

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 76, Chapter 5 Verses 19 – 22

Greetings All,

Shloka # 19:

एतदत्र जन्ममर्त्यं जित्वा ब्रह्मैवमाप्नुते ॥

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मणोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ ५.१९ ॥

Even here is birth vanquished by them whose mind abides in equality. Flawless indeed is Brahman, the same; hence they abide in Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, from the 13th to # 21 shloka Sri Krishna has been discussing Gyana yoga, which is the central theme of this chapter. Gyana Yoga is the process of discovery of my real self. This process happens in two stages.

- 1) Realizing that I am not the body mind complex, rather that I am Consciousness itself.
- 2) I discover that “I” the consciousness not only pervades my body but also pervades all bodies.

Bodies are many but consciousness is one. I discover my real nature is consciousness. I also see that your real nature too is also consciousness. If I see myself as a physical body, I will see you too as a physical body. As I see myself, so I see the world and if my vision of myself has undergone a radical change, my vision of the world also will change.

As I see the world, so I see everything in it as well. If my vision changes I will see everything as Atma.

Citing example of a sentient wave, if wave sees itself as a

wave, it will see other waves as perishable waves. If I see myself as water and the wave-ness as an incidental feature that comes and goes, it confirms I am essentially water. This water-ness will not come and go. If the wave discovers this fact, then the wave will look upon itself as water and the wave will look upon the other waves also as water as well.

I “see” the atma in myself and everybody through the eyes of wisdom. When I see myself as immortal atma, I will look at you as shuddha atma and as the ever-secure Atma as well. I see myself as the nitya

shuddha budha mukta svaroopaha.

And having discovered this beautiful inner nature; a wise man will never like to come down to this perishable incidental and superficial body. After having lived in a wonderful house I will not want to go back to that slum dwelling.

The wise man only abides in this body. He is not obsessed with the physical body. He takes care of the physical body as the Lord’s property, but he is not obsessed with the incidental superficial mortal physical nature.

Shloka # 20:

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With a steady intellect, undeluded, knowing and abiding in Brahman, one should neither be elated when gaining the pleasant nor shrink when meeting with the unpleasant.

A Gyani even after gaining knowledge will have to live in the same world. Mukti is here and now, not after death. The same laws that govern an Agyani also govern a Jivan Mukta’s life. Three factors govern life. They are:

1. Deshaha: Place

2. Kalaha: Time. Time flows and body ages. We discover our wrinkles, pains and graying hair.
3. Prarabhda Karma: It varies from individual to individual. Different people have different experiences. This is due to their past karmas. So, both gyani and agyani's lives are governed by above three factors.

If there is no difference between a gyani and an agyani what is the benefit of Gyanam? Sri Krishna says, the difference is in the response to situations in life. Gyanam gives one the ability to provide a balanced response to a situation. He is not carried away by good experiences as they will come and go. He is not hooked to or addicted to a favorable situation. And what is the difference between appreciation and addiction? When I get addicted to something I am not prepared to loose that experience. And when that experience is lost, I go through a tremendous vacuum. Gyani is one who appreciates a favorable situation and when that situation goes away, it does not create a vacuum in him.

For a Gyani, loss does not happen. Citing example of the ocean, the ocean is ever full. Whether the water is taken away or added ocean continues to be full and its inner fullness continues. Sri Krishna says a Gyani does not get elated nor carried away by favorable situations.

Similarly, when the situation is unfavorable he retains the same balance. Citing example of Sri Rama who got the news one day he was going to be crowned as the king. Next day, however, he had to lose his kingdom and go into exile. While people around him were deeply affected, Sri Rama, himself, was not. Instead he spoke about his prarabhda karma. **Prarabhda is a choice less situation. So, advises Swamiji, for such choice less situations , put your effort into changing your attitude rather than changing the situation. This is possible only to one with Self Knowledge. This knowledge must be a conviction. If there is no conviction, this knowledge will not come through in a crisis.**

If law of karma is understood and assimilated the question “why me” will not arise. If it is a choiceful situation I try to change it. If it is a choice less situation I accept it. **Self-knowledge and laws of Karma should be deep convictions (doubtless knowledge).** “ Am I convinced I am consciousness different from this body?” Until this conviction comes we have to continue our sravanam and mananam.

Every experience I go through is perfect as per nature’s laws. I do not see the all dimensions of my experience as I do not have the total picture. Hence, I can’t talk of justice or injustice.

Even Gyanis like Ramakrishna paramahansa or Ramana Maharishi had bodily suffering. So we do not say Gyanam will stop physical ailment; Gyanam will give you the inner strength to face it; or to have a proper perspective of it. This requires conviction.

You get knowledge through sravanam and conviction through mananam. Until you get both one has to continue the quest by asking questions about your doubts. These questions are your mananam. Even after conviction we will still continue to have our habitual responses. We have to perform Nidhidhyasanam , keeping teaching in mind and leading an alert life. The next chapter discusses this aspect in greater detail. Even a mechanical life should be an alert one. Thus:

Sravanam: is required for Gyanam.

Mananam: is required for establishing conviction.

Nidhidhyasanam: is required for elimination of habitual negative tendencies. I know I should not get angry , but I get angry. One has to be constantly alert and remember the teachings. Chapter 6 elaborates on this process.

Such a person is a jivan mukta.

Shloka # 21:

॥ अविनाशोऽयं योगीन्द्र ॥
॥ अविनाशोऽयं योगीन्द्र ॥

॥ अविनाशोऽयं योगीन्द्र ॥ अविनाशोऽयं योगीन्द्र ॥ 5.21 ॥

The sage whose inner sense is unattached to objective contacts wins bliss in the Self; his inner sense is united with Brahman; he enjoys inexhaustible bliss.

In Shlokas 18 through 20 Sri Krishna talks about the transformation a Gyani enjoys. The transformations in a Gyani are:

1. a) Samadarshanam
2. b) Conquering mortality or fear of death
3. c) Right perspective in facing ups and downs of life.

Citing example of a football player where they are taught how to fall during a game without getting hurt. So also in life we will face psychological falls from which we need to come out without hurting ourselves. I should be able to start life again. Life must be lived.

The shloka # 21 talks about a Gyani's ananda or joy or fulfillment. This ananda is a result of his knowledge of his higher nature. He has learned to tap into his higher nature.

Citing an example of how an Ashrama got city water piped in with great difficulty. A devotee who was an engineer visited the ashrama and suggested there was under ground water there. The Swami of the ashrama was delighted, now that he did not have to depend on somebody for water.

So, we also have our own ananda swaroopa. Gyani taps into his own poornatvam. While Agyani depends on external factors as source of ananda the Gyani's source is the Atma. Sri Krishna says that all pleasures of external objects are included in the Atmananda.

Brahma Gyanam is “ I am Brahman”. Through this gyanam, a Gyani has uninterrupted supply of ananda. He has psychological independence. Akshayam sukham means inexhaustible sukham. All worldly pleasures are included in the atmananda. They include music, dance, art, science etc.

Many people sympathize with us Sanyasis. They think the poor chap has no wife, no children as such who will take care of him? While so many people sympathize with us inwardly I sympathize with them. I would like to tell them that by getting spiritual ananda one is not missing any other pleasures, because all the pleasures in the world are included in it.

Thus, a Gyani does not miss anything in life, while an Agyani with all his possessions is still unhappy. The Gyani does not hate anything.

Shloka # 22:

॥ अहं ब्रह्म ॥ इति ज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥ अहं ब्रह्म ॥ इति ज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥

॥ अहं ब्रह्म ॥ इति ज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥ अहं ब्रह्म ॥ इति ज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥ 5.22 ॥

Enjoyments born of objective contacts, indeed, cause pain only. Son of Kunti! They have a beginning and end; the sage does not delight in them.

With the previous shloka Gyana yoga is over. Shlokas 13 through 21 are the essence of chapter 5 and the chapter is called by many names including Gyana Yoga, Inner detachment, Psychological independence or Inner independence.

In shlokas 22 and 23 Sri Krishna talks about Sadhanas for Self Knowledge.

Take Away:

1. I “see” the atma in myself and everybody else through the eyes of wisdom. When I see myself as the immortal

atma, I will look at you as shuddha , ever-secure Atma as well.

2. For choice less situations, put your effort into changing your attitude rather than changing the situation.
3. Self-knowledge and laws of Karma should be deep convictions (doubtless knowledge).

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy