

Geeta – A text of life

When I was in mother's womb, my mother read biography of *Swami Vivekanand* and many of his books. My sisters told me that, through this influence she named me *Vivek*. In 1982, once I was travelling in a train, I met a fellow traveller. While talking to him, I came to know about two things. One is the thoughts of *Gandhiji* will be very useful in today's atmosphere of violence and people will appreciate this godly personality. Secondly, a person should read *Geeta* at least once in life. If there is unrest in your mind, it has only one answer – *Bhagvadgeeta*.

In due course, I started reading *Geeta* and even today I read it. Every day I read at least one *Shloka* (hymn) of *Geeta*. I read *Geeta* regularly but every time I find it new and I feel that I am reading it for the first time. Till now, many great personalities have written about *Geeta*. To bring the knowledge of *Geeta* in *Prakrit* language, *Saint Dnyaneshwar* wrote *Dnyneshwari*. *Vinobaji* wrote a book '*Geetai*'. While in prison at Mandalay – *Lokmanya Tilak* wrote a book called '*Geetarahasya*'. The study on *Geeta* continuously goes on.

I have named my daughter *Geeta*, intentionally. It is so important that even if a person utters, this word while dying he / she gets salvation. On death-bed, a person remembers, his near and dear ones. That means, when I will be on death bed, the name of my daughter will come to my lips and thus the word *Geeta* will be uttered by me. When I started

reading *Geeta*, when I was a college student. I used to participate in debate competitions. Once I was selected for inter university elocution competition on national level, which was to be held in the University of *Kurukshetra*. It was a coincidence. I was selected for the competition at a place, where *Bhgwan Shrikrishna* told *Geeta* to *Arjun*. Hence my belief on *Geeta* became firm. Even today I am of the opinion, reading and reciting *Geeta* is effective, whether it is done voluntarily or otherwise. If everyone follows the *yogamarg* in *Geeta* and behaves accordingly, then he will add to the welfare of his society, country and the world.

In my childhood, competitions of *Geeta* recitation were held. There was recitation of 12th Adhaya (Chapter). Just by recitation, without the meaning known then. My teacher for scholarship in forth standard always read the 12th chapter of *Geeta* and then started the class. He explained the importance of *Geeta*. Now while reading *Geeta*, I try to understand the meaning of every chapter. If we read it carefully, we can bring it into practice, whether it is home or office. Now a day, management science has become important. *Bhagvadgeeta* is at the top and has encouraged me in my life. Hence I thought heartily, and decided to have a chapter about *Geeta* in this book and I am bringing it into practice.

We know that when Arjun came on the battle field of Kurukshtra, he saw his own relatives on the opposite side and he was discouraged. Knowing the condition Lord Shrikrishna, who was driving Arjuna's chariot, advised him. It is known as Geeta. The first chapter of Geeta is 'Arjun Vishad Yog'. Today every one of us faces war like situation in our life. Many times we face difficulties. In taking small and big decisions, the dilemma is unavoidable. In Shakespeare's play Hamlet, he doesn't know which lamp to put off, this or that. We think of either past or future, but we think very little about the present. Arjun was also caught in such thoughts on the battle field. At that time Krishna told Arjuna about the importance of principles. It is a great war and it is for the principles. At one place Lord Krishna has said, "I am there, where debates are held for the decisions of principles." So it should be understood, if a war is to be fought for good principles, then such war is our duty. If we can't decide, 'what to do,' then Krishna's statement should be remembered 'Karmanyevadhikaraste Ma faleshu kadachan' which means - Doing your duty is in your hands, don't expect the fruit results of the deeds. Whatever happens, happens for good. Keep on doing your work without expecting any fruit of it. This saying of Krishna is encouraging us to do work. The factors preventing work are - laziness, anger which should be avoided. Without thinking of the fruit of the efforts, you should always work. *Geeta* tells us the theory of work.

A person is most afraid of the death. Somewhere I read, 'why does a man worry? If one is sick, one may be cured or not. No need to worry if one gets cured. Otherwise one is going to die, one thinks about whether one will go to heaven or hell. If one goes to heaven, nothing to worry about. But if one goes to hell, even then, no need to worry, because one's time will be spent in meeting friends and saying 'Hi, Hello' to them. So don't worry.' Keep aside the humour, the moral is 'a man should never worry about the future.' It brings stress on our mind and it becomes difficult to take the decision. We go in 'Vishad yog' like Arjun. We become sad and anxious. Hence we should firmly take the decisions and implement them.

Many a times it so happens that we like a particular subject and then get addicted to it. A person thinks of a subject, one develops a liking for it, develops affection, through affection addiction and addiction gives rise to anger. Anger gives away conscience and it loses the knowledge. This destroys our decisive intelligence and when intelligence is destroyed, everything is lost. Today we see such things happening in the society. For the greed of money, people forget their duties and are corrupted, they do some things unpardonable, in anger, get addicted to liquor etc. Unless controlled one gets destroyed. Lord Krishna has told the same clearly in Geeta. I don't think, there would be so many religions and sectors, as we have today, when Krishna told Geeta to Arjun. So it should not be looked upon as a text of any religion. Geeta includes the philosophy of life. Attempt is made to explain this philosophy in short, as well as in detail. Perhaps it may be the only experiment of its type. Actually it is a conversation. We should regard it as a motivational programme. There should be no stamp of any religion, sector and creed on it.

It is clearly stated in *Geeta*, "whatever work you have to do, you must do it." We say that we haven't done the deeds, but they are done. *Karma* like work a 'vedic' sacrifices (Yadnya), are performed to ensure welfare. While doing yadnya, you satisfy, those who come with you. They give you something in return. You again give them, whatever they have given, back to them. Through 'vedic' sacrifice (yadnya), rain is formed, food is formed from rain (parjanya) and yadnya is created through karma (work). In short, such type of cycle is mentioned in *Geeta*.

Whatever work (*karma*) you do, should be done properly and it should reach the people. You should see the welfare of yourself, your family and the society. A king orders something and his subjects follow it. Orders should be for people's welfare. People follow researchers and scholars, who invent something or give the philosophy of life. In the world, leaders are less but followers are many. Your work should be such that, it should be regarded as ideal by the people and they should be motivated by it. Your work should be ideal for your family, if it is for your home. If you are in a business, people in your business should be impressed.

'Own religion is always the best qualitatively, than any other religion. It is good to die for your own religion, than following other religion.' Here we should try to understand the concept of religion. It doesn't mean the different religions, that exist today. It is related to self-esteem, conduct behaviour and attitude. Whatever and whosoever you are, whatever you can do, should be done by you for self image. Sometimes a person wishes to do something different and unnatural, some people poke their nose in others affairs, leaving their own work. Recently, the famous movie, 'Three Idiots' tried to give this message that, 'whatever you like, whatever is your wish, whatever your path is, you can become successful if you accept it. Do your duty as per your choice.' This message is given by *Geeta*. We have many organs and so wishes. Running after these wants of the organs, may miss lead you and take yourself towards destruction. Hence we should keep control over them.

In Geeta, Lord Krishna has assured us that - 'Keep doing your work, you won't have any problem. At one place he says, 'Hey Arjun, whenever the religion becomes weak, I will take birth for the rejuvenation of the religion". He further says 'For the protection of the good, for the elimination of the cruel people and their bad deeds, and for the reestablishing of the religion, I will take birth in every era.' It is a kind of assurance given by God to us. At many places in Geeta, it is said that even the smallest act of good conduct can save you from the biggest tension. A person who is detached from joy-sorrow, not jealous has the same attitude to success and failure can remain undisturbed, can get salvation. This means we should be also detached in our life. Even if a person doesn't get success in life, becoming detached and thinking about it, with the same attitude, may not have any problems. One more important thing is the religion of serving. A pupil gets best knowledge

from the teacher, by serving his teacher with polite conduct. He gets value education which gives him the knowledge about the self. It means, for getting knowledge, serve your teachers. Thus service should be our religion.

Selfless work leads to salvation, keeping busy in work is much better (karma yog), than renouncing the worldly things. A person should follow karma yog i.e. keeping one self-busy in work. Try to understand people's ability, the work they have to do and the results of their work are not given by the God. It is a natural outcome of their actions. We always expect something from the God. If we don't get it, we blame God. This is not proper, because whatever we have depends on our attitude. This is karma yog.

Tolerating the vices like anger or keeping away from them makes the real saint (*sadhu*). For salvation concentrate on the middle of eyebrows, by maintaining pace of breathing and giving away the attraction of organs. For this, mind and intelligence is required. After getting detached from vices like lust, fear and anger, one can reach salvation.

Some people have the tendency of putting their responsibility on other's shoulders and if the others succeed, they take the credit without doing anything. Actually a person should do own work and should not take its credit, because our attitude towards everything should be same. We are creator of our destiny. Therefore we will get joy if we do right things. We have to bear the consequences of our mistakes.

Lord Krishna says in *Geeta*, 'Yogaksheman Vahamyaham'. This is being used by Life insurance company, Krishna says, 'I will take care of those, who acknowledge me and worship me'. This is an assurance of God Shrikrishna to Arjuna, 'One who overeats or doesn't eat who oversleeps or doesn't sleep, cannot have the 'dukkhanashak yog' i.e. the yoga which keeps away sorrow. If a person wants to have peace, one should have proper diet, conduct, behaviour, sleep and work. Then one can attain 'Dukkhanashak Yog.' In short, excess of all things good or bad can create sadness. Today people have to face many ailments as there is no balance diet, conduct, sleeping. Some diseases are very dangerous like heart disease, cancer, diabetes. Today we see unrest everywhere; its base is the impatient behavour of man. Many people have devotion to God. They wish to walk on the path shown by the God. But they fall short of their efforts. First they work hard with their entire mind, but later become lazy. What will

happen when they go away from the road of salvation? Here, once again God has assured us. God says, "Arjuna, the one who does good work if disgraced, is not destructed in this material world or supernatural world. On the strength of one's luck, a bad person can also get the best parents on birth." I say, "I was born as Vivek Ksheersagar, Why was I not born in a great family?" Every person has such a question. Here we get its answer, we should not be jealous of others because everyone goes ahead according to his past deeds. Hence you should not be sad, for your condition.

The strength we attain should be free of lust and greed. We should nurture the feeling of global brotherhood. We should have the feeling that everything is beautiful in this world. Such feeling helps us to get rid of jealousy. *Geeta* tells us about *satvik*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* attitudes. *Satvik* i.e. good, should be nurtured *Tamasi*, i.e. ill feelings, should be avoided. Today we see that people are more inclined to *tamasi*, (bad). Hence our thoughts also have become bad. Our diet, behaviour etc. has effect on our mind. Therefore we should avoid the badness (*tamas*) in anything and should try to live *satvik* i.e. simple life.

When does a person get salvation after death? Geeta has guided us in this reference. The person who dies during day, when there is sunlight, in the shuklapaksha (i.e. the period of waxing moon) and in the period of uttarayan (January to June)' gets salvation. When you die, is not in your hands. For that you should have the power of death as you wish. As we know 'Bhishmacharya' had this power, hence he stopped his death in the Mahabharta war, when he was on the bed of arrows, and he embraced death, when 'uttarayana' started. You can also have such death if you have the power. If you have good, simple behaviour, you can get death when you wish. If your behaviour is ill or bad, you can die anytime. My father also had wishful death. He said, "Take me to my native place. I want to see our home". I took him to the village. When we reached there, he drank water, took rest and left for heavenly abode at night. You can have control on everything if you decide. When you gain control, an aura is created around you. And if it extends, whatever you think comes true. Your blessing gets power and your blessing can become true in your life. You will do spiritual progress and you will get the power so that your wishes come true. Through this way, you can get the power of death, as you wish.

The different manifestations of the God are everyone's friend, the creator and caretaker of all. God is present in everyone. That means

the God is in all and all are in God. This is the feeling of equality, there is a tree, when you will know how difficult it is to plant and grow a tree, the axe will fall down from your hands at that moment you will think that, the tree has life like us. It is manifestation of God like us and you will know that you are doing injustice to the tree. One can taste the fruits of the tree. If the tree is dead, there is no problem in using its wood. Cutting the tree unnecessarily is not good.

God has given us one more assurance. Suppose you started reading *Geeta* at the age of sixty or seventy. In the old age, when a few years of life are left, you remember God. It doesn't matter. God says if anybody worships me, though late, one is a good person, because one has taken a good decision. One becomes a religious soul. Lord *Krishna* tells *Arjuna* that, "my devotee can never decline, nor go down". When we worship or pray to God, it is not always *Krishna* wearing a peacock feather, having a flute in hand with *Sudarshan Chakra*. God is everywhere. You worship *Krishna* means you love the whole world. This is the visible God. Beyond that God is invisible and unexpressed. Common people find it difficult to worship God that is not seen. Hence we worship the visible form of God.

A theory in *Geeta* is that, 'A person who is born is bound to die'. While living life a person suffers from diseases, on becoming old, death is inevitable. Old age is also inevitable. A person can never remain young always. Hence those young children, who treat their parents cruelly, should know that they are also going to be old one day. What will happen, if their children give them, the same treatment? Today life has become difficult for the old people, who live alone. Somebody attacks, takes away their valuables and even kills them. Don't they understand that they also will become old one day? The strength of our age should be used for the society. The energy you have should be used properly. It is a blessing. *Geeta* tells us to use this blessing for the welfare of the people.

Lord Krishna has said in *Geeta* - 'I am the ultimate joy, I am the determination, I am the good quality of the *satvik* man. I am the punishment; I am the knowledge of scholars''. In short everything is included in me. On *Arjun's* request, *Krishna* showed him his enormous form (*Vishwa roop*) wonderful description is given in *Geeta*, after reading it, when we think of God, we come to know, how small and trivial we are in front of God. The feeling of being proud disappears.

Geeta preaches, 'Make good use of your time. People make haste; push each other for catching a bus. Everyone should spend time responsibly. It is said that time, money and strength are the three things, which we cannot get again, once they are lost.

We don't know 'how is the life after death.' If we had done good deeds in life, then life after death would be good. This assurance is given to us by God. We should learn to enjoy the good things in our life, acquired by us due to good deeds. It is important. Lord Krishna showed his universal form (vishwa roop) to Arjuna. I have read that Prophet Muhammad also had such type of experience. It means there are such theories in different religions and sectors. There is a similarity in the life of all devine personalities. Lord Krishna was born in the prison of Kansa. While Jesus Christ was born in a manger. Shrikrishna says, "a person who does all his own work as God's work, prays me, leads a good simple life without lust, finally meets me".

In twelveth chapter, *Lord Krishna* tells about *Bhaktiyog* (devotion). Lord says, "Those who heartily worship and pray me, they are 'paramyogis' i.e. the great sages, but those whose mind is engrossed in the worship of invisible God, have to toil hard". Humans acquire 'Brahma' with great difficulty. Thinking of God or bringing it before eyes, which is not invisible form is difficult. But according to some beliefs God is in invisible or unexpressed form, it is very difficult to worship. *Lord Krishna* says, "You follow any path, in any form, you will finally come to me. I will accept the worship of those, who are engrossed in devotion immediately". It is said, "Better late than never". God has often assured us, "You devote your mind to me, and I will take care of you."

Lord Krishna says, "A person who regards friend or foe, honour and dishonour, hot and cold, joy and sorrow as equal, who is detached from family and other worldly things, who is satisfied in whatever one gets, is loved by me." Once I had gone to listen to the lecture of Parthasarathy who is the head of Vedant academy. He said that one's family has become one's life. It may be at the centre, but it should not become circumference. We should think that there are neighbours, friends, relatives, society, city, state, country, world and nature, beyond your family. You should think about the welfare of all. In the thirteenth chapter Lord Krishna has defined knowledge. A person who has detachment from the things like life, death, old age, diseases, woman, son, home and wealth, who keeps equilibrium between the good and the bad, who likes to live a detached life, away from others, who has

spiritual knowledge is called a *gnyani* or knowledgeable person. In this definition the other qualities are not being proud, non-violence, the attitude of forgiving others, sincere behaviour, service to the teachers, stability and determination. Today we see that people have become blind like '*Dhritarashtra*'. They have been caught in the affection for their wife, son, home and family. It has become life for them. People have been fighting for wealth. They are trying to fill their houses with money. All this should be avoided. We know that, we have come to earth, empty handed and while leaving the earth also we go empty handed. Even then, people are addicted to worldly things, they get attracted towards them and they get entangled into them. Such entanglments keep us away from God.

Fourteenth chapter is about yoga of quality or virtues. In this, *Krishna* has told about the three types of man, namely *Satva*, *Raja* and *Tama*. These three types from nature tie the soul in the body. Today, we see that *'Tama'* qualities i.e. bad qualities are spreading everywhere making a person attracted towards it. It comes out of ignorance. It makes a person lazy and sinful. Development of such quality in the society is not a good sign. It takes a person towards destruction. Hence always keep away from *'Tama'* or bad qualities. Today we see many people following the path of *Tama* and a very few people follow *Satvik* i.e. good qualities. The *Satva* quality spreads enlightenment, away from all vices. It gives the human soul joy and knowledge. The person with evil qualities likes, bad and foul smelling diet. Today we see that many people are addicted to liquor, instead of a good food like milk. Liquor is consumed on a large scale. This tells us how widespread is the *'Tama'* gun i.e. bad qualities.

In fifteenth chapter, *Krishna* has told us about the yoga of the best human being i.e. 'Purushottam Yog'. Lord says, "God is the best. He is everywhere. The soul of life is in ears, nose, eyes, skin, tongue and mind and it enjoys the worldly things. But the ignorant people don't understand it and live their life". The valiant Alexander Conquered the world, but on his death bed, he told the people, "After my death, don't tie my hands. Let the world know that while coming in this world Alexander had come empty handed and after death went empty handed". The people with the vision of knowledge know about the soul and the super souls are referring as Purushottam i.e. the best of a soul or a person. A person gets knowledge through spiritual study. One should strive for it because spiritual knowledge is the knowledge

forever. We always update the programmes on the computer. Likewise spiritual knowledge also should be updated through regular reading and thinking and practicing.

Sixteenth chapter is about divine Yoga. In this Krishna has described about godly virtues. The virtues of a person having godly characteristics are 'one is brave, good natured, determined, non-violent, truthful, sacrificing, peaceful, sympathetic self-less, polite, with a bright personality, doesn't envy others and is not proud.' The person with ill attitudes doesn't know what to do and what not to do. They are not stable. They indulge themselves in bad behaviour. Today we see many people, who are proud of themselves. They think "I have so much treasure, I will have more and I will become richer. I have killed my enemy; I will kill other enemies also. There is nobody like me." They boast like this. Lord Krishna has described people saying, "I am the God and I will enjoy the wealth". They are proud because of their ignorance. Such type of people, are attracted towards vices and addicted to bad things and they will go to hell. They hate God. Krishna says "I send them to their original birth i.e. demon's birth." In short, it is impossible to change their nature. If you try to straighten a dog's tail by putting it in a pipe, it remains curved. Thus the original nature of Tamsi people takes them to destruction.

I want to tell you, religion in this context is attitude. Demolishing attitude of bad people is their religion. Likewise, good attitude is the nature of good people. Someone may throw stones at a mango tree or someone may water it, but it gives mangoes to both of them that are equally sweet. There is a story about *Saint Kabir*. Once, while he was bathing in the river, a scorpion accidentally came in his hand. To save it, *Kabir* tried to leave it on sand. But the scorpion bit him. With pain, he shook his hand and it fell again in water. *Kabir* kept on trying to leave the creature on sand and was bitten repeatedly. People watching it asked, "Why are you trying to save the scorpion?" *Kabir's* answer to it is very subtle. He said, "To bite is the nature of scorpion; it is not ready to leave it, even while dying. I am a human being. If the nature of man is doing good deeds and if I am not going to die with his bites, then why should I leave my nature or behaviour?"

Seventeenth chapter deals with yoga of faith - Krishna says faith is of three types - Satvik, Rajas and Tamas. These three types are everywhere, in giving; doing work and they have their results. Tamasi (bad) people like food that is half cooked, tasteless, stale, foul

smelling. Rajas people (somewhat bad and good) love a diet that is good for life, health, intelligence and tasty. A diet that enhances love, makes the mind fresh and healthy food is *Satvik* good and simple. Today is the age of junk food. Physiology hygiene tells us that junk food is not good for health. But it has no effect on the people. We see the consequences of excessive eating of such food. Such diet should be avoided. *Lord Krishna* has preached us about this, thousands of years ago.

There are three types of meditation. Respecting and worshipping God, following virginity, non-violence is physical meditation. Learning of *vedas* and good speech and constant chanting of God's name is the meditation of tongue. Freshness of mind, peace, quietness, determination of God's thoughts and the purity of mind is mental or psychological meditation. *Satvik* (simple and good) people do all the three types of meditation. Hence it is called *satvik* meditation. Meditation done for getting greatness is a *Rajas* meditation, while the one which is done for bodily, mental pain for others is a *Tamas* - meditation.

Giving is our duty. The 'daan' that is given to a right person at right time and right place is called a 'satvik daan'. The daan that is given with some expectations is a rajas daan. While giving such daan, the giver's mind pains. The one which is given to a wrong person, at wrong place and time is 'tamas daan'. Today we see that whatever is given in the forms of concessions, subsidies, gifts or any other help is given with some intentions. There is absence of good intentions. Money has become everything. No work is done without money. One has to give bribe even for small things. Today the giver and taker, both are not satisfied.

Eighteenth and last chapter is about 'Moksha' i.e. salvation. In this chapter Krishna says that 'daan', vedic sacrifice, meditation are the works, everyone must perform. We cannot avoid them. They should be done without any expectations. It makes your mind clean and pure. Krishna says, "A person who kills the Tamasi, proud, addicted to bad things; is not found guilty. It is not regarded as sin." In today's times, the courts of law have the right to punish the guilty. But this right is not used properly as it has to be. It is very essential to increase morality in the society. If a guilty person is punished severely the society will feel happy and assured.

Whatever work (karma) you The the do, should be done properly and work it should reach the people. You should see the welfare of yourself, your family and the society.

Intelligence is also of three types - Satvik, rajas and Tamas.

Those who know- what thing is acceptable or not, what action is good or not, whom to fear or not, are of 'satvik' intelligence. They know which thing leads to salvation. Those who don't understand the difference between good or bad, duty and right are 'rajas' intelligence. Those who think

bad things as good and good things as bad are

of 'tamas' intelligence.

Geeta, defines the duties of four varnas namely Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. A person is free to choose occupation according to nature and liking. There is no use compelling one to accept a certain occupation. The duties of a Brahmin are determination, control on organs, knowledge of sciences, tolerance towards anything for religion etc. The duties of a Kshatriya are bravery, daring, wisdom, 'daan', not leaving the battlefield and to protect those who surrender etc. The duties of a vaishya are agriculture, animal husbandry, (specially keeping cows), trading sincerely. Serving the people of all the varnas is the duty of a shudra. Krishna says, 'a person who is sincere to his work gets salvation. This means the doors of salvation (moksha) are open to all. A person can choose the occupation according to his nature and liking and accordingly a person born in 'vaishya' or 'shudra varna' can go to become 'Brahmin' or 'Kshatriya' or a person born as 'Brahmin' or 'Kshatriya' can have the occupation of 'Vaishya' or 'Shudra'. There is no caste or religion involved in it. These things might have entered at later date. Lord Krishna says in Geeta that any person who does his duty with pure and clear mind, gets salvation.

Krishna tells Arjuna that your decision of not participating in war is futile. Because your nature and conscience will compel you to get in war. God says, "Follow my instructions; I will take care of you. You are my beloved, so I am telling you this secret. One who worships me dearly will come to me." Krishna has said that, "reading and listening

to *Geeta* is a sacred duty. The one who tells and preaches about it is my beloved, will come to me and will see me (*darshan*)".

When Lord Krishna was preaching Geeta to Arjuna on the battle field, Sanjay with his divine sight (eyes) saw and heard it. Hence Sanjay says, "The team that has Yogeshwar Krishna and brave - Arjun, will always attain the four goals". If we think deeply about it, we will come to know that, whatever politics we see today is not proper politics. If it is done with morality, then only it will be called Rajneeti or moral politics. We have seen that Bhagvadgeeta touches every part of human life and transactions. It guides us about how to live our life. It keeps the ideal of human life in front of us. Therefore is a great text. Everyone should read it and try to understand its meaning.

Lastly daughter – disciple of *Smami Parthasarathy – Sunandaji* nightly said, "*The Bhagarad Geeta* is a conversation between *Lord Krishna* and the mighty warrior *Arjuna* on the battlefield of *Kurukshetra*. It provides a dynamic and practical philosophy which expounds the technique of living for a successful and peaceful life. Above all it ushers one towards the ultimate goal of spiritual enlightement."

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