

**YAMIMAAM PUSHPITAAM VAACHAM PRAVADNATY AVIPASCHITAH
VEDA VAADA RATAAHA PARTHA NANYAD ASTITI VADINAH**

O Arjuna, the unwise utter flowery speech. They take pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas (e.g. express words of praise for the sake of praising only - not having totally understood the true meaning) and say, "There is nothing else but pleasures."

**KAMATMAANAHA SVARGAPARAHA JANMA KARMA PHALA PRADAAM
KRIYA VISHSHA BAHULAAM BHOGAISHWARYA GATIM PRATI**

They are full of desires, their highest goal is heaven, leading to new birth as reward for their actions, and engage themselves in specific works for the purpose of acquiring enjoyments and prosperity.

**BHOGAISHWARYA PRASAKTANAAM TAYAPA HRITA CHEATASAAM
VYAVASAYATMIKA BUDDHIHI SAMADHOU NA VIDHEEYATE**

The minds of such men who are drawn away by attachment to pleasures and wealth cannot be concentrated to remain fixed in divine contemplation and samadhi.

We need to take the three slokas together to understand the true import of the words used by the Lord.

To understand clearly the true meaning of the slokas, we should recollect some basic principles of spiritual education.

The subject matter of the ancient method of spiritual teaching was "The Vedas." The learning of the Vedas was to assist the spiritual seeker in "realising the Eternal Truth which is nothing but the Eternal Happiness abiding within each one of us."

The Vedas, as we have discussed in the beginning are broadly divided into three sections. They are:
Karma Kanda
Upasana Kanda.
Jnana Kanda

Karma Kanda deals with various rituals and gives the benefits from conduct of such rituals.

Upasana Kanda deals with methods of Sadhana that assist in concentrating on the "Supreme" and controlling the mind from getting distracted to worldly pleasures.

Jnana Kanda is the final section that deals with acquiring the wisdom about the Supreme, dropping the feeling of "me and mine" and uniting back with the Supreme. It is realising the "Tat Tvam Asi" which is popularly known as "Moksha."

If we compare this three-tier system of Vedic education to our present day education system, we can understand the implications more clearly.

Before the education, one is considered as "ignorant." The ignorant lives in darkness. He/she is lazy and/or not interested in acquiring knowledge. (tamasic living)

We, the elders in the society have to tempt (bribe) the young kids who are keen to spend their time on playing and enjoying themselves to accept the need for education. To do so, we have to tempt them with rewards like sweets, gifts etc for showing progress in learning. With the progress in education, the need for giving rewards for success has to get less and less. Instead of rewards as the motive for good work, maturity should bring in the attitude that the knowledge acquired for welfare is the reward for hard work.

The Karma Kanda section of the Vedas deals with various rituals and the benefits one can get by performing them. They offer the promise of "heavenly pleasures" for those who conduct the rituals. This is like inducement to show interest in learning the Vedas.

The Upasana Kanda takes the spiritual seeker a step higher and gets him/her to concentrate more on the end result of acquiring the total knowledge that leads to the path of "Moksha".

Finally, the "Jnana Kanda" that takes the seeker away from worldly pleasures and gives the end result of "Moksha."

It is important to remember that the Vedic education is to dissuade the seeker from running after the personal pleasures and to live the life of "Peace and Contentment."

They say that "heaven" is an intermediary plane of experiencing higher forms of pleasures. They also teach that the pleasures experienced in heaven are not permanent and are directly proportional to the amount of spiritual effort put in.

It is like spending the money saved by hard work to relax and go for holidays. As soon as the savings are exhausted, we cannot remain in the resort we enjoyed previously and have to start working and saving for next period of holidays.

Heaven is to be looked upon as a place of reward for good deeds done on earth. The one who is looking for pleasures in life, albeit, in an honest way, will experience the heavenly pleasures in relation to the good deeds conducted. As soon as the benefits proportionate to the good deeds are exhausted, he/she has to work again to acquire more spiritual points.

The highest goal for man is to know and realise the Eternal truth. Every benefit that he/she gets for the efforts which comes short of the final end result is of no consequence. Heaven is not the goal. Those who go after the pleasures of heaven will unfortunately fall down to earth on exhausting good spiritual points acquired by hard work. They have to go through many more cycles of births and deaths before reaching the final goal. This is what the texts say as "samsara."

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