



The Scientific Art of Living

Volume - 4

(Based on Bhagavad Gita Chapter 4)

Swami Anubhavananda

The Scientific Art of Living

(Based on Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 4)

by

Swami Anubhavananda



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Foreword

Our pre-occupation with the present day rat-race burns us out even before we reach forty years of age. The speed with which we live does not allow us to cope up with the quality of life we expect from the modern age life style. It is the greatest surprise, that we claim to be scientific in our outlook and achieve great advancements in science and technology and yet we hardly have any scientific approach to our life. Life is an expression of the infinite, divine bliss through the limitations of the instruments such as body, senses, organs of action, mind etc..

A natural objection to this statement would be - If life is an expression of infinite bliss, how come we have finite blisters all over our personality in and through our life?! Therefore, either the statement made is wrong or we do not know the science behind life which will allow us to express the divine bliss, the source of life.

Science is not a property of one particular scientist to whom all the discoveries of science can be attributed to. In fact, science reveals the principles in nature and a number of scientists have contributed their might in the development of science. This is the discovery of scientists of life of the yore, technically called as the *Rishis*. Their experiments, experimental material and the researchers were none other than their own enquiry about this great, grand, divine bliss and the search for the reasons that can be attributed to the seeming contradictions of life. This forms the bulk of the ancient Indian wisdom contained in the books of knowledge and wisdom called as Vedas. This Vedic knowledge was required to be reinterpreted for the crisis of life that Arjuna faced on the battlefield of life.

In fact, he was never afraid of wars for that was his specialisation in life. Yet, at the deciding moment of his life, he failed to face the challenge that life presented to him. The net result was, the 'challenge' was mis-spelt by him as 'problem'. In fact, life is a series of challenges to be faced to learn from every event in life and grow wise. Instead when we do not learn from our own life experiences and consider life as a series of problems, we get tired in life and as a result, simply grow old and otherwise. This is the story of majority of Arjuns in this world.

Bhagawan Shri Krishna through His unparalleled, inimitable, delightful exposition brings about a quality change in the attitude of Arjuna to face the challenge of life at a particular juncture in the period of history. This book of history called Mahabharata contains this "Scientific Art Of Living" wherein we are educated to live in the same world where we are placed by the Lord and face the challenges of life with a smile on the face and courage in the heart.

The following pages are a compilation of talks delivered at *Prempuri Ashram, Mumbai*, under the auspices of *Geeta Chitanmala*. In all, there were hundred and thirty-six talks delivered on as many number of topics to bring out the scientific approach to life in the language of modern science easily acceptable to the modern scientific man. We have appended the original text of this chapter along with transliteration with diacritical marks which will be convenient for those who are not familiar with Sanskrit language.

It is hoped that this publication may inspire many people to live life scientifically and express bliss in and through all the activities of life.

Be Happy Scientifically!!

Swami Anubhavananda

Sept.19, 2012

[Ganesh Chaturthi]

DISCOURSE 1

Life or Science

This series of ours, we have named it as “Scientific art of living”. It is something like this - we start appreciating the greatness of Sun because it is giving us light and energy. Whether we appreciate Lord Sun or not, he doesn’t care, isn’t it? But our approach today in this world is, whenever anything is labeled as scientific, it becomes authentic. So, rather than the Reality proving the falsified existence of science, it is the other way round!

Science is trying to prove the greatness of the Reality. It is something like, an ignorant man doing *upasana* (worship of God). And how does he do it? First of all, suppose he goes to the Ganges... Now, how is the Ganges worshipped? We take the water from the same Ganges, and say *Gangecha yamunechaiva*.....and we give bath to *Ganges*, by taking the water from the same *Ganges*, isn’t it? But by that, what happens? Our heart becomes pure. But when we take up a scientific view of life, we become more of materialist and less of spiritual, yet this is the demand of time.

We have to say, ‘this is most scientific’ and then we start accepting, ‘Oh, it must be true because it is scientific!’ But do you know the basic difference between spiritual approach to life and the scientific approach to life? The basic difference is, in case of scientific approach, every latest addition in the discovery discards the old findings. Isn’t it? If you see, in the earlier days, when medicine started, the sulfa drugs were very important but slowly they were replaced by penicillin that came later. Sulfa drugs were discarded.

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Then the first, second generation of antibiotics came, gram-positive, gram-negative and then both putting together, tetracycline. Then came the Terramycin (*tera mera sin!*). And in this manner, when the additional newer discoveries are made, the earlier are discarded. And if we imagine the same thing is true in the science of life, we are going the wrong way! Please understand this as very important.

And therefore, if you are going to anybody and if he tells you, we are going to give you 'scientific spirituality', be aware. In science, there is a possibility of improvement because it is not perfect. In the scientific field, improvement and growth is considered as a sign of progress but in case of the spiritual science, it is not. Because the truth is immutable, it doesn't change, it is the same all the time. And therefore, whenever we say 'The scientific art of living,' it is only an opium label to make us believe, 'Oh, we are the men of modern age and what we are doing is most scientific!' We are fooling ourselves with a wrong label.

In the third chapter, the Lord explained, living in this world with dynamism is an art by which you function outside and purify inside. When the results of our activities are evaluated in the outer world, it is called as revolution and achievement but when the results of our actions are discovered and evaluated in the inner world, then it is called as evolution or spiritual growth. Scientific field talks of evolution in the outer world while the Spiritual life talks of evolution in the inner world. This is the basic difference between the two.

Now, next important thing - Science talks of life between the womb and the tomb and what happens beyond these points is not taken care of at all. It is treated to be all imagination. Therefore, when we are thinking in terms of *karma*, action and dynamism in life, our attention is not only on the outer world but also on the purification of our mind. And, as we go on purifying our mind, a stage comes in life when there is total contentment of being. There is no fear of death. There is discovery of unsullied happiness. If this is happening, then we have lived a worthy life.

We have heard in *Ishavasyopanishad*, “*Kurvanye veh karmani.....sama*” - one should keep on doing his activities, and desire to live hundred percent and not just live for hundred years. Instead of adding more years to life, let us add more life to every moment we live. That is the meaning of living hundred percent, not hundred years. Otherwise, living hundred years and then, ‘how do you feel?’ “I feel alright. But people don’t feel good about me. I don’t know how to tell them. People don’t understand; they don’t take my experience for their benefit. I am ready to give everybody everything, but nobody wants it from me, except my money. I don’t know what I should do?” This kind of frustration is not the creed of spiritual lifestyle.

And therefore, when the principle of living life dynamically was explained in the third chapter of *Gita*, *Arjuna* had asked a question, ‘Sir, we don’t find the reason as to why we go the wrong way?’ Now, this question cannot be answered by science. ‘We go the wrong way knowing well it is wrong. What is that which is compelling us? Kindly tell me.’ And there the Teacher tells, “It is only the compelling force of *desire* from within. So, unless you take care of this disease of desire in your mind, you can never have contentment in life.”

Yesterday, I went somewhere in a taxi. The moment I sat in the taxi, as is my routine; I started calling my Lord, “*Siyavar Ramchandra Ki Jay, Pavansuta Hanuman Ki Jay* and finally, *Aaj Ke Anand Ki Jay, Hara Hara Namah Parvatipataye Har Har Mahadev.*”

Then I asked the driver, “*Mahatmaji, aapka naam kya hai?*”

‘*Swamiji, my name is Bhagavandas.*’

I said, “*Bhagavandas Maharaj Ki Jay.*”

He said, ‘*Swamiji why did you call my Jay?*’

I said, “You know, I have got many bad habits, this is one of them; what can you do? I am a victim of those habits.” And then...

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‘*Swamiji*, I want to share with you one thing. Many *Mahatmas* have come and sat in my taxi.’

I said, “You don’t tell me what they told you, I will tell you what they have told you.” (Then I told him.)

‘*Swamiji*, you are hundred percent right!’

I said, “Do you know why I am right? Because I am a super *Mahatma!*” And then I told him...

“Look here, how much money you have got, it makes no difference. Among the poor people, there are happy people as well as those who are miserable. Among the rich, there are happy and miserable persons also. So, happiness and misery has nothing to do with your material prosperity.”

And yet, we are unable to understand why this happens. So, here is a reply given by the Lord, “It is the virus of *desire* which is affecting the subtle body, the mind; because of which we are compelled to act the wrong way.” And then after telling this, the Lord doesn’t stop there because he was not a psychiatrist!

(Do you know the difference between a spiritual master and a psychiatrist? A psychiatrist maintains the patient, because ultimately he has to become one! Suppose somebody is practising psychiatry, he is sure to ultimately end up with that. Heart specialist gets heart attack. Oncologist has cancer problem. I have a friend, he said, ‘*Swamiji*, I heard your lecture but I have selected such a profession that I will never be a victim of my own specialization.’ “And what is that?” He said, ‘I am a gynaecologist.’)

So, the Lord didn’t tell, you take this tablet and then your desire pressure will reduce and you will feel very happy. And when again you start feeling miserable, come to me and then I will give you another tablet. And in this manner, *Parasparam bhaavayantah* - You come with your problem, I will give you one tablet. I maintain you, you maintain me, and both of us will grow together, see!

So here, the Lord tells that this desire is the main cause. (And be very attentive I told you last time, again I am repeating.) Had desire been a healthy condition, we will not like to remove it. See! Wherever there is health, there is no pain. Pain is a sign of unhealthy condition. When we have desire in our mind, we are not at our own natural disposition, we are extremely disturbed. So unless the desire is fulfilled, we don't feel comfortable and what is the fulfillment of desire? Fulfillment of desire is removal of the desire. Had the desire been a natural condition of the mind, we will never like to remove the desire. See how important it is.

The Teacher who has nothing to take from you, tells this secret. He is not only telling the name of the disease. Like, you go to the doctor and he tells you, 'Oh ho! You are suffering from lymphosarcoma.' 'Ahha!' You feel very good, nice disease! Naming the disease is not the solution for the disease. You prescribe some medicine, but it is not available. What is the use of that medicine? So, only identification of the disease and prescribing something which is not available is not the creed of the spiritual teachers. They tell, this is the problem and now I give you the solution. So, the approach is methodical and this methodical approach in spirituality does not have the foundation of science. But science has borrowed the foundation of methodical approach to the problem from the scriptural authority. See!

You know what happens, I want to sell my commentary on *Bhagavad Gita*. *Bhagavad Gita* is great by itself. But I want to prove that it is great. Then what do I do? I write on the first page, opinions of the great masters, what *Mahatma Gandhi* said about *Bhagavad Gita*; therefore *Bhagavad Gita* is great. Look here, even before *Mahatma Gandhi* was, *Gita* was, and it will continue to be great. But because we don't understand the greatness of *Gita* and we have understood the importance of a person, then that person becomes an authority to certify the greatness of *Bhagavad Gita*; see the tragedy. So is the case with the application of science in Spiritual life.

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So, the Teacher gives a very excellent explanation, we call it scientific explanation because we are somehow enchanted by that word. And what is the explanation? He says, the location of desire is at three places - your senses, your mind and your intellect.

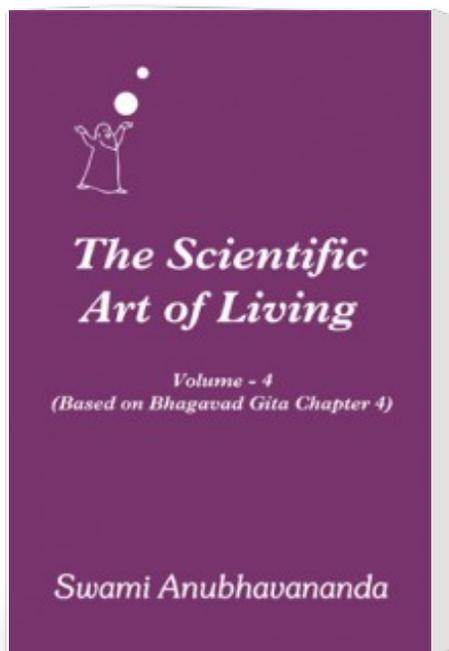
If the virus of desire is located in the senses, there is a chance of cure. If it has gone still deeper at the level of the mind, there are chances but you have to struggle a lot. And if the desire has attacked your intellect, you will be totally convinced that life is nothing but fulfillment of desires, may what happens to others. So, to come out of that, the Teacher says, “As long as you are living at the level of the sense organs, at the level of the mind, at the level of the perverted intellect, you can never be freed from the disease of desire.”

Then what is to be done? One has to go beyond them. So, when you go beyond the senses, the sense objects, the mind and the intellect, then you come to that level of existence from where you are able to control your total life and be the master of your life and that of others. This scientific approach is given by the Lord to lead a dynamic life. Never remain a victim of one’s own weaknesses. Then alone, there is glory of living like a human being. Otherwise, living at the level of impulses, is living like animals.

Friends, wherever freedom is not guarded, it becomes a calamity. A common example we all know. We have freedom to drive the car on the road. If the freedom is not guarded with the traffic rules, there will be chaos. And we can see this in our North India, because there, democracy is more rampant! We can’t say operational, there it is rampant. So, this freedom to live and fulfill your desire must be with guarded freedom.

Guarded freedom in our life is leading the life according to scriptural injunctions of do’s and don’ts. Whatever you are supposed to do, that is the first priority and the only priority. If we all become responsible, ‘What I am supposed to do, that alone I should do,’ then, ‘what I like’ is not important. What is required to be done, that

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