Krishna states that tapah or austerities of the mind in sattva guna or mode of goodness are serenity derived from self-satisfaction, tranquillity derived from the self-control of with drawing the mind from the senses, silence derived by constant meditation within, purity of heart derived from the absence of any deceitfulness in thoughts, words and conduct are all known as austerities of the mind in sattva guna.

Thus the tapah or austerities performed through the physical body, speech and the mind have been delineated by Lord Krishna. These threefold austerities when practiced without any desire for reward or compensation with great faith and steadfast determination by those devoted to bhakti or exclusive loving devotion to the Supreme Lord are situated completely in sattva guna the mode of goodness.

Tapah performed for the sake of gaining respect, honor, desire for prestige is very much unstable and would not procure any results is known as Rajas guna.

Tapah which is performed by ignorant and foolish people, causing pain to oneself with an intent of harming others is described as Tamasa Tapah.

Lord Krishna describes the threefold divisions of danam or charity. It is an act of duty to give danam accordingly to one's capability.

The danam that is offered freely from the heart to Vaisnavas and brahmanas without expectation of receiving anything back in return, that is bestowed in a holy places called as Satva guna.

Danam or charity that is given with the intention of gaining something in return, with a desire to enjoy some benefit or to receive some service, or with the wish to achieve some goal is described as Rajas guna.

Danam or charity given disrespectfully, given at improper places like mlecha or meat eaters deshas are described as Tamas guna.

Once again the Supreme Lord Krishna discourses on OM TAT and SAT. These are the names/gunas of Lord Vishnu. OM describes that Lord Narayana is Guna Poorna. He is TAT and because the Supreme Lord is perfect without any defect and always auspicious. He is SAT. In the subsidiary chapter of the Rig Veda the word OM is referred to His potency of the brahman which is the spiritual substratum pervading all existence

Those seeking liberation, uttering tat signifies the performance of yagnas and the duty of charity without desiring any of the fruits of the actions.