



## Extra Assignment - Additional 8 Hours

Throughout our lives, we are enticed by that which promises happiness, success, love, good times, power, etc. The paradox is that we never really get true happiness, as we look for it in these places. We look for things that satisfy outside, not inside.

The Katha Upanishad tells us Preya and Shreya are two choices we have to make at any given time. Consciously or unconsciously, we choose either Preya or Shreya, and they go in opposite directions.

There is material happiness when the senses are pleased, and it is external, transient and ultimately disappointing and causes pain. Another option is to follow that which benefits others too, and is described as 'shreya'. This is internal as well as shared happiness is obtained when one makes a choice intelligently and with discernment,

The Katha Upanishad 1.2.2 states:

śreyaś ca preyaś ca manuṣyam etas tau samparītya vivinakti dhīraḥ.  
śreya hi dhīro'bhīpreyaśo vṛṇīte, preyaśo maṇḍo yoga-kṣemād vṛṇīte.

The good and the pleasant take hold of man; the wise man examines and distinguishes them. The wise man prefers good (Sreya) to pleasant, but the ignorant man chooses pleasant (Preya) for the sake of the body.

Preya is what pleases us, what offers immediate gratification to senses, feelings, on self-will. Preya is the "pleasure principle - doing what feels good, no-matter the consequences.

Shreya is simply what works out best in the end. Shreya means choosing the best consequences, whether it feels good or not, forgoing temporary pleasure for the sake of lasting benefit.

One moves towards lasting happiness and fulfillment, the other towards temporary satisfaction and permanent regret. At the end of our lives, we will be able to gauge which has been our guide and inspiration by examining where we are.

In the Katha Upanishad, the body is the chariot, the five senses are the horses, the intellect is the charioteer, the mind is the reins, and the Self is the rider who rides the chariot. As long as the intellect and the mind do not control the senses, the horses will run amok, charging after whatever attracts without discrimination or restraint. The rider never gets to the place of peace, happiness, health and enlightenment. We need detachment to see clearly, and discrimination to know what is of lasting value, and the will power and determination to put our insight into action.

1. What Does the concept of Preya and Shreya mean to you?
2. What lessons are valuable and applicable to our yoga practice?