

## Bacteria-Viruses?

The following text is from The Mahabharata  
Santi Parva Section XV

Arjun said: "I do not behold the creature in this world that supports life without doing any act of injury to others. Animals live upon animals, the stronger upon the weaker. The mongoose devours mice; the cat devours the mongoose; the dog devours the cat; the dog is again devoured by the spotted leopard. Behold all things again are devoured by the Destroyer when he comes!

This mobile and immobile universe is food for living creatures. This has been ordained by the gods. The very ascetics cannot support their lives without killing creatures. In water, on earth, and fruits, there are innumerable creatures. It is not true that one does not slaughter them. What higher duty is there than supporting one's life? There are many creatures that are so minute that their existence can only be inferred. With the falling of the eyelids alone, they are destroyed."

The law of sacrifice operates at two levels:

1. The physical
2. The spiritual

At the physical level, the life in the mineral kingdom evolves as the mineral forms are broken up to nourish plants of every kind. The life in the vegetable kingdom evolves by the sacrifice of the lower plants to nourish the higher, the countless annual plants perishing to enrich the soil in which the trees grow. Myriads of others are eaten by animals.

The life in part of the animal kingdom evolves by the sacrifice again of lower forms to the higher, and also to the maintenance of the human kingdom. It is imposed on the lower creation by strife and continual combats; its voluntary acceptance by self-sacrifice is the crowning glory of man. Hence all man's higher evolution is marked out by self-sacrifice. By sacrificing himself and all his actions to the Supreme Lord, man obtains liberation.

At the spiritual level, with the development of conscience and sympathy, man realises that the Divine nature in him develops by sacrifice of himself to others, and by the sacrifice of others to himself.

Outer sacrifices of wealth are less valuable than inner sacrifices of virtue. Better than the sacrifice of any objects is the sacrifice of wisdom.

When men in a community strive co-operatively without ego and egocentric desires, the cosmic forces that constitute the environment, shall cherish them in turn. In short, when man works in the Yagna spirit, the outer circumstances must miraculously change their pattern to

be conducive to the common will of the selfless community striving for the good of all. When we cherish the outer cosmic forces (devas), they shall in return cherish us with the fulfillment of our welfare, or whatever is the common need of the total community striving together. This is a divine law - a universal truth - a scientific fact. Thus mutually cherishing each other, let man, with the grace of the devas, achieve the greatest prosperity.

From the Bhagavad Gita, Ch.3,  
Verses 10-11-12 -13 -14 -15 -16

The Creator (Brahma), having in the beginning of creation created mankind together with sacrifice, said, "By this shall you propagate; let this be the milch cow of your desires (the cow that yields all the desired objects)." (10)

With this do you nourish the gods and may those gods nourish you; thus nourishing one another, you shall attain to the highest good. (11)

The gods, nourished by the sacrifice, will give you the desired objects. So, he who enjoys the objects given by the gods without offering in return to them, is verily a thief. (12)

The righteous who eat the remnants of the sacrifice are freed from all sins; but those sinful ones who cook food only for their own sake verily eat sin. (13)

From food come forth beings; from rain food is produced; from sacrifice arises rain and sacrifice is born of action. (14)

Know thou that action comes from Brahma and Brahma comes from the Imperishable. Therefore, the all pervading Brahma ever rests in sacrifice. (15)

He who does not follow here the wheel thus set revolving, who is of sinful life, rejoicing in the senses, he lives in vain, O Arjuna. (16)

"All deeds other than those performed in a spirit of yagna (sacrifice) result in bondage."- Gita Ch 3 -Verse 9.

In the Aitreya Brahmana Lord Yagna-Narayana Himself explains the meaning of sacrifice:

"What are you doing in the name of yagna? You kill an animal and offer it to the Divine? And in this yagna you propose to kill a human being?... Now when you perform, do not kill poor animals but burn away your own selfish, foolish and cruel animal instincts in the holy fire. And remember, fire does burn, fire can burn anything, but at the same time fire brings light in the darkness. Darkness is ignorance and light is knowledge. Let your ignorance disappear in the light of your knowledge. Use your strength and riches for the well being of the world. That will be real yagna."

In the Mahabharata, Santi Parva, Section CCLXV

Bhishma said: Only those that are transgressors of defined limits, that are destitute of intelligence, that are atheists and sceptics, and that desire the acquisition of celebrity through sacrifices and religious rites speak highly of the slaughter of animals in sacrifices. The righteous-souled Manu has applauded the observance of harmlessness in all religious acts. Indeed, men slaughter animals in sacrifices, urged by only the desire of fruit. Hence, guided by authority (in respect of slaughter and abstention from slaughter or harmlessness) one conversant with the scriptures should practise the true course of duty which is exceedingly subtle. Harmlessness to all creatures is the highest of all duties.

Wine, fish, honey, meat, alcohol, and preparations of rice and sesame seeds, have been introduced by knaves. The use of these in sacrifices is not laid down in the Vedas. The hankering after these arises from pride, error of judgment, and cupidity. They that are true Brahmanas realise the presence of Vishnu in every sacrifice. His worship, it has been laid down, should be made with agreeable Payasa. The leaves and flowers of such trees as has been indicated in the Vedas, whatever act is regarded as worthy and whatever else is held as pure (by persons of pure heart and cleansed natures and those eminent for knowledge and holiness), are all worthy of being offered to the Supreme Deity and not unworthy of His acceptance.

---

From The Mahabharata, Aswamedha Parva, Section XCI

Vaisampayana said: Animals have not been ordained to be slaughtered in sacrifices. Animal sacrifice is not consistent with righteousness. The destruction of creatures can never be said to be an act of righteousness. If you wish it, let your priests perform your sacrifice according to the Agama. By performing sacrifice according to the true import of the scriptural ordinances, great will be the merit achieved by you.

---

"The term YAJNA (Yagna) is derived from the root YAJ, meaning sacrifice or worship." - Panini 6-40, 120

So long as man identifies himself with his body, he is always trying to take, to absorb, because the body continues only by such taking and absorbing. When he identifies himself as the Self (Atman) he is always trying to give, to pour out, because the joy of the Self is in the forthpouring. On the Pravritti marg he takes; on the Nivrtti marg he gives.

[Related articles: "Pravritti- Nivritti" See pages on the left]

[Cows are sacred](#) < Click here for more details

Ghee or clarified butter (or, the cow from which it is produced) is regarded as the very root of sacrifice.

---

[Top](#) < To top of this page

[Index Alphabetical](#) [Index to Pages]

From The Bhagavad Gita

Chapter 17, Verses 11,12 & 13

That sacrifice which is offered by men without desire for reward as enjoined by the ordinance (scripture), with a firm faith that to do so is a duty, is Sattwic or pure.

The sacrifice which is offered seeking a reward and for ostentation, know thou that to be a Rajasic yajna.

They declare that sacrifice to be Tamasic which is contrary to the ordinances of the scriptures, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of mantras and gifts, and which is devoid of faith.