Baghawat Geeta, Class 95: Chapter 6, Verses 32 to 34

Greetings All,

Shloka # 32:

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Arjuna! He, who sees alike pleasure or pain in all beings, on the analogy of his own self, is deemed the supreme Yogin.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, with this shloka Dhyana Phalam is completed. In these 32 shlokas of chapter #6, Sri Krishna talked about general disciplines to be followed before meditation (Bahiranga Sadhanani), specific disciplines (Antaranga Sadhanani) to be followed before meditation and finally Dhyana swaroopam, the actual process of meditation or dwelling on the teaching. The final topic Dhyana swaroopam is also the Dhyana Phalam. The benefit of this vedantic meditation is that the knowledge gets totally assimilated in the personality. It transforms the core personality. Due to this my attitude, towards people and world experiences, goes through a big change. This change is due to Vedantic meditation. Now, the world does not unsettle me anymore. World does not determine if it unsettles me; it is I alone who determine this. Vedanta makes the world incapable of disturbing me. This change of attitude is due to change in understanding of the world and myself.

Thus, through **shravanam and mananam, one gets Gyanam; through nidhidhyasanam, one converts gyanam into gyana nishta**. Elaborating, Sri Krishna points out the benefits of Nidhidhyasanam as:

- One obtains samadarshanam,

- One reaches the highest ananda,
- Devotion towards the Lord reaches its peak,
- Universal compassion arises

These are all the benefits of nidhidhyasanam; which is otherwise called jivanmukti; I am no more under the tyranny of the world and its people. And this inner psychological freedom is jivanmukti phalam. Thus four topics have been completed in the first 32 verses; bahiranga sadhanam; and antaranga sadhanam; dhyana svarupam and dhyana phalam.

Shloka # 33:

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O Krishna ! Of this Yoga, elucidated by You as consisting in sameness, I do not see firm certitude, the mind being fickle.

The fifth topic is now introduced with a question from Arjuna. It starts from shloka # 33 and ends at Shloka # 36. The topic is obstacles to the practice of meditation and their remedies. Scriptures mention four types of obstacles in Manduka Upanishad. Gaudapada dealing with them talks of Mano-nigraha or discipline of the mind. If mind is undisciplined the Vedantic study remains intellectual. Mano-nigraha is prescribed for certain people; one's who study and understand Vedanta but whose mind is not disciplined. When should I incur mental discipline? When I study Vedanta and Vedanta remains in one corner in my day-to-day life while my emotional problems continue. There is a gap between what I know and what I am. My problem is not knowledge but lack of mental discipline. Vedanta says such a person needs mano-nigraha. And since many people face this problem, shastra discusses mano-nigrahah as a discipline to be practiced after the study of Vedanta.

Why do some people have this problem and others don't? Shastra says qualifications for studying Vedanta known as Sadhana

Chatushtaya Sampathihi have been prescribed. For people who are qualified, mano-nigraha is not prescribed. For those who are not qualified but still study Vedanta, they need to perform Mano-nigraha. Sri Krishna knows Arjuna has this problem hence he prescribes it. Arjuna confesses he has this problem as well.

In Mandukya karika, in the name of mano-nigrahah, Vedantic meditation is prescribed, and the karika mentions four obstacles. Sri Krishna does not deal with all the four obstacles here. However, I thought, I will just briefly mention them. They are: layah, vikshepah, kashayah and rasasvadah. These are the four obstacles, which stand between my meditation and me.

Explanation of the four types of obstacles is:

1. Layah: Layah means the dullness of the mind or sleepiness of the mind. This is a universalcomplaint when we sit for meditation. So sleep is a common problem and it is tamas dominant.
2. Vikshepa: Indicates an overactive mind. It makes the mind wander.
3. Kashayaha: Mind is non-functional. It is between dull and active. Shock, trauma, separation etc., can stun the mind into this state. Extreme happiness can also cause this state.
4. Rasasvadaha: Pleasant feeling felt during meditation. It is not atmanada or Brahmananda. It is a condition of joy at quietude. The difference is brahmannada is enjoyed at all times while rasasvada is only present during meditation. Don’t be enamored by this state. It can be addictive. It is an obstacle to meditation. In this state if somebody disturbs your meditation, you get upset.

Gyani’s pleasure is in pashyan srinvan, sparshan, jignan; therefore rasasvadah, enjoying meditation pleasure is an

obstacle.

What can one do about rasasvadaha? Instead of enjoying the pleasure, you have to dwell upon the teaching; which says you are ananda; not only during meditation, but also during an active life.

So these are four obstacles and what are the remedies?

Gaudapada himself says: the sleep should be countered by two methods; one is removing the cause of sleep and also by practice.

1. Following are causes of Laya.
    - Over eating and then meditating; or Bahu Ashnan.
    - Upset stomach or Ajirna.
    - Sleep deficit or Nidra Sheshaha.
    - Mind not habituated to meditation or abhyasaha.

Pavlovian association of mind; Mind should not go to sleep during meditation. The mind associates closing the eyes and withdrawal from the activities with the sleep alone. Therefore in meditation when you do all these things; mind thinks, Oh he is going to sleep sitting; the mind has to be trained; and the mind should know that this is the time of meditation; So by abhyasah the mind learns. This is the method of remedying the problem of sleep.

3. Vikshepa: Here too practice of Vairagyam is recommended as remedy. Sri Krishna discusses Vairagyam at a later stage when we will also get into it.
4. Kashayaha: Anger, jealousy, suppressed emotions. One is not aware of these emotions. In loneliness they surface such as while at an Ashram. Guadapada says let the steam out and release the emotions.
5. Rasasvada: By proper discrimination or understanding that this pleasure is conditional. I should remember that I am poornaha all the time.

Shloka # 34:

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The mind is indeed fickle, O Krishna! a tormentor, powerful and hard. I deem its control as extremely difficult as that of the wind.

The hyperactive mind is intense in my case, O Sri Krishna, says Arjuna. It makes other organs turbulent as well.

The mind is like a churning rod. When mind is active mouth becomes active, talking and eating; eyes become active without concentration and wanders; legs walk up and down.

When mind is disturbed it disturbs all indriyanis. Mind is very powerful. Mind does not obey nor follow the intellect. Normally intellect drives the mind.

Citing an example: initially the coffee drinking is intellectual. Later body demands it and even later this can cause withdrawal symptoms, when you stop coffee. While you wish to withdraw from coffee, your mind does not. This is the split personality every Vedantin goes through. This re-orienting the mind or vasana is a painful affair. It is like stopping drinking of alcohol. Remaining sober is painful. Vedanta considers us drunk from our many habits. It requires time and effort to withdraw from our ingrained habits.

Arjuna says I find it difficult, like controlling the wind. O Sri Krishna, You have to help me.

Take away:

1.Through shravanam and mananam, one gets Gyanam; through nidhidhyasanam, one converts gyanam into gyana nishta.

2.Nidhidhyasanam is also called jivanmukti. I am no more under the tyranny of the world and its people. I achieve inner

psychological freedom.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy