

Baghawad Gita, Class 192:

Chapter 15, Verses 5 to 7

Continuing his teachings

Swamiji said,

Shloka

15.5:

15.5 The wise ones who are free from pride and non-discrimination, who have conered the evil of association, [Hatred and love arising from association with foes and friends.] who are ever devoted to spirituality, completely free from desires, free from the dualities called happiness and sorrow, reach that undecaying State.

After

giving a description of samsara in the first few verses, Sri Krishna dealt with the samsara nivrtti upaya, the means or methods for removal of samsara or attaining mokshaha.

What

are the disciplines to be followed to attain moksha were described. Four disciplines were highlighted.

The first one is vairagyam or dispassion; the second one is sharanagathi, surrendering to the Lord in the form of any Ishta devatha; the third discipline is the acquisition or cultivation of healthy values, which we called sadgunaha also discussed in the 16th chapter as daivi sampathi. Cultivating healthy virtues is the third discipline and the fourth and the primary discipline are vedantic enquiry, Vedanta vichara, vedanta sravana manana nidhidhyasanam. And the word Sri Krishna uses for this vichara is parimarganam.

And enquiry into Brahman is possible only through Vedantic scriptures and therefore Brahman enquiry automatically means vedantic enquiry. Of these four, the first three are supporting sadhanas, and vedantic enquiry alone is the primary sadhana, which alone removes the self or Brahman ignorance. And if a person follows all these four disciplines, the seekers will benefit from becoming wise people or Gyani and they will attain Brahman.

Previously Brahman was presented as the root of the world and now Brahman is presented as the destination of the seeker. So what is the substratum of the world alone is the destination of the seeker, and that is why the word padam is a versatile word; it has got two meanings. One meaning is the substratum; the other meaning is the destination. So Brahman is padam, the support of the world and Brahman is padam, the destination of the seeker, that Brahman they attain.

Shloka

15. 6:

**15.6 Neither the sun nor the moon nor fire
illuminates That. That is My supreme Abode, reaching which they
do not return.**

In the previous verse it was mentioned that the seekers who follow the four fold disciplines will attain that undecaying padam, which is called Brahman, which is the root of the universe. Now in this verse, Sri Krishna tells us the nature of that Brahman; which is the destination of the seekers; which is the substratum of the universe.

So this verse is the Brahma lakshana shloka. A shloka, which defines Brahman. Wherever Brahman is defined that verse is considered

important.

And

while defining Brahman in this verse, Sri Krishna is borrowing from a well-known

upanishad mantra. I

have often said that the entire Gita is a borrowed teaching,

Sri

Krishna does not give anything original rather the whole Gita is extracted

from the upanishads. That is

why you should remember the verse, sarvopanishado gavo dogdha gopala-nandana, partho vatsa sudhirbhokta dugdham gitamrtam mahat. This

verse is based on a well-known upanishad mantra, which occurs both in the Mundaka

upanishad and Kathopanishad and it is so

well known that it is used in all the temples regularly, at the time of deeparadhana.

And that mantra is:

na

tatra suryo bhati na candratarakam

nema vidyuto bhanti kuto yamagnih |

tameva bhantamanubhati sarvam

tasya

bhasa sarvamidam vibhati || 2.II.10

||

It is one of the very important definitions of Brahman, which we use at the time of arathi. The essence of the shloka is that, any instrument of knowledge cannot objectify Brahman. Brahman is not objectifiable through any instrument of knowledge. Brahman cannot be illumined by anything. And to convey this idea, the Upanishad uses the example of light.

Light in Vedanta is that in whose presence things are known. For example, this is called light, because in its presence I am able to know you are seated in front. Imagine light goes away; I will not know whether you are continuing to sit or quietly walk off. I won't know. Therefore light is that in whose presence things are known. And keeping this definition, the Upanishads mention or point out that every sense organ can be compared to a light. Every sense organ can be compared to a light, because sense organ is that in whose presence things are known. Therefore ear is a light, in whose presence sounds are known; therefore ear becomes a light (light with quotation, it is figurative expression)' nose is a light in whose presence smells are known; tongue is a light in whose presence, tastes are known and if you extend further, any pramanam or instrument of knowledge is called a light. Any pramanam; any instrument of knowledge; is also called light, because in the presence of instrument of knowledge the objects are known. Thus inference is also a form of light, through which you can know things and even words are a form of light. Even a lecture is a form of light. Hence the expression: Can you throw some light upon that particular topic?

Thus

even words are a form of light called shabda pramanam through which we come to know

things and the upanishads says that there are so many lights in the world. Sun is

a light; moon is a light; stars are light; fire is light.

There are so many

lights, and there are many sense organs, which are also light and in addition

to that, there is shabda pramanam, which is light. **Thus**

there are so many lights and Brahman is that which can never be illumined by or

known through any light. No light can objectify that Brahman.

To use a

technical language, anything that can be known through a

light, an instrument of knowledge, anything that is known through a pramanam is called a prameyam. Anything that is objectified, known, illumined through any pramanam is called a prameyam. Sri Krishna says **Brahman is that which is not an object of knowledge; it is not a prameyam at all.**

And then finally, we will have a question. If Brahman cannot be objectified through any instrument of knowledge, does that Brahman exist at all?

If you say that it cannot be tasted, touched, seen, heard, etc.; if it cannot be inferred or described; if it cannot be known through any instrument of knowledge, does it exist at all? The upanishads however say that it does exist.

So while Brahman is not an object of knowledge, Brahman does exist. If so, what is that Brahman?

You can have only one answer, if Brahman exists, and if it is not an object, there can be only one answer; That, it is the very subject; it is the very conscious being, which objectifies everything but which can never be objectified.

Which is the experiencer of everything, but which is never experienced. It is this seer of everything but never seen. The unseen seer; the unseen hearer, the unsmelled smeller; the untasted taster, the untouched toucher, these are all not my expressions. These are all upanishadic expressions.

So

therefore, adrshto drashtaha asrto srota, amato manto, avijjato vijnata, this subject that is never objectified and objectifiable is Brahman. **In short, Brahman is the consciousness-principle. It illumines the inert world; but it is not illumined by the inert world. It illumines matter but; it is never illumined by matter. It knows the matter; but the matter does not know it.** So thus Brahma lakshana is finally chaitanya swaroopam brahma or Chid rupam brahma. Satyam Gyanam ananthambrahma; this is the essence of this verse.

And why do we use this mantra at the time of deeparadhana. We use this mantra to expose our foolishness. Oh Lord you are the illuminator of everything while I am using this miserable camphor light tri illuminate you. So therefore, the pujari says, I am trying to illumine you through this fire, but the fact is fire does not illumine you. On the other hand, it is you the consciousness, which is illumining this fire. And that is the significance of such a prayoga.

Now

look at the shloka. Sri Krishna says:

The

sunlight does not illumine the Brahma chaitanyam, the Consciousness; on the other hand, the sunlight itself is known because of the Consciousness alone. The moonlight does not illumine that Brahma chaitanyam.

So

the fire does not illumine that Brahman. On the other hand, Brahman illumines the fire; illumines, means makes the fire known. In vedanta, the word illumine

is equal to making something known. So Brahman illumines the fire means,
Brahman alone makes
the fire known because the Brahman is the Consciousness principle because of which I am
conscious of the fire's existence.

And in the original mundaka mantra, two more are added that means Stars do not illumine; flashes of lightening, do not illumine that Brahman.

And if that Brahman is Consciousness, which can never be objectified, I said that Brahman has to be the very subject itself. Now the question is if Brahman happens to be I, the subject; how many kilometers, I should travel to reach that Brahman?

I have to understand that Brahman is the subject, the Subject, I, the observer, the conscious-principle. In short the very atma. Once I know Brahman is the very atma, or aham, how far should I travel to reach Brahman? I need not travel even a millimeter, because by the very knowledge I have discovered the fact that there is no distance between Brahman and me. And therefore, we get a very important idea that we should know. Reaching Brahman is not a physical event.

Reaching Brahman is not a physical event, which requires a time or a process; reaching Brahman is an intellectual event. Reaching brahman is an intellectual event; what type of intellectual event is it? It is an event, which involves dropping a misconception. Dropping a misconception is that event; and what is the Misconception? That there is a misconception that between Brahman and me there is a difference; this is my false notion. This false notion, which is distancing me from Brahman, is neither a physical distance nor a temporal distance; rather it is a notional distance. **What is that false notion? The false notion is that Brahman is somewhere and I should reach there.** All the movies will

reinforce our misconception. A Bhakta will die in the movie or the TV serial and you will see a jyothi rising from the bhakta, a flame from the body, the jivatma flame, and the flame will travel, come out of door, (all the modern technology are used), flame will be travelling, travelling, and will rise and rise and paramatma will be sitting there, and jivatma will travel and travel and merge. All these things will reinforce my misconception, that there is a distance between God and me. What Vedanta says is that if God is all pervading, there cannot be a distance between God and me. And if at all there is a distance, it is a distance caused by a false notion; that Bhagavan is in Kailasa or Vaikuntha.

If

the distance is caused by a false notion, how do you remove the distance? By removing the false notion. **And how do you remove the false notion; only by knowledge.**

Therefore knowledge is equal to merger. Other than Gyanam, there is no other merger with Lord. Therefore Sri Krishna says yat gatva, having merged into that Brahman; "merge" within quoting, by dropping the notion that there is a distance between Brahman and Me and knowing that I was never away from Brahman and I can never be away from Brahman, having removed the notion, na nivartante. There is no question of coming back to samsara once again. When merger is in the form of knowledge; it is permanent merger. If merger is in the form of a physical event, that merger will be temporary; you will merge and remain there for some time; thus, every union will end in separation. Any physical merger is not permanent. That is why we all have come together between 6 and 7 am. Samyoga at 6 o' clock and viyoga at 7 o clock. Samyoga in svarga loka and afterwards what viyoga; any physical merger is temporary. That is why we say if merger is going to vaikuntha, you will go alright, but after some time, if merger is going to Kailasa, you will come back; Physical merger is temporary. But

Vedantic merger is not physical. It is in the form of Gyanam. And knowledge based merger is permanent, because ignorance once gone, is gone for good.

And having merged into Brahman, that person does not come back again. That destination Brahman is nothing but, Sri Krishna says, my own higher nature; Hey Arjuna Brahman is my own higher nature. So, by saying higher nature, Sri Krishna indirectly indicates I have got a lower nature also. When you say that person is more intelligent, this person is less. When Bhagavan has got higher nature and lower nature and that has already been described in a previous chapter . And therefore Arjuna my body is my lower nature, and the Consciousness is my higher nature.

Para

Prkriti we defined as Nirguna,
nirvikara, satya, and
chetana tatvam. And apara prakrti
we defined as saguna, savikara, mithya, and chetana
tatvam.

Shloka : 15.

7

**15.7 It is verily a part of Mine, which
becoming the eternal individual soul in the region of living
beings, draws (to
itself) the organs which have the mind as their sixth, and
which abide in
Nature.**

So with the previous verse the topic of the moksha upaya
is over. The methods or disciplines to be followed for
attaining moksha,
which is the four-fold discipline and by following that one
will attain Brahman.

The second topic was called Brahma nirvanam. Nirvanam

means merger. So with that, the first part of the 15th chapter is over.

Now from the 7th verse onwards, Sri Krishna is entering into another very important topic and that topic is Brahman alone is in the form of the whole universe. **Brahman alone is in the form of whole universe, which means there is no universe at all, other than Brahman.** Just as saying there are no ornaments other than the gold, ornaments are nothing but different names that we use, but they are not substances. There is no substance called bangle. Substance is gold alone. There is no substance called chair; the chair is nothing but wood alone. Similarly there is no substance called world. Brahman alone is known by the name world. And this idea has been hinted in the fourth chapter of the Gita. In the well known shloka:

brahmarpanam brahma
hvirbrahmagnau brahmana hutam

brahmaiva
tena gantavyam brahma karma
samadhina.

And

if we chant this verse, you will get hungry, because it is used for eating. But the idea, the content of this shloka is: Brahman alone is in the form of everything.

And to convey this idea, Sri Krishna divides the entire world into two parts; one part is the jiva rupa; jivas; so the conscious experiencers are known as jiva, and the second part is the inert objects of experience, called jagat. So universe is nothing but jiva plus jagat. The experiencer plus the experienced, if you remember the Mandukya Upanishad, it calls it, the pramata and the prameya, or the jiva and jagat. And Sri Krishna wants to say that one Brahman alone is appearing

in the form of jiva and the same Brahman is in the form of jagat, the inert world as well.

And for this purpose, we should know what is the definition of jiva. **What is the definition of jiva? For this purpose, you should remember tatva bodha. And Sri Krishna defines jiva as all pervading brahma chaitanyam, all pervading consciousness, which is reflected or manifest in our body mind-reflecting medium.** In Sanskrit, we call it chaitanya prathibhimbam, jiva. The originalall pervading Consciousness is called Brahman or paramatma. In Tatva Bodha, we used the expression, OC. **OC means original consciousness. And that original consciousness when it is expressing through the body, expressing through the mind that reflected or manifest consciousness is called RC; the reflected consciousness.**

And this body

mind matter medium, is called the RM, the reflecting medium.

So OC, RC and

RM.

And to understand this, I will give you an example, which also we have seen before; I am reminding you of that example. Imagine during the daytime there is the original sun in the sky, that we will call as OS. Original sun is OC and OS, or the original sun in the sky. And imagine there is a room down below or a hall down below, and because there is roof and also the doors are closed, the room is dark within. There is no light. And original sunlight is not able to illumine the light because there is a roof obstructing the sunlight. And you take a mirror. A darpanah, a reflecting mirror and you open one of the windows of the room, and you keep the mirror at a 45 degrees angle that you keep outside. You know that the mirror does not have a light of its own.

Therefore,

mirror is not an illuminating principle; it is not a luminous principle at all.

But when you keep the mirror down below, the original sunlight gets reflected in the mirror and now the mirror has got Reflected sunlight (RS). And what is the mirror? The mirror is the reflecting medium. Therefore OS, RS, RM. RM is common to both and this RM which is not luminous by itself has now become luminous because of the reflecting sunlight. And not only the mirror has become bright, it is capable of illumining the dark room.

Now

I ask you a question; what is illumining the dark room; the mirror, or the original sunlight? Suppose you say, original sunlight is illumining; not the mirror, then I will ask you to remove the mirror and you will find that once the mirror is removed, the hall gets dark. It cannot be illumined.

Suppose

another person says, the mirror alone is illumining, original sunlight is not required; then I will ask you in the night you try. So, it is not the mirror alone nor the original sunlight alone; but you require the combination of both. You require the combination of both to illumine the dark room.

Now in this combination you can focus on any one of them. You can give importance to any one of them because both are equally important. In a particular context, you can highlight; like father and mother; who is important for the child to be born; both are required; But at some time, the mother takes the credit; at some time the father takes the credit.

Therefore,
you can focus any one of them.

Based on this, we have got two ways of presentation. One way is I say the mirror illumines the dark room; blessed by the original sun; so in this the importance is given to the mirror, when the mirror illumines the dark room; but I add quietly blessed by the original sun. But who is the illuminator? When the mirror illumines importance is given to the mirror. Or I can present in a different language also; the Sun alone illumines the dark room; not directly but through the mirror. The sun alone illumines the dark room, not directly; but through the mirror and therefore the credit of illumination goes to ultimately the sun alone.

In the same way, our body mind complex is like the mirror. The original consciousness is Brahman and the reflected consciousness is Jiva. The body-mind complex is RM; the reflecting medium, it does not have sentiency of its own; body is inert matter, mind is inert matter. Just as the mirror by itself is non-luminous and this body mind complex has got the reflected consciousness, we call the Jiva, and the reflected consciousness is possible because of the original consciousness called Brahman. And therefore we say: Brahman alone is available in the body-mind complex as the jiva. OC-Brahman alone is present in the body mind complex as the RC-jiva and as the jiva; Brahman alone illumines or experiences the dark room, what is the dark room? The entire world is comparable to dark room.

And

suppose you remove the mirror, what happens? Original sunlight will be there; but since there would not be reflection, mirror is removed; the room will become darker. Similarly, during sleep, what happens? The mind-mirror is removed, and therefore the reflected consciousness is not available and therefore the world becomes

what? Dark,
means during sleep, there is total darkness. Why there is
darkness? Not because
Brahman is not there, the original consciousness is, but the
reflecting medium
the mind has resolved, therefore the world is not illumined.

And
therefore in these verses, from the 7th up to the 11th,
Krishna says Brahman the
OC alone is in the form of jiva,
the RC. Thus Brahman the original consciousness alone is in
the form of Jiva, the
Reflected consciousness (RC).

And
now in the shloka, Sri Krishna says: Jivaloke, in the world
of Jivas, I, the
Brahman alone am in the form of reflection and this reflected-
consciousness
alone makes the body mind complex alive and sentient. And once
the RC is not
there; the body will become dead matter. So this is the
description, which is
going to come, the details we will see in the next class.

Take Away:

Brahman
is that which can never be illumined by or known through any
light. No light
can objectify that Brahman.

Brahman
is that which is not an object of knowledge; it is not a
prameyam at all.

Brahman
is the very subject; it is the very conscious being, which

objectifies

everything but which can never be objectified. Which is the
experiencer of everything,
but which is never experienced. It is this seer of everything
but never seen; the
unseen seer; the unseen hearer, the un-smelled smeller; the
un-tasted taster
and the untouched toucher.

In

short, Brahman is the consciousness-principle. It illumines
the inert world;
but it is not illumined by the inert world. It illumines
matter but; it is
never illumined by matter. It knows the matter; but the matter
does not know
it.

Reaching

Brahman is not a physical event, which requires a time or a
process; reaching
Brahman is an intellectual event.

We have

the false notion that Brahman is somewhere and I should reach
there.

And

how do you remove the false notion; only by knowledge.
Therefore, knowledge is
equal to merger.

Brahman alone is in the form of whole universe, which means
there
is no universe at all, other than Brahman.

**With Best
Wishes,**

Ram Ramaswamy