

DSC 151 PHILOSOPHY UNIT 2

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UNIT: 2

(Śreyas, Preyas and Purusārthas; Moksa and Morality)

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1. What is the meaning of Śreyas in Indian philosophy?

- Answer: Śreyas refers to the ultimate good or the path that leads to spiritual growth and liberation (moksha). It is the pursuit of long-term happiness, which involves self-discipline and moral living.

2. Define Preyas in Indian thought.

- Answer: Preyas refers to immediate or sensual pleasures, the pursuit of which leads to temporary happiness. It is often seen as the path of short-term gratification that may lead to long-term harm.

3. What is the difference between Śreyas and Preyas?

- Answer: Śreyas represents the higher, long-term good (spiritual fulfillment), while Preyas refers to the pursuit of immediate pleasures, which may distract from spiritual growth.

4. Explain the concept of Purusārthas.

- Answer: Purusārthas are the four main goals of human life in Indian philosophy: Dharma (duty), Artha (prosperity), Kama (pleasure), and Moksha (liberation). They guide an individual's ethical and spiritual journey.

5. How do Śreyas and Preyas relate to Purusārthas?

- Answer: Śreyas is aligned with the higher goal of Moksha, while Preyas is often connected with Kama (pleasure) and Artha (material wealth), emphasizing the choice between immediate gratification and long-term spiritual fulfillment.

6. What is the role of Moksha in relation to morality?

- Answer: Moksha, the ultimate liberation, is achieved through moral living by following Dharma, cultivating virtues like non-violence, truth, and compassion, and practicing detachment from worldly desires.

7. How is the concept of Śreyas linked to ethical behavior?

- Answer: Śreyas encourages individuals to choose actions that lead to spiritual growth and self-realization, prioritizing long-term ethical goals over short-term pleasures.

8. Why is Preyas considered a hindrance to Moksha?

- Answer: Preyas, being focused on transient pleasures, diverts attention from the path of self-discipline, moral duty, and spiritual growth, making it difficult to achieve Moksha.

9. How does one differentiate between Śreyas and Preyas in daily life?

- Answer: One differentiates by evaluating choices: Śreyas involves choices that promote spiritual growth and alignment with universal truth, while Preyas emphasizes indulgence in sensual pleasures.

10. What is the connection between Moksha and morality?

- Answer: Moksha, or liberation, is closely tied to morality. A person must live ethically, follow Dharma, and practice virtues like truth, non-violence, and selflessness to attain Moksha.

11. What is Dharma in Indian philosophy?

- Answer: Dharma refers to the moral order, the set of duties and ethical principles that one must follow to live harmoniously with the universe and fulfill

one's purpose in life.

12. Define Swadharma.

- Answer: Swadharma refers to an individual's own personal duty or righteousness, which is specific to their stage in life, nature, and social role.

13. What is Varnashramadharma?

- Answer: Varnashramadharma refers to the duties and responsibilities associated with an individual's caste (varna) and stage of life (ashrama), guiding ethical and social behavior in society.

14. How does Swadharma differ from general Dharma?

- Answer: Swadharma is the personal and specific duty based on one's nature, role, and circumstances, while general Dharma refers to the universal ethical principles that apply to all individuals.

15. Why is Swadharma important in ethical decision-making?

- Answer: Swadharma helps individuals make choices that are true to their nature and life circumstances, leading to moral fulfillment and spiritual growth, and avoiding conflict with societal and cosmic order.

16. Explain the concept of 'Varnashrama' in relation to Dharma.

- Answer: Varnashrama refers to the system of four varnas (castes) and four ashramas (stages of life). Each individual has duties specific to their varna and ashrama, contributing to the well-being of society and personal development.

17. What is the significance of Dharma in achieving Moksha?

- Answer: Dharma, by helping individuals live righteously and fulfill their duties, purifies the mind and soul, leading them on the path toward Moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth).

18. How do Varnashramadharma and Moksha relate?

- Answer: By fulfilling the duties prescribed by Varnashramadharma, an individual aligns their life with cosmic law, purifying themselves and progressing toward spiritual liberation (Moksha).

19. What role does Varnashramadharma play in social harmony?

- Answer: Varnashramadharma ensures that each individual performs their prescribed duties, maintaining social order, justice, and harmony within the community.

20. What is the importance of Dharma in the Bhagavad Gita?

- Answer: In the Bhagavad Gita, Dharma is central, as Arjuna is taught to fulfill his duty as a warrior (Kshatriya) without attachment, thereby ensuring both his moral and spiritual progress.

21. What is Niskāma Karma?

- Answer: Niskāma Karma refers to selfless action performed without attachment to the results. It is an essential teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, emphasizing the importance of doing one's duty without seeking personal gain.

22. How does Niskāma Karma relate to ethical living?

- Answer: Niskāma Karma teaches individuals to act ethically by focusing on duty and righteousness rather than personal desires, thus leading to moral purity and spiritual growth.

23. What is the difference between Karma and Niskāma Karma?

- Answer: Karma refers to actions driven by desire for results, while Niskāma Karma involves performing actions without attachment to their outcomes, seeking only to fulfill one's duties.

24. How does the Bhagavad Gita view attachment to the results of actions?

- Answer: The Bhagavad Gita teaches that attachment to the results of actions leads to suffering and entanglement in the cycle of birth and death. Detachment from outcomes is essential for spiritual progress.

25. What role does the concept of Niskāma Karma play in achieving Moksha?

- Answer: Niskāma Karma leads to the purification of the mind and soul by detaching from selfish desires, helping an individual progress toward spiritual liberation (Moksha).

26. Explain the significance of performing one's duty according to the Bhagavad Gita.

- Answer: The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes that performing one's duty (Dharma) without attachment to the results leads to inner peace, spiritual growth, and freedom from the cycle of karma.

27. Why is Niskāma Karma considered a path to spiritual freedom?

- Answer: Niskāma Karma is considered a path to spiritual freedom because it frees individuals from the bondage of desires and ego, allowing them to act in accordance with divine will and progress towards Moksha.

28. What does the Bhagavad Gita say about action and inaction?

- Answer: The Bhagavad Gita teaches that inaction is not desirable; one must perform their duty, but without attachment. Even inaction can be a form of attachment if it stems from selfish motives.

29. How does the Bhagavad Gita guide ethical decision-making through Niskāma Karma?

- Answer: By practicing Niskāma Karma, individuals are taught to make ethical decisions based on duty, righteousness, and selflessness, avoiding personal attachment and desires in the process.

30. How can the concept of Niskāma Karma be applied in everyday life?

- Answer: Niskāma Karma can be applied in daily life by performing one's tasks diligently and ethically, without concern for rewards, focusing on fulfilling responsibilities and contributing to the welfare of others.

1. What is the meaning of Śreyas and Preyas in Indian Philosophy?

- Answer: In Indian philosophy, particularly in the Bhagavad Gita, Śreyas refers to the path of spiritual welfare and the pursuit of long-term, eternal good, while *Preyas* refers to the pursuit of immediate, temporary pleasures. Śreyas is associated with spiritual growth, self-realization, and ultimate liberation, while Preyas is associated with sensory pleasures that often lead to attachment, sorrow, and bondage. The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes choosing *Śreyas* over *Preyas*, as the former leads to Moksha (liberation), while the latter perpetuates the cycle of birth and death (samsara).

2. Explain the concept of Puruṣārthas in Indian Philosophy.

- Answer: The Purusharthas are the four goals of human life, which are considered essential for achieving a balanced and meaningful existence. These four are:

- Dharma (righteousness, moral law),
- Artha (prosperity, wealth, and material success),
- Kama (pleasures of life, sensual and emotional satisfaction),
- Moksha (spiritual liberation, the final goal of life).

Each of these aims contributes to the overall well-being of an individual and must be pursued in harmony, where Dharma serves as the guiding principle in pursuing Artha and Kama. The ultimate goal is Moksha, which transcends the limitations of material existence.

3. What is the relationship between Moksha and Morality?

- Answer: *Moksha* refers to spiritual liberation, the liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth (samsara). *Morality*, in the context of Hindu philosophy, involves the adherence to ethical principles (dharma) that guide an individual's actions. The practice of morality is seen as an essential means to achieve Moksha. The pursuit of righteous living (Dharma) leads to detachment, self-discipline, and inner peace, which are necessary for realizing the ultimate truth and liberation (Moksha).

4. What is Dharma in Indian Philosophy?

- Answer: *Dharma* is a central concept in Indian philosophy, often translated as *righteousness*, *moral law*, or *duty*. It refers to the ethical and moral principles that govern an individual's actions. Dharma is not static but depends on the

individual's role in society, their stage of life (as per the stages of ashramas), and their personal qualities. In the **Bhagavad Gita**, Dharma is emphasized as a way of life that aligns with one's true nature and leads to spiritual progress.

5. What is the significance of Swadharma in the Bhagavad Gita?

- Answer: **Swadharma** refers to an individual's own personal duty or righteousness according to their nature and role in society. In the **Bhagavad Gita**, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to follow his Swadharma as a warrior, which involves fighting in the battle. The concept of Swadharma stresses the importance of performing one's duties according to one's inherent nature (or Varna), rather than adopting the duties of others. By following Swadharma, individuals purify themselves and move closer to self-realization.

6. What is Varnashramadharma and how does it relate to moral life?

- Answer: **Varnashramadharma** is a concept based on the fourfold division of society (varna) and the four stages of life (ashrama). According to this system, individuals are expected to perform duties according to their social class (varna) and life stage (ashrama). The Varnas are Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaishyas (merchants), and Shudras (laborers). The Ashramas are Brahmacharya (student life), Grihastha (householder life), Vanaprastha (retirement), and Sannyasa (renunciation). Each person's duties (Dharma) are prescribed based on their Varna and Ashrama, and following this order leads to moral living and ultimately spiritual liberation.

7. What is Niskama Karma as explained in the Bhagavad Gita?

- Answer: **Niskama Karma** refers to selfless action performed without attachment to the fruits or results of the action. In the **Bhagavad Gita**, Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna to engage in actions for the sake of duty (Dharma) rather than for personal gain. By practicing Niskama Karma, an individual purifies their mind and soul, leading to spiritual growth and liberation (Moksha). This approach emphasizes the importance of selflessness, detachment, and focusing on the process of action rather than its outcome.

8. Explain the ethical teachings of the Bhagavad Gita in the context of Niskama Karma.

- Answer: The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the philosophy of **Niskama Karma**, where individuals are urged to perform their duties without attachment to their results. Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to act without any expectation of success or failure, focusing solely on the action itself as a means to serve the divine purpose. This ethical principle encourages selfless service and devotion to the greater good,

rather than ego-driven desires, and is considered essential for spiritual progress and mental peace.

9. How does the Bhagavad Gita explain the role of desire in the pursuit of Moksha?

- Answer: According to the Bhagavad Gita, desire is one of the major obstacles to attaining *Moksha* (liberation). Desire, especially for worldly pleasures, binds individuals to the cycle of birth and death (samsara). In Chapter 3, Krishna explains that desires arise from attachment to the material world, which leads to actions performed for personal gain. To achieve Moksha, individuals must transcend these desires by practicing *Niskama Karma*, controlling the senses, and cultivating inner detachment, thus purifying the mind and soul.

10. What is the significance of the concept of Karma in the path to Moksha?

- Answer: *Karma* refers to actions, and the law of Karma states that every action has consequences, which can either lead to positive or negative results. In the pursuit of *Moksha*, one's actions (Karma) should be in accordance with Dharma and performed selflessly, without attachment to their results. According to the Bhagavad Gita, performing righteous actions without selfish desires purifies the soul and moves one closer to liberation, while sinful actions bind one to the cycle of birth and death.

11. How does the Bhagavad Gita propose to attain liberation (Moksha)?

- Answer: In the Bhagavad Gita, *Moksha* (liberation) is attained through a combination of selfless action (*Niskama Karma*), devotion to God (*Bhakti Yoga*), and knowledge of the self (*Jnana Yoga*). Krishna teaches Arjuna that by performing one's duties without attachment, by surrendering to the divine will, and by realizing one's true nature as the eternal soul (Atman), one can break free from the cycle of samsara and attain Moksha. The practice of equanimity, control over desires, and a life of dharma are essential for attaining liberation.

12. What is the relationship between Śreyas and Moksha in Indian philosophy?

- Answer: *Śreyas* refers to the pursuit of long-term, spiritual welfare, which leads to self-realization and ultimately to *Moksha* (liberation). *Moksha* is the ultimate goal of life, representing freedom from the cycle of birth and death. Pursuing *Śreyas* is essentially the path that leads to Moksha, as it emphasizes spiritual growth, ethical living, and the renunciation of worldly attachments in favor of divine knowledge and liberation.

13. What role does ethics play in the concept of Moksha in the Bhagavad Gita?

- Answer: In the Bhagavad Gita, ***ethics*** play a crucial role in the pursuit of ***Moksha***. The Gita teaches that one must live a righteous life by following ***Dharma*** (moral duty) and performing ***Niskama Karma*** (selfless action). Ethical behavior purifies the mind and heart, reduces attachment to the material world, and helps in attaining the highest state of self-realization. The practice of ethical principles such as truth, non-violence, compassion, and humility is essential for achieving spiritual liberation.

14. What is the concept of Swadharma in the Bhagavad Gita and its relevance to morality?

- Answer: ***Swadharma*** refers to one's own personal duty, which is aligned with one's inherent qualities and social role. In the ***Bhagavad Gita***, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to perform his ***Swadharma*** as a warrior, which involves engaging in battle. Morality in this context means fulfilling one's duties according to one's nature and role in society. Acting according to ***Swadharma*** is considered a moral act that aligns with cosmic order (Dharma) and leads to spiritual progress.

15. How does the concept of Dharma guide human actions in relation to Moksha?

- Answer: ***Dharma*** serves as the guiding principle for all human actions in the pursuit of ***Moksha***. Dharma directs individuals to live in harmony with cosmic law, to perform their duties (Swadharma), and to adhere to ethical conduct. Following Dharma helps in controlling desires, acting selflessly, and developing virtues such as compassion, truth, and humility, all of which lead to spiritual growth. By aligning one's actions with Dharma, individuals purify their mind and soul, gradually moving toward the ultimate goal of Moksha.
