

International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research

Review Article

CONCEPTS OF AYURVEDA IN SHRIMAD BHAGVAD GEETA - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Having philosophical background Ayurveda is very close to Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta. Philosophy presents fundamentals of the principles whereas the science presents the applied aspects of these fundamental principles. The ultimate goal of life is to get rid from all the miseries i.e. from the cycle of birth and death. To attain the salvation, the true knowledge of self and the universe is essential. Triguna i.e., Sattva, Raja and Tamo guna plays an important role regarding the true knowledge. Rajas and *Tamas* are the prime causes of the diseases, where as the *Sattva guna* leads towards health. Karma (good and bad deeds) is such a factor which leads an individual to happy or unhappy life respectively. Ayurveda explains in a very well manner the Do's and Don'ts as a preventive measure. Beyond the medical science Ayurveda explains the life style which leads the human being towards the ultimate goal. Shrimad Bhaavad Geeta also narrates the same guideline for the human being to get Param Pada (salvation). In the present era of very fast and stressful life there are so many pathies for the treatment of the diseases. Among these Avurveda gives a spiritual touch to the treatment and it is the science of using health as the basis of one's journey toward the supreme power (God). Ayurveda as well as Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta both the scriptures explains the basic concepts such as Srushti aavirbhaav (evolution process), Karma, Triguna, Panch Mahabhuta, Atma tatva, Punarjanma (rebirth), Moksha (salvation), etc. for the sake of human being.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta, Philosophy, Salvation.

INTRODUCTION

The ancient Indian literature i.e. Vedas and its sub division i.e. Samhita, Brahman, Aranyak and Upanishadas are full of philosophical concepts. Philosophy presents fundamentals of the principles, where as the science present the applied aspects of these fundamental principles. Ayurveda, the most sacred, ancient medical science, Upaveda of Atharva *veda*, having philosophical background, *Ayurveda* is very close to many of the Indian literature like Veda, Upanishadas, Puranas etc. According to some scholars Ayurvedais the fifth and independent Veda. The Loka purusha samyasidhdhant of Ayurveda indicates the similarity of the universe and an individual as "Purusho ayam lokasammitaha^[1]. The famous Vedic saying 'Yat pinde tat brahmande' also narrates the same idea. The structure of the body reflects the structure of the universe. The six elements i.e. Pruthvi. Iala. Teia. Vavu. Akasha and Avyakta Brahma constitutes the Loka (universe); an individual also consist of the same matter. Such basic concepts of philosophy and psychology are described in both the scriptures -Ayurveda as well as Srimad Bhagvad geeta. Shrimad *Bhagvad Geeta*, the most popular and famous dialogue between *Bhagwan Shri Krishna* and his disciple *Arjuna*; narrated in the chapter numbers 25 to 42 of the 6th Parva - Bhishmaparva of the famous epic Mahabharata. Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta is one of the three basic texts of

Vedanta philosophy – Prasthantravi. It is called Smriti Prasthan. The other two being Upanishads and Brahma Sutras are known as *Sruti prasthan* and *Yukti Prasthan* respectively. On the battle field of Kurukshetra, the nectar of all the Upanishadas, the great immortal song was sung by Bhagwan Shri Krishna. Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta consists of 18 chapters and about 700 Slokas (verses). First six chapters deals with *Karma yoga*, the next six chapters i.e. from 7th to 12th chapter deals with *Bhakti yoga* where as the last six chapters. i.e. from 13th to 18th chapter deals with *Gyan Yoga*. The human mind is a battlefield, one cannot live with conflict, nor can one solve conflict by temporarily desensitizing the mind with drugs or other means; all the pursuits undertaken in one's life fall under two categories, striving for something, and getting rid of certain other things. In Sanskrit, these are called *Pravrti* and *Nivrtti* respectively. One can find all the solutions from Shrimad *Bhagvad Geeta*; if one understand the hidden explanation and practice accordingly, all the conflicts will be solved. This concept of Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta is identical with Ayurveda, because Ayurveda is not only medical science but it is narrated for this life and also for beyond the life. The ultimate goal of Shrimad Bhaqvad Geeta was to make Arjuna realize about the fact – the truth – the real knowledge. Here *Arjuna* is as a representative of the common man. The very same goal is of *Ayurveda*. As per *Acharya SusrutaJanma* and *Maran* are '*Swabhavik roga*' until the soul gets liberation from this cycle of birth and death, it will be continued. Hence *Acharya Charaka* explains *Naishthiki chikitsa* to get rid of this *Bhavroga*. In this review article attempt has been made to highlight such philosophical aspects of Ayurveda found in *Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta*.

Materials and method

References has been collected from *Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta* with its available commentary and *Ayurvedic* treatises such as *Charak samhita, Susruta samhita, Ashtang hridaya* and other Samhitas with its available commentaries. Related articles from various websites has been referred.

Srushti aavirbhaav (evolution process)

The five subtle form of *Panch mahabhuta* i.e. Akash tanmatra, Vayu tanmatra, Teja tanmatra, Jala tanmatra and Pruthvi tanmatra; Buddhi, Avvakta (Moola prakruti) and Ahankar (ego)- these eight are known as Bhoota prakruti, the sources of creation. Panch gyanendriya i.e. Srotra, Tvacha, Netra, Jihva and Ghran; Panch karmendriya i.e. Hasta, Paad, Guda, Medhra and Vaak; Mana with five Artha (objects) i.e., Shabda, Sparsha, Roopa, Rasa and Gandha- these sixteen are known as Vikaar (transformation). These 24 elements (Ashta prakruti & Shodasha vikaara) are the cause of the creation of the universe.^[2] According to Acharya Charak, Avyakta is the combined form of Prakruti and Purusha; whereas Acharya Susruta, following Sankhya Darshan, consider *Prakruti* and *Purusha* as a different entity, so there are 25 elements mentioned in Sushruta samhita.^[3] This concept of *Srushti aavirbhaav* is identical with the concept mentioned in Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta. Pruthvi, Jala, Teja, Vayu, Akash, Mana, Buddhi and Ahankar are known as Ashta- prakruti.^[4] Bhagvan shri Krishna has mentioned Para and Apara prakruti. The Apara Prakriti (lower nature) is eight-fold, and envelops within itself the five basic elements, the cosmic mind, the cosmic intellect & the cosmic ego (doer ship). The Para Prakriti (higher nature) on the other hand is the spark of existence within everyone. The combination of the higher and lower natures (Prakritis) is the womb of all beings, these two are the cause for the origin of all creatures or manifestation. The lower nature manifests itself as the material body and the higher nature as the enlivening soul, the experiencer.^[5]

Srushtiand pralaya (Evolution and Dissolution)

The manifestation of unmanifested stage is *Srushti* and merger of manifested forms into unmanifested stage is *Pralaya*. At the time of *Srushti* (creation), from *Prakriti*, *Mahat* is created: from *Mahat*, *Ahankar* is created; from *Ahankar*, *Panchtan-matras* are created; from *Panch tanmatras*, *Panchmaha-bhuta* are created. Again at the time of *Pralaya*, the *Panchmahabhutas* merges into the *Panch-tanmatras*, the *Panchtanmatras* merges into *Ahankar*, *Ahankar* merges into *Mahat* (intellect) and *Mahat* merges into *Prakriti*. Those who are attached to *Rajas* and *Tamas* and those who are egoistic undergo the process of birth and death. Others that are not, get liberation from this cycle.^[6] At the beginning of the day (universe) all living entities become manifest from the unmanifest state and when the night starts they again merges into the unmanifest state.^[7]

Kshetra- kshetragya: As mentioned above among *Ashta prakruti* and *Shodash vikaar*, except *Avyakta* (unmanifested) the rest of the twenty three factors together is known as *Kshetra;* whereas the *Avyakta* is known as *Kshetragya*.^[8] The physical body is known as *Kshetra,* whereas the knower of the *Kshetra* is known as *Kshetragya* (absolute soul).^[9] The word *Kshetra* indicates the field, where one can perform various activities and according to one's deeds whether good or bad, one will get the fruits of pleasure or miseries respectively.

Satkaryavaada: Theory of causation

Ayurveda describes *Satkayavad* as the prime cause for the disease. There can be no germination without a seed and a seed cannot bring out heterogeneous products.^[10] As per one's diet, there will be increase or decrease of the *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*. According to the *Nidansevan* (causative factor) the disease will be produced. *Sankhya darshan* has accepted this theory, and according to this theory the effect preexists in its cause. It is said that the non-existent can never exist and the Sat (eternal) can never be nonexistent. *Atma* the soul is sat, hence exists permanently, whereas the body is *Asat* (non-eternal) and ever changing, hence does not exist permanently, it is just the seat for *Atma* to attain the fruits of one's deed. ^[11]

Tri-guna: The psychic concepts of *Ayurveda* are based on the well-established doctrine of *Trigunas* i.e. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Recognizing the effect of Trigunas on physical and mental development of human being, these are known as *Mahaguna*.^[12] According to Acharya *Susruta* in the creation of universe *Mahat* is evolved out of *Avvakta*, with the features of *Avvakta*, from *Mahat* the same natured *Ahankar* is born: Ahankar is divided into three form viz. Vaikarik – Satvika, Taijasa – Rajasa and Bhutadi - Tamas. In the stage of Avyakta the Trigunas remain in the stage of equilibrium. The disequilibrium of these Trigunas cause the evolution process. Out of these three, the two *Rajas* and *Tamas* are accepted as Manas doshas (mental humours) as they are responsible for various psychic diseases such as *Kaam* - passion, Krodha - anger, Lobha - greed, Moha - attachment, Irshya - envy, Mada - pride etc.^[13] Due to Rajoguna there is lot of desires which if unfulfilled turns into anger. It is of great sinful and greatest enemy of the living being.^[14] According to the dominant Guna, Manas - mind is divided into three types; viz. Sattvika, Rajasika and Tamasika. Sattvika mind is free from defects as it is endowed with auspiciousness. *Rajas* is characterised by activity and motion. Wrathful disposition. Bravery, cruelty, envy, anger, gluttonous habit, greediness etc. are the features of *Rajasik* type of person. The *Tamasika* type of mental faculty represents ignorant, lack of intelligence, cowardice, unsteadiness and indolence. ^[15] *Sattva guna* is pure and auspicious, it is luminous and having healthy character, leads to happiness and real knowledge. *Rajas guna* attaches the person with action which leads to pain and greed. While as *Tamas* leads to ignorance, inactivity *Alasya* and *Nidra*.^[16] These *Trigunas* plays an important role in the treatment point of view.

Karma: In the treatises of Ayurveda much more emphasis is given on the deeds of an individual as a causative factor of the disease. The wise man should not blame any deity, ancestors or *Raksasas* (an evil spirit) for diseases caused by his own misdeeds.^[17] The action performed in the previous life which is also known as Daiva constitutes in due course causative factors for the manifestation of diseases.^[18] Some of the diseases arises due to Karma -bad deeds, some others due to the vitiation of the *Doshas* and some diseases occurs by the combination of both Karma as well as vitiated Dosha.[19] All the diseases in the human being are due to their bad deeds and it leads to terrific suffering.^[20] For one who is not renounced, the three fold fruits of action viz. undesirable, desirable and both together, gets after death. But for those who are in renounced state of life have no such fruits to suffer or enjoy.^[21] As a preventive measure Dashdha Paap Karma (ten sinful deeds) pertaining to the body, speech and mind should be avoided viz. Hinsa (violence), Steva (robbery), Anyathakaam (unlawful sex), Paishunya (abusive speech), Parusha (Harsha speech), Anruta vachana (untruth), Sambhinnalaap (speech causing dissension), Vyapaad (quarrel) and Abhidhya (jealousy).^[22]

Yoga: The contact of *Atma, Manas, Indriya* and *Artha* leads towards happiness and unhappiness; when the mind becomes stable with *Atma*, an individual becomes free from happiness and unhappiness. In this state of mind any favorable or unfavorable situation does not affect the mind. It is known as *Yoga*; which leads towards the path of salvation.^[23] One whose *Doshas, Agni*, and functions of *Dhatu* and *Malas* are in the state of equilibrium and who has cheerful mind, intellect and sense organs is termed as *'Swastha'*.^[24] The balance state of mind in success or failure and to perform the duty without any attachment is known as *'Yoga'*.^[25]

Dietetic Regimen

One should not eat food without reciting mantras or without offering oblations to the Gods or without making offerings to the departed ancestors, teachers, guest and dependents.^[26] The one who consume the food which is offered first for *Yagya* (sacrifice), can be free from all types of sins. Others who prepare food for their own self only, they verily eat sins only.^[27] By the observation of the association of painful diseases with irregular dieting, a wise person who has control over his senses should take wholesome food in

proper quantity and in proper time. ^[28] Untimely and excessive sleep and prolonged vigil (waking up at night), take away both happiness and longevity. The same sleep, if properly enjoyed brings about happiness and longevity in human beings as the real knowledge brings about *Siddhi* (spiritual power) in a *Yogin*.^[29] One who is regulated in his habits of eating, sleeping, recreation and work can mitigate all material pains by practicing the *Yoga* system.^[30]

Punarjanma

All the four means of knowledge i.e. *Pratvaksha* (direct observation), Anumaan (inference), Aptopadesh (authoritative testimonies) and Yukti (reasoning) theory of rebirth.^[31] The establish the soul transmigrates from one body to another along with the four subtle elements i.e. Pruthvi, Jala, Agni and Vayu with the help of the mind and as per the past actions performed by an individual.^[32] One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death one is sure to take birth again.^[33] The person who fails to get success in yogic practices in this life, after prolonged enjoyment on the planets of the pious living entities, takes birth again to this planet into an auspicious and aristocrat family, or in a transcendentalists family having great wisdom. Such type of birth is very rare in this world. [34]

Atma: The consciousness of the living being is due to soul, hence it is known as *Chetna dhatu*.^[35] *Atma* is free from disorders until it attaches with the mind and body. He observes all the activities hence known as *Drashta* (observer).^[36] *Atma* is known as *Karta*(doer), *Gya* (knower), *Vibhu* (omnipresent), *Vishvakarma* (can perform any action), *Vishvaroopa* (can take any shape),^[37] *Atindriya* (beyond any sensory perception) *Shashvat* (eternal), and *Avyaya* (imperceptible)^[38]. The soul neither burns nor dies at any time. *Atma* has not come into being, does not come into being and will not come into being. It is unborn, eternal, ever existing and anachronic. The soul is not slain when the body is slain.^[39]

Moksha (salvation): Absolute eradication of miseries is obtained by the elimination of desires. Desires are the root cause of all the miseries. A wise person who has controlled his sensory organs, considering them as dangerous as burning fire does not subject himself in any activity which leads to miseries.^[40] Rajas and Tamas are responsible for the cycle of birth and death, which is infinite; The removal of these two Gunas and the increase of Sattva guna with diminution of the deeds leads towards *Moksha*.^[41] Those who are free from false prestige, illusion and association, who understand the self as an eternal soul, who are disassociated with desires, free from dualities of happiness and unhappiness and unbewildered attains to that eternal situation known as Moksha.[42]

DISCUSSION

As per Indian philosophy, after so many birth in different species one gets birth as a human being. It is

the Vivekbuddhi (conscience) which makes the human superior than any other living beings. But due to *Rajoguna* and *Tamoguna* one indulges in such activities that one forgets about its real nature. To get the real knowledge of the self and the universe one should have faith in our scriptures and should practice accordingly. Avurveda explains the concept of self-realization in a systematic way. Loka - purusha samyasidhdhant reveals that the human being is the small unit of the universe. The evolution and dissolution process of the universe indicates the birth and death. The physical body is known as *Kshetra* in which one performs the activities and gets the fruits accordingly. One is free to perform good or bad deeds, but after so many births also one has to suffer the fruits as per the deeds. To perform the good deeds only Ayurveda gives the guideline for the righteous path such as Dharniya vega (urges that should be controlled), Sadvritta (code and conduct), Naishthiki chikitsa, dietetic regimen, rebirth theory etc. and to avoid the sinful acts. Triguna plays a vital role to constitute the mental status. One should always make the efforts to conquer over *Rajo* and *Tamo guna*, and to increase Sattva guna. Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta explains these Triguna in a very systematic way. According to Triguna three types of - diet, Shraddha (faith), Yagya (sacrifice), Tapa (penance), Daana (donation), Tyaga (renounce), Gyana (knowledge), Karma, Karta (doer), Buddhi (intelligence), Dhruti (patience) and Sukh has been described. One should consume Sattvika type of diet and should avoid rest of the diet to practice the Yoga so as to maintain the health. In the present era of fast food and junk food it seems very difficult to follow, but once if the mind is controlled nothing is impossible. According to Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta 'Samatva' (balance) is known as the Yoga; whereas Ayurveda defines the balance state of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala as Swastha. To maintain the health one should follow the suitable diet and seasonal regimen. When the soul transmigrates from one body to another, it carry forwards all the likings and disliking, love and hatred, knowledge and ignorance to the next birth, along with its good and bad deeds. The cycle of birth and death itself is a major disease. In ignorance one will misuse the precious human life enjoying the materialistic happiness which has no ends and ultimately it leads to the miseries. Doing so the cycle of birth and death will be continuous. If one gets success in self-realization, no conflicts will be there in the life. Ayurveda and Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta, both the scriptures explores the pathway to realize the eternal soul and to get rid from the absolute miseries.

CONCLUSION

Health is the prime cause to fulfill the four *Purushartha* i.e. *Dharma* (moral values), *Artha* (economic values), *Kama* (desires) and *Moksha*. Hence, Ayurveda gives emphasis on physical health, mental health and beside that it gives emphasis on the spiritual aspect of the health. The one who desires happy and

healthy life as per four *Purushartha* should follow the concepts of Avurveda as it has a philosophical background. One must be aware while performing the *Karma*; as per the principle of *Karma* every karma has its consequences whether good or bad. Depending upon the nature of one's activities one may gain sorrow or happiness in this life or after rebirth in second life. The rise of true knowledge and the recognition of the absolute truth puts an end to suffering and enables one to identify the personal self and achieve transcendence. Ayurveda is much more than the medical science which prescribes many regimens to maintain the health, and suggest the lifestyle which leads towards libration (Moksha); and that is the prime need of present era. Moreover it is the science which presents the applied aspects of the fundamental principles narrated in Shrimad Bhaqvad Geeta.

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Cite this article as:

Bhavna Pandya. Concepts of Ayurveda in Shrimad Bhagvad Geeta - A Review. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2017;5(11):28-32.

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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