

Taitreya Upanishads, Class14

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 1:

The sacred sound Om is Brahman. All this is the syllable OM.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 2:

It is widely known that Om is uttered to indicate consent. The priest officiating at the sacrifice encourages his assistants with the words "O Sravya". With the chanting of Om they start singing the Sama verses; and with "Om Som" they recite the shastras; Adhvaryu answers with the syllable "Om".

With Om the chief priest, Brahma expresses his assent. One permits the offering of oblation to the fire with "OM". May I obtain with Brahman; with this determination, the Brahmana says "Om" before he begins to recite the Veda; and he does obtain the Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said this shloka is a glorification of Omkara. It is a mantra used in Gyana Kandam, as analysis of Omkara, in Upasana Kandam where Omkara is used as a symbol for saguna Brahma Upasana and in Karma Kandam where it is used in rituals. Priests of Rg, Yajur, and Sama Vedas also use Omkara extensively. Even a beginning Brahmachari starts his chanting or Veda Adhyayana through Omkara chanting. In Veda Adhyayanam one only learns how to chant, as such it is Shabda Pradhana. Later the Brahmachari moves on to Veda-mimasa where he learns the meaning of the chant. Typically, he learns his branch of Veda that is Rg, Yajur or Sama. Some may also learn more than one Veda. In our tradition memorizing and chanting alone existed in the past and not reading and chanting.

In this Shloka Brahma means Yoga. Thus the Brahmachari starts his chanting with Om. Uttering Om is mangalam. As a result of this prayer he certainly completes Veda Adhyayanam.

Some clarifications were provided on Omkara.

How should one utter or pronounce the word Om?

In English Om is often written as AUM, however the pronunciation is not Aum. In Sanskrit A +U= O, due to a sandhi. Thus, in English, AUM should change to OM. OM is the correct pronunciation.

How long does one chant Om?

In the beginning of a Vedic chanting O must be three matras long or as O3M. At end of a Vedic chanting O should be four matras long or as O4M.

Omkara Japa is prescribed only for Sanyasis. People in other ashramas such as Brahmacharya and Grihasta are not allowed to chant Omkara alone as a kevala mantra. For a Sanyasi it is a compulsory mantra. Sanyasi chants Omkara instead of Gayathri. A Sanyasi can prolong the Om mantra chant as much as he wants such as OOOM.

Dayananda Saraswathi used to say that the mere Omkara chanting creates Tivra Vairagyaha (extreme sense of detachment) and because of it a Grihasta may wish to take up Sanyasa after such a chanting. This, of course, can create problems in society. Therefore Omkara is always mixed with other mantras for Grihasta's. Now, concluding the anuvakaha #8 with shloka # 1, it says, May the seeker practice Omkara.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 9, Shloka # 1:

The practice of what is right and proper, as fixed by the scriptural texts, is to be done along with reading the texts oneself and propagating the truths of the same. "Truth", meaning practicing in life what is to be understood to be right and proper, is to be pursued along with regular studies and preaching. Penance, study, and preaching; control of the senses, study and preaching; tranquility, study and preaching;

the “maintenance of fire”, study and preaching; offering oblations in fire sacrifice, study and preaching of the Vedas; serving the guests, study and preaching; the performance of duties towards man, study and preaching; duties towards children, study and preaching of the Vedas; procreation, study and preaching; propagation of the race, study and preaching; all these are things to be practiced sincerely. Satyavaca, son of Rathitara, holds that truth alone is to be strictly practiced. Taponitya, a son of Purusista declares that penance alone is to be practiced. Naka, son of Modgala, holds the view that the study and preaching of the Vedas alone is to be practiced; that verily, is penance; aye that is penance.

With previous shloka the five Upasanas of Samshito Upasana, Vyahriti Upasana, Hiranyagarbha Upasana, Pankta Upasana and Omkara Upasana have all been completed. These Upasanas are meant to purify, concentrate and expand one’s mind. These Upasanas will make the mind ready for Gyanam. We should keep in mind that these Upasanas will not give us Moksha. For that one has to go through Gyana yoga of sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam of Vedanta scriptures under a qualified Guru.

There are many types of Upasanas. Chandogyo Upanishad has countless Upasanas. Puranas and Itihasas also have many Upasanas. Bhagawatham also has many Upasanas. It is not compulsory to practice a Vedic Upasana. Nowadays, Vedic Upasanas are not preached or practiced anymore. Rather, Ganesha, Rama, Krishna and other such Upasanas are more common and as good for purification of the mind. In todays context Vedic Upasanas are only of academic interest.

Now, the Upanishad talks about karma as well. Karmas can be Kayika or Vachika karmas. Thus, in the beginning stages, Brahmacharya stage, one starts with Karma yoga. Later, Karma decreases and Upasana increases during Vanaprastha stage. So, one should not neglect Karma. Karma Yoga has been discussed extensively in the Gita. Karma Yoga involves actions that contribute to the spiritual growth. Thus we have:

Para Upakara Karmani: This involves work that helps more people as such leads to spiritual growth.

Para Udasana Karmani: Here my work helps me. I don't care about others. He does not do any good or harm to others. In this state one is in a stage of spiritual stagnation.

Para Apakara Karmani: These are actions harmful to others. It brings one down spiritually.

Swami Chinmayananda used to say:

Godman: Para Upakara

Man man: Para Udasana

Animal man: Para Apakara

So, one should strive to increase Para Upakara or Satvika Karmani. One should bring Tamasika Karmani to a minimum. The word Suna means "necessary evil". If one performs Suna, one should also perform prayaschita. Vedas have Prayaschita built into it so that any errors are corrected immediately. Sandhya Vandanam has Prayschita mantras built into it.

All prayers and Pancha Maha Yagna, all contribute to spiritual growth. Pancha Maha Yagna is a Prayaschita as well as a Shodhaka karmani.

Refreshing our memories on Pancha Maha Yagna, they are:

1. Deva Yagna: Puja or Sandhya vandana are examples
2. Pitr Yagna: Prayers and puja to ancestors. One should not forget one's living parents as well.
3. Rishi or Brahma Yagna: Study of scriptures and teaching others about our scriptures.
4. Manushya Yagna: Social Service
5. Bhuta Yagna: Service to lower beings such as animals and plants. Daily placing of Kolam (rangoli) using rice powder, Tulasi puja are all examples of this.

The Upanishad says, of the five-maha yagna's, while all are important, Brahma Yagna foremost. People are naturally more rituals oriented. However, Taittiriya Upanishad recommends a systematic study of scriptures. Many people consider such a study as of academic interest only. However, recognizing that knowledge is power and that spiritual knowledge is very powerful, study of scriptures should not be just for academic interest. Furthermore, spiritual knowledge helps with our Prarabhda Karmas as well. It is a Kavacha against Prarabhda karmas.

This Upanishad also emphasizes values or Daiviha Sampati. Daiviha Sampati means discovering God in my heart. To obtain this sampati one has to acquire Godly character. Therefore values are important.

Discussing the shloka, following words were explained:

Svadyaya: Study of scriptures. In Brahmacharya ashrama Dharma shastra is studied in addition to learning professional skills such as warfare, business etc. Dharma shastra, in poorva bhaga, was a common subject for all students. Thus, in Brahmacharya ashrama one studies Dharma while in Grihastha and Vanaprastha ashramas one lives the Dharma, hence the saying Dharmam Chara. The idea was to learn Dharma in Brahmacharya, then follow Dharma in practice and then learn about Brahman or go to Gyana Yoga.

Pravachanam: Means sharing knowledge. Only a competent Guru can teach you the Vedas. Self-study can be dangerous. This also gives me the responsibility of teaching future generations as well as a part of the Anadi Guru Shishya Parampara.

In the Vedic society everyone had to share by talking and living the teachings of the Vedas. Vedas also ask a segment of society to make the study and spread of scriptural knowledge their only profession. This segment of society is known as

Elevate the self by the self; do not weaken the self. Self is indeed the friend of the self. Self-alone is self's foe.

Continuing his teaching of Gita Swami Paramarthananda said, in the beginning of chapter six, Sri Krishna is dealing with the general disciplines to be observed throughout his transactions so that he will enjoy a mind, which is conducive to meditation. These disciplines are called samanya sadhanani or bahiranga sadhanam.

The first Bahiranga sadhana is maintenance of Samatvam of mind even when we go through many experiences. I have no control over the experience itself, which is a product of the external world. I don't even know how my family will react at any point in time. Even after fifty years of marriage a wife is not sure of her husbands reaction to situations. I can only control my response to experiences of life. This control is a Karma Yoga mind. So, having a poised mind is a first discipline. Such a mind is free of violent emotions and it does not get out of control. This capacity to recover from emotional trauma is called Samatvam. If we have that, we are reasonably healthy, psychologically. Psychological health is Samatvam. It is brought about by karma yoga in which the Lord himself plays the primary help or role. So Lord is the backup. We talked of this samatvam up to the 4th shloka of this chapter.

In shloka # 5 Sri Krishna introduces another Bahiranga Sadhana called self-effort. Scriptures say human beings have free will. Plants don't have free will. Animals also don't have choice; as such they also don't have punyam and papam. Many people however are fatalistic and don't accept concept of free will. They consider everything as pre-determined. It is difficult to argue with them. To them we say everything is destiny or Prarabhdam. Now, there are two types of prarabhdams, one is punyam and other is papam.

If a person has got punya prarabhdham meaning if he has a good destiny, that good destiny will influence the mind in such a

way that he will accept the concept of freewill. And when the destiny is negative meaning papa prarabdham, the very destiny will influence the mind in such a way that he will not accept freewill. Therefore, we say, those who have got punya destiny will accept freewill. Those who have papa destiny, they will not accept freewill and Sri Krishna is addressing those people who have got punyam and accept the concept of freewill. Shastra's want us to accept freewill as well.

Once you accept free will do you also accept destiny or do you think it is free will alone that functions at all times? Shastra's say both free will and destiny play a role in our lives. Fate is the result of our own past actions while freewill is the course of action that we choose to take because of our thinking or because of our buddhi. Between these two, which is more powerful, is it Vidhiya (fate) or Madiya (free will)? We cannot answer this question as we do not know when fate comes in and when free will actuates, as their relative strengths vary. Fate is determined by a particular action of ours and the intensity of this action will vary.

Thus, prarabhda can occur as prabala (strong), madhyama (middling) or as durbala (weak). So also it is with free will, the intensity of free will varies, as does the result.

Prabal Prarabhda: Free will is helpless. It can only ask for inner strength to face such a powerful fate.

Madhyama prarabhda: Free will can manage the prarabhda. It can reduce the impact of fate.

Durbala Prarabhda: Prayaschitam (as free will) can wipe out the Prarabhda karma.

So, fate can be changed depending upon its intensity. Citing an example, it is like going to a doctor. The doctor will never say, "I can or I cannot." He will desire to examine you first then pronounce his diagnosis. In some cases he will say

it is curable, in some cases he will say it can be controlled and in other cases he may say medicine may not be able to help you. Thus, our future is neither controlled by fate or free will. Rather it is controlled by a resultant of the intensities of fate and free will respectively.

Therefore, freewill has got a contributory role in determining our future; and since the freewill has got a contributory role, an asthika purushah, one who follows vedic teaching, he always has an attitude that I can take charge of my life. This is the reason why our goals are called purushartah. Purushartah means goals, which are sought after by human beings; and the goals, which are accomplished by human beings.

Moksha is such a purushartah and it is to be chosen and accomplished by me.

Sri Krishna says, "And Arjuna, I expect you to be the chooser of your future; and once you believe in free will and you have decided to choose your future, I am ready to help you".

God can help only those who are willing to put forth the necessary effort. A guru can help only those students who believe in themselves. Therefore, first, you should have faith and confidence in yourself.

Swami Vivekananda said that " I believe in a man who believes in himself". Such a man is an Astika.

So take charge. For whatever goal you have to accomplish, you have the same set of instruments i.e., body, mind and intellect complex. In shloka # 5, this instrument is called Atma. Success depends upon your instrument. If they are in decent shape, you can accomplish your goals. It is like a car, if it is in good shape, it will take you far. Katho Upanishad compares our body to a chariot. Just as musicians fine-tune their instruments before a concert so too should we fine-tune this body mind instrument. This is the instrument given to us for this life.

Many people spend a lifetime without knowing what they want in life. Our body and mind must function in coordination. Many organizations fail despite having great people. This happens often due to poor coordination. So, to succeed in life, our body and mind must be in coordination. This is called integration or Gyana Yogyatha prapthihi.

Question comes how do I fine tune my body mind complex? Sri Krishna says one has to use your own body mind complex to perform this fine-tuning.

So, integrate your instruments with your own instruments. Do not weaken your instruments. The most weakening attitude is “I cannot accomplish this”. Get over such self-diffidence. Get over the inferiority complex. Be optimistic. This is called self-confidence and self-effort.

Your own Atma is your true friend. Scriptures and God can only contribute indirectly to your assistance. You alone can contribute directly. You alone are also your own enemy.

When you are a friend, the whole world is a friend.

When you are an enemy, the whole world is inimical.

Shloka # 6:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ॥ अथ श्रीकृष्ण उवाच ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ॥ अथ श्रीकृष्ण उवाच ॥ 6.6 ॥

The Self is the friend of that self by which the self has been subdued. The Self alone operates as the foe of one unsubdued by the self.

In previous shloka we noted that this mind body complex is our best friend. If so, how can I be my own friend as well as enemy? How can opposite attributes remain in one person in life? Sri Krishna says any instrument can be a friend or an enemy. An instrument is a friend if I know how to operate it. Atomic energy and electricity are good examples of this. On

the other hand, if I don't know how to use the instrument, it can be deadly. Thus, wrong use of atomic energy or electricity can kill. Thus, a managed body mind complex is a friend while an unmanaged one is an enemy. It is like a militant within one's own country. So real victory is self-victory. Therefore, Self- Management is most important.

A body-mind-complex that is under my control is my friend. The body-mind-complex that is beyond my control becomes my own enemy. I do not know what to do? Whatever the body wants I give; whatever sense organs want I give; whatever the emotions want

I give. I consider it my friend; but I do not realize that my own organs are enslaving me and a time comes when I cannot even proceed further nor withdraw. It is like an addiction. If I continue the addiction, the addiction destroys me. If I withdraw from the addiction the withdrawal systems create problems for me.

Who has created this condition? I alone have created this condition.

Shloka # 7:

सर्वत्र समं सर्वत्र त्तपः शान्तं शान्तं शान्तं
सर्वत्र समं सर्वत्र त्तपः शान्तं शान्तं शान्तं 6.7

The supreme Self is concentrated for one who has subdued the self and is quiescent, in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, and in honor and disgrace.

Let us assume there is such an integrated person, a jitaatma (one who has learned sense discipline). The more I win myself over, the calmer I become. Jitatma is a Prashanta purusha. He is gyana yogyaha. He is not liberated yet. He is, however, ready for Gyana yoga or Vedantic enquiry.

How do I know that I am master of myself? What is the sign?

Sri Krishna says prashantah; the more I win a victory over myself the more my life is calm. This calmness (prashantaha) of mind is the acid test. Otherwise, my mind will be turbulent and I am not able to control this turbulence. Therefore, a jitatma is a prashantah purushah and Sri Krishna calls such a person yogarudhah. He is a sadhana chatushtaya sampannah person or a Gyana yogyaha person. He is not yet liberated though. He will have to take Gyana Yoga to obtain moksha.

Only a person who reaches this stage will find Vedanta appealing. The different types of intellects (budhi) are described below.

Karpura Budhi: It catches fire immediately.

Kari (coal) Budhi: It will catch fire slowly.

Plantain Budhi: It won't catch fire rather it will put out the fire.

Vedanta also classifies students as: Manda, Madhyama and Uttama. An uttama budhi student gets knowledge very easily. He will get Mukti as well.

And, therefore Arjuna, first develop self-belief in free will and develop the confidence that the future is in my hands. Then, with self-confidence, put forth self-effort. The first stage of self-effort is attunement of my own instruments (body mind complex). If you do this, rest will be taken care of.

Take away: Scriptures believe in free will and so should you.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Omkaara Upasana

In the 13th Class of Taitreya Upanishad, Swamiji discusses Omkaara Upasana. This upasana is presented in the form of a chart. Please click on the link for a chart form of this Upasana.

omkaara upasana

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 13

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 1:

The sacred sound Om is Brahman. All this is the syllable OM.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 8, Shloka # 2:

It is widely known that Om is uttered to indicate consent. The priest officiating at the sacrifice encourages his assistants with the words "O Sravya". With the chanting of Om they start singing the Sama verses; and with "Om Som" they recite the shastras; Adhvaryu answers with the syllable "Om".

With Om the chief priest, Brahma expresses his assent. One permits the offering of oblation to the fire with "OM". May I obtain with Brahman; with this determination, the Brahmana says "Om" before he begins to recite the Veda; and he does obtain the Brahman.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami

Paramarthananda said we have completed the first four upasanas of chapter # 1. They are Samshito Upasana, Vyahriti Upasana, Hiranyagrabha upasana and Pankta Upasana. Now in anuvaka # 8, the fifth and final upasana of this chapter known as Omkara upasana is introduced.

In this upasana the word OM is introduced as a symbol or Alambanam and upon it Ishwara is invoked. Omkara can represent Virat (Samashti Prapancha), Hiranyagarbha (Sukshma prapancha) and Ishwara (Karana Prapancha). Omkara can thus represent the macro or Samashti. “ May you practice upasana of Brahman on Omkara” It is a Saguna Brahman. Nirguna Brahman cannot be an object of Upasana. If it is an object it cannot be nirguna. Thus, if an object is meditated upon such an object cannot be nirguna. In such an instance the meditator alone is the Nirguna Brahman.

Therefore, Brahma upasana connotes Saguna Brahman. It can represent the Virat (Samashti Guna), Hiranyagarbha (Sukshma guna) and Ishwara (Karana Guna).

When there are so many scared words in Scriptures why choose Omkara? Omkara is a most sacred and unique mantra. We have seen before in Shikshavalli's anuvaka # 5 that Brahmaji extracted Omkara from Vedas. Therefore, Omkara chanting is equal to chanting all Vedic mantras. Thus, we get the Omkara mahima. Any word in scripture can refer to a particular object. Thus, when we say chair it means only “chair” and not a table. So it is also with the name Rama or Krishna. Thus, words have limitations. They don't represent the totality of Brahman. To describe God, a word describing all objects in cosmos should be used. One word should represent all objects of creation. OM is such a word. Om encompasses all objects of creation Thus:

A: All Sthula objects

U: All Sukshma objects.

M: All Karana objects.

A is the beginning of sound. Last sound produced is M. U represents all intermediate alphabets. Thus, AUM represents all characters. They also represent all words of the language. Thus: OM represents alphabets. Alphabets represent words or padam. Padam represents objects. Therefore, OM represents all objects of the world. All objects put together represent the Lord. Hence Om is his best description. Lord is one and OM is also one. Therefore, Om is Pranavaha or the ideal name for God. Hence it is used in the upasana.

Omkara is very important in upasana. It is also very important in meditation. Omkara is also very important in Karma Kanda. Everywhere Om is important.

How is it important in rituals?

Omkara is a versatile mantra. Thus, Omkara is used as:

Anukriti or acceptance. Omkara conveys acceptance. Hasma-vai-pi means well known. In olden times different priests were involved in rituals. There are special invitation mantras for specific devatas. The concerned priest had to be ready with oblations. Then the main priest asks his assistants to invoke the God.

O Sravya, he says to his assistants. Then, the assistant starts the Vedas with Omkara.

OM iti samani gayanti. Each priest of the ritual handles one mantra. Thus Rg, Yajus and Sama are chanted.

The Rg Veda priest is called Hota. His assistants are called Hotraganaha. Usually there is a main priest with three assistants or a total of four.

The Yajur Veda head priest is called Adhvaryuhu. His assistants are called Adhvarganaha. Here also there is a head priest with three assistants.

The Sama Veda priest is called Udgata and his assistants are called Udgataganaha. They also total four.

The Atharavana Veda has no direct application in Vedic rituals. The priest does not play a direct role. Therefore, he becomes the supervisor of the entire ritual. He is called Brahma. He too has three assistants known as Brahmaganaha.

Thus, a total of 16 priests are involved including the husband and wife (Yajamana and Yajamani). They all add up to 18 people for a yagna.

The Brahma (atharvanavedi) supervises to ensure all priests are performing their rituals properly. If mistakes happen there are built in prayaschittas in every ritual. The prayaschita can vary depending upon the mistake made in the ritual. Thus, prayaschita can include from donating one's property to chanting gayathri japa. Thus, a Brahma must be very knowledgeable and must be very alert. He has to be a Chaturvedi, one who knows all four Vedas. All four ganas use Omkara in rituals. Thus, OM iti Samani gayanti.

Rg veda mantras are called Shastrani and they can be chanted with or without swaras. They also start the mantras with Om.

Swamji said nowadays there are not many Chaturvedi's available for such Yagnas. Therefore, a seat is assigned for one in a yaga, although it is empty. It is assumed a Brahma is sitting there.

Adhvaryuhu, the Yajur Veda priest, gives permission using OM. Agni Hotra is a basic Srauta karma performed twice every day. It is a fire ritual. Aupasana is also a fire ritual performed every day after one's marriage.

In these daily pujas OM is the beginning of all mantras. For spiritual cleansing of house too water is sanctified in front of God and then used with chanting of OM and sprinkling in many parts of a house.

A Brahmachari starting to learn Vedic chanting also begins his chant with Om. Through the chanting he grasps the Vedas.

A Sanyasi does not have gayathri mantra. They only have Omkara mantra to chant.

Since a Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, all chant Omkara mantra, it is a very important mantra for all castes as well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 82, Chapter 6, Verses 2 to 5

Shloka # 2:

ॐ तस्यैवात्मने ज्ञानं ब्रह्मविद्यायां
ॐ योगसंज्ञितं ॥ ६.२ ॥

That which they call renunciation, know to be yoga, O Pandava Prince! None indeed who has not discarded mental constructions can become a yogin.

Continuing his teaching of Gita Swami Paramarthananda said, I had pointed out in the last class that in the 6th chapter of the Gita, Sri Krishna deals with five important topics with regard to the dhyanam or meditation and those five topics are:

1. Bahiranga sadhanani or general disciplines to be observed throughout one's transactions, so that one can practice meditation successfully.
2. Antaranga sadhanani or specific disciplines to be observed just before the starting of the meditation;
3. Dhyana svarupam, the actual process of meditation;
4. Dhyana phalam, the benefit of meditation;
5. Dhyana pratibhanda pariharau; obstacles to meditation, and their remedy.

Bahiranga sadhanani: are preparations before taking up dhyanam. If we don't have discipline during a transaction mind can be disturbed. Such disturbances, also known as Samskara's, can scar the mind. This Samskara will bubble up later when the mind is quiet. They are a like piece of wood held down under water that pops up the moment you release it. Our subconscious mind has many such Samskaras that can come up at any time the conscious mind is resting. During meditation the conscious mind withdraws then the subconscious impressions come up. Violent disturbances during the day can come up as well.

How to stop such disturbances from occurring in the mind?

Training the mind for Samatvam can stop this. Citing an example, a philosopher and businessman was told, "you have lost everything." He said in agitation, "What"? Calming down, later, he said, "So what?" This change from "what" to "so what" requires great training of the mind to maintain Samatvam. In Samatvam, the mind does not get too high or too low. Practice of Karma Yoga helps with Samatvam. Sri Krishna thus glorifies a Karma Yogi or a Grihasta. Chapter six begins with glorification of householder, and through this glorification God is glorifying Karma Yoga as well and thus Samatvam too.

We can say: Grihasthashrama=Karma Yoga=Samatvam.

How does Sri Krishna glorify? He says the householder is the real Sanyasi. He says regular Sanyasis are not the real Sanyasi's. Then, again, Sri Krishna points out that a conventional meditator is not a real meditator. Who is a conventional meditator? It is one who has withdrawn from all the activities; taken to a quiet place, taken the proper posture; closing his eyes and keeping the body straight; such a person is a conventional meditator. Krishna says that conventional meditator is not true a meditator. Then who is a true meditator? Sri Krishna says, it is the karma yogi, the grihastha, who is a true meditator.

Shankaracharya, a champion of Sanyasis is disturbed by this criticism of Sri Krishna. He says, Sri Krishna does not want to criticize a Sanyasi rather he wants to glorify the Grihastha. He is using "Nahi Ninda Nyayaha", a process where you criticize something to glorify something else. So, the focus is on glorification. Sri Krishna is glorifying Karma Yoga.

In the second shloka he justifies why he calls a Grihastha a real Sanyasi. The Grihastha has after all not renounced anything. He has all kinds of possessions (house, money, land..), family etc. How can such a person be a Sanyasi? What makes him a Sanyasi?

Sri Krishna clarifies that Sanyasa means renunciation. The word renunciation does not always mean renouncing wife and children; or one's home and job. Sri Krishna says a Karma Yogi Grihastha is a renouncer because he has renounced concerns for the future. **Biggest concern of people is what happens in the future. One who drops such worry is a Sankalpa Sanyasi.**

Worrying versus planning. Planning is acceptable. It is a deliberate action at a stipulated time. Worry is not deliberate. It is a reaction or obsession that happens at any time. It makes us inefficient. Karma Yogi may plan but he does

not worry, hence he is a Sankalpa Sanyasi.

Shloka # 2: In the second shloka Sri Krishna says, "O Arjuna, by the word sanyasa or renunciation, I do not mean the conventional renunciation". Swamiji says Gita is a Grihastha book. Sri Krishna was a Grihastha as was Arjuna. Vyasa too was a Grihastha. So, he says, if you are a good Karma Yogi you will get benefit of both Grihastha and Sanyasa. So, if one has to become a Karma Yogi one has to renounce Sankalpa or our obsession with future. So, renounce worry.

Shloka # 3:

कर्मयोगोऽसौ योगो ज्ञानयोगोऽसौ योगो
कर्मयोगोऽसौ योगो ज्ञानयोगोऽसौ योगो 6.3

Work is said to be the cause in the case of the silent sage who seeks to scale the peak of Yoga; as regards this very sage who has scaled it, quiescence is said to be the cause.

How long should one follow karma Yoga? Is it an end or is it an intermediate step? Karma Yoga is not an ultimate sadhana. It only makes you Gyana Yogyata Prapthihi. It purifies the mind. Limitation of Karma Yoga is it cannot give liberation.

Some people claim Karma Yoga alone will give liberation. The other extreme is Karma Yoga is useless and should not be taken up. Citing an example one person says I will never enter the college; his argument is after all finally I have to come out, so why even enter?

Sri Krishna says, use Karma yoga then transcend and get liberation.

So, initially follow Karma yoga. In the shloka Yogam means Dhyana Yogam. No scripture prescribes meditation in the beginning. Sri Krishna recommends meditation only after five chapters. Patanjali recommends meditation only after sixth stage of Yoga. There are eight stages of his Yoga.

Without studying scriptures the only meditation recommended is Nama japam.

Yama and Niyama of Patanjali, the Do's and Don't of Yoga, are the same as Karma Yoga. If one has to purify the mind he should perform Karma Yoga. Therefore, Vedas begin with Karma kandam. How long do you perform Karma Yoga? Once you have the necessary mental preparation then you grow out of it. It is like the life of a fetus in a womb, after nine months, nature will throw the baby out. So withdrawing from Karma Yoga can be done in two ways:

1. Taking to Sanyasashrama or Sanyasavidhi, a formal process. Just as the sacred thread ceremony is used for initiation, this process is used for withdrawal from life. Sanyasavidhi's goal is to get out of rituals and start the process of self-enquiry.
2. There is another form of withdrawal in which a person reduces the amount of activity remaining in grihastha ashrama itself. So, if he was doing rituals for many hours he now reduces the duration. Even mundane activities, he reduces, handing them over to someone else. This requires detachment. Thus, this is also a kind of a vanaprastha ash

Therefore, either by becoming a sanyasi or by taking to vanaprastha one withdraws. Both of them involve reduction of extrovert activities. Now, I spend my time in sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam.

Shloka # 4:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.4 ॥,

When the sage is no longer attached to sense objects and works; he discards all mental constructions; then he is said to have scaled the peak of Yoga.

In previous shloka we learn that one should follow karma yoga also known as Pravrithi marga and then follow up with Gyana Yoga or Nivrithi marga. How do I know when to switch to Gyana Yoga? Swamiji said, for going to a college we have pass examinations that tell us our next step. Similarly nature also tells us the next step when it expels a baby from the womb after nine months. Unfortunately, the rate of inner spiritual maturity is not uniform for all. The rate of acquiring inner maturity is also not uniform for all. Some people become mature within short while other people even after 95 years of life experiences don't mature. Citing an example, a child asked its grandfather, are you ready to marry? He answered, who will give me a girl?

Sri Krishna says **a mature mind is free from obsession of sense pleasures**. Here the emphasis is on obsession. Artha and Kama are allowed but obsession with them is wrong. Until mind is preoccupied with money and entertainment, you are not ready for Vedanta. The key is obsession. **If you don't get what you want, you should not be upset**. Preference is acceptable but not need. Craving after sense pleasures should not overwhelm me. Hating sense objects is also not good. This too can be an obsession.

Dayananda Swamiji said, when you are a child and play with marbles, one tends to be possessive of the marbles. Now, when you are much older, you don't have a problem of playing without attachment. Thus, playing and not playing both should be acceptable. This is known as Vairagyam. Artha kama (wealth and entertainment) are Sadhyam. Karma is Sadhanam. He is not attached to both. He is attracted to moksha purushartha's. Therefore sign of maturity is "detachment". Such a person is called Sarva Sankalpa Sanyasi. He is not obsessed with the coming and going of material things.

Security never depends on external conditions. It is an internal state of mind. Even possession of wealth can cause insecurity. So, better surrender to Lord. Such a person

reality, is only one of the factors. The other factor is our own free will or self-effort.

2. A mature mind is free from obsession of sense pleasures. Here the emphasis is on obsession. If you don't get what you want, you should not be
3. One who drops worry of the future is a Sankalpa Sanyasi. Worry is not deliberate. It is a reaction or obsession that happens at any time.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Tatireya Upanishads, Class 12

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 1:

Here in this space within the heart resides the intelligent, imperishable, effulgent "Purusa" or "Entity". Between the palates, that which hangs like a nipple (the uvula), that is the birthplace of Indira, where the root of hair is made to part, opening the skull in the center.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said we are concluding this anuvaka six. In this anuvaka we were getting the details of the Hiranyagarbha Upasana. Hiranyagarbha represents Samashti Sukshma Sharira Chaitanyam. Hiranayagarbha has two main organs and they are Prana and Mind. Very often Hiranyagarbha is represented as the

Total Mind or Total Prana. It is then called Ahamgraha.

In this upasana god is visualized on myself. The Upanishad says this upasana bestows two phalams. They are:

- If performed as nishkama karma then spiritual growth occurs. Through this upasana purity, focus and expansion of mind occurs.
- If performed as sakama karma one obtains Brahma Loka. This, however, occurs only after death.

How is Brahma Loka reached? Jiva at death withdraws into Hridayam. From there, via Shukla Gathi (Indra Yoni), a bright path, Jiva travels through Sushumna Nadi and then through the head (Brahma Randhra). It continues through the solar disc to Brahma Loka.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 2:

With the word Bhu, he stands in fire; in the air in the shape of Bhuvaha; as Suvaha in the sun; in the Brahman as Mahaha. He obtains self-effulgence. He obtains Lordship over minds. He becomes the Lord of speech, lord of the eyes, lord of the ears and lord of knowledge. Then he becomes this Brahman whose body is space, whose nature is truth, who sports in dynamic life Prana, whose mind is bliss, who is full of peace, who is immortal. Thus, Oh descendant of the ancient yoga culture, meditate.

This shloka tells us what happens to a Hiranyagarbha Upasaka after death. The Upasaka has practiced Hiranyagarbha upasana with Vyahrithi upasana. Both are performed together. Thus, the upasaka has performed Hiranyagarbha upasana as well as upasana of other Devatas. All devatas (anga's) are a part of Hiranyagarbha, the total, also known as Angi. He will become one with all devatas as well. In this process at the merger first occurs with anga devatas and later with angi devata as well.

Thus, first merger is of the seeker as Bhu with Agni, then of seeker as Bhuvah with Vayu, then of seeker as Suvaha with Surya, then of seeker as Mahaha with Hiranyagarbha. Brahman in the shloka means Saguna Hiranyagarbha.

After merger, the sadhaka attains sovereignty over 14 Lokas, as Brahma Loka is the highest Loka. He is now lord of all individual minds. He is also lord of speech and karmendriyas (speech, eyes, ears, tongue and knowledge). Varuna Devata presides over speech. Additionally, Hiranyagarbha has akasha; as such he has lordship over space as well. Since Hiranyagarbha is shown as saguna Brahman, his body consists of both visible and invisible bodies (sthula and sukshma shariras).

In shloka Sat means visible universe. Prana-ramam means Total Prana. Hiranyagarbha also controls Total Prana. Thus, Sadhaka enjoys the ananda through every mind. Why does he not get dukha is a question that can come up. Hiranyagarbha is total punyam hence he gets only sukham. Hiranayagarbha is also total peace and prosperity. Such a Hiranyagarbha the Sadhaka obtains through this upsana.

In Shloka, the words Prachin Prayoga means: O student you who are eligible to receive this ancient wisdom.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 7, Shloka # 1:

The earth, the sky, the interspace (antariksham), the heaven, the main quarters, the intermediate quarters; the fire, the air, the sun, the moon and the stars; the waters, the herbs, the forest trees, the space and Atman, so far regarding all living creatures and then come regarding the Soul (adhyatmam), the prana, the vyana, the apana, the udana and the samana; the eyes, the ears, the mind, the speech and the touch; the skin, the flesh, the muscles, the bones and the marrow. After analyzing and determining these, the seer said, "All this is panktam or five fold or pentadic. The one set of five fold

grouping sustains the other pentadic grouping.”

With previous shloka anuvakaha 6 is complete. With this, the three upasanas of Samshito, Vyahrithi and Hiranyagarbha are all complete. This section deals with a fourth upasana called Pankta Brahma Upasana. Here too the upasana is taking us to Jivatma paramatma aikyam. Here again we are practicing the visualization of macrocosm in the microcosm.

This creation (macro) is divided into three groups. Each is called Panktam or Pankta-trayam. Why call it panktam? Panktam means group of five numbers. Thus, here we have 3 groups with five members in each adding up a total of 15 members. These 15 members constitute the creation.

Individual creation (micro) is also divided into three groups. Here too each group has five members and thus total of 15 members are present at the micro level as well.

In this upasana, Samashti Pankta-Trayam (macro) are visualized on Vyashti Pankta Trayam (micro).

This is the reason it is called Pankta Brahma Upasana.

The members of each group are now listed.

At macro or samashti level:

1. Loka Panktam consisting of: Earth, interspace, heaven, four directions (NSEW) and four intermediary directions (such as NE, SW etc)
2. Dev Panktam consisting of: Fire, Air, Sun, Moon and Stars.
3. Bhuta Panktam consisting of: Water, Herbs (small plants), Trees, Space and Virat. In the shloka atma means everything else mentioned in creation or Virat.

At the micro or Vyashti level:

1. Vayu panktam consisting of: Prana, Vyana, Apana, Udhana

and Samana.

2. Indriya Panktam consisting of: Eyes, Ears, Mind, speech and organ of touch.
3. Dhatu Panktam consisting of: Skin, flesh, muscle, bone and marrow.

Thus, we have total six panktams.

A Vedic rishi prescribed these six panktams. The whole creation is nothing other than these panktams. So visualize Samashti panktam via Vyashti Panktams. Through this visualization of totality, one gets strengthened. Just as an individual gets courage through family, or a family gets courage from their tribe, you too strengthen your self by invoking God in You.

This upasana is called pankta upasana. It can also be performed either as Nishkama karma or Sakama karma. When performed as nishkama upasana one gets chitta shuddhi. When performed as sakama karma upasana one gets Brahma loka.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

**Baghawat Geeta, Class 81,
Chapter 6, Verses 1 & 2**

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of Gita and the introduction to chapter 6, Swami Paramarthananda said, in last class we talked about the role of meditation for a Vedantic seeker. It is purely from point of seeking liberation. There are meditations meant for extraordinary powers as well. A Vedantic seeker is not interested in such powers. Extraordinary powers place one in bondage or in samsara. Such powers can lead to fights and jealousy. So, here we are only interested in Self-Knowledge and liberation. This does not require extraordinary powers. Thus, there are Gyani's without such extraordinary powers, while there are Agyani's with such powers. Rakshasas are a good example of Agyani's with extraordinary powers. Our interest is only in purity of mind and assimilation of knowledge.

Thus, meditation has two roles. The roles are:

- Meditation before study of scriptures is called Upasana
- Meditation after study of scriptures is called Nidhidhyasanam.

The study process itself is called shravana mananam or gyana yoga. Study of scriptures itself is called sravanam. And therefore the entire spiritual journey can be presented in three stages: Upasana, Gyana yoga and Nidhidhyasanam.

Upasana: This upasana is saguna ishvara upasana. It is performed for Gyana yogyata prapthihi or for purification of mind.

Gyana Yoga: is consistent and systematic study of the scriptures for a length of time, under the guidance of a competent acharya and this study alone gives self-knowledge. If one does not get knowledge through scriptures there is no other way to obtain this knowledge. Scriptural study is the only means of knowledge.

Nidhidhyasanam meditation is meant for assimilation of knowledge. I would like to add a few more ideas with regard to the assimilation, because doubts do come up in this area.

After gaining knowledge one contemplates on the knowledge received that "That I am not the Body. I am not the mind. I am not the senses. However, I am the awareness which is aware of all of them ". This contemplation is not meant for converting knowledge into Brahman. Rather this meditation after scriptural study is for experiencing the Gyana phalam.

Scriptures point out that we experience Brahman all the time as consciousness. No special effort is required to experience the light in the hall. So also it is with consciousness. Everything else is evident to us because of consciousness. Every word I hear now is due to consciousness. Consciousness is self evident and ever evident. It is Brahman. So, Brahman anubhavam is not an issue. Therefore meditation after scriptural studies is only for Gyana Phalam. The benefit that knowledge brings is shanti, tripthi and abhayam. This experience of peace, fullness, contentment, fearlessness and security is called assimilation or jivan mukti.

Sri Krishna will tell us how to meditate in this chapter. However an overview is as follows:

- Upasana Meditation is to purify the mind.
- Study of scriptures is to attain knowledge
- Meditate to experience benefit of knowledge, which is peace and fullness.

The first meditation is called upasanam. The second meditation is called nidhidhyasanam. The sixth chapter of the Gita is focusing on nidhidhyasanam, which I translate as Vedantic meditation. The sixth chapter is nidhidhyasana yoga or Vedantic meditation. This chapter can be divided into five main topics. They are:

1. General preparation for meditation or called Bahiranga sadhana. These are disciplines that have to be observed throughout the transaction. These are meant for day-to-day transactions or Samanya sadhanani.

2. Specific disciplines: Vishesha Sadhanani are disciplines to be observed just before meditation. They are also known as antaranga or vishesha sadhanani.
3. Dhyana swaroopam: What is meditation? The process of meditation? Is it concentrating on something or is it remaining thoughtless? Is it destruction of the mind or is it transcending the mind? All these points are clarified here.
4. Benefit of Vedantic meditation: Is it reading other peoples mind or predicting the future? All these points are clarified.
5. Obstacles to meditation: What are the obstacles and how to remedy them are discussed. Dhyana pratibhanda parihara, here pratibhanda means obstacles and parihara means remedy, are discussed. One such obstacle is sleeping during meditation. Sri Krishna describes such obstacles and how to overcome them.

A sixth topic is also discussed which Swamiji preferred to bring up later.

General preparation for meditation:

Why have this preparation? We have only one mind for our day-to-day transactions and meditation. In our daily transactions we go through all kinds of experiences. Before meditation one must free one self from all these experiences and meditate with a fresh mind. The daily transactions leave strong impressions on us that affect meditation. Violent emotional disturbances adversely impact meditation. Both the winner and loser of Wimbledon cannot get sleep. One should learn the art of keeping a balanced mind. This does not mean an emotionless mind. An emotionless mind is like a wall. Rather it is a mind without violent upheavals. So, one has to keep a balanced mind or Samatvam and not get carried away by joys and sorrows. I should have mental mastery. It is one of the pre-conditions of meditation.

- Enjoy life, eat well etc., that are artha kama pradhana.
- Perform spiritual activities like pancha maha yagna that contribute to inner growth and Chitta shuddhi. Through these activities more people are benefitted by selfless activities. These are nishkama karmas or selfless activities. The selfless actions are performed only for spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is often subtle and not visible while material growth is often visible. Spiritual growth will change how you look at yourself.

Sri Krishna says such a karma yogi is as good as a sanyasi. Why? He is considered a sanyasi because he has renounced concerns for material growth. What can come out of such renunciation? Such renunciation may result in failure in the material world, nevertheless, inner growth will occur. Sri Krishna says for a karma yogi there is never a failure because he is growing inwardly, whatever be the external outcome of his actions. As such he has no anxiety. He accepts whatever is going to come as Ishvara prasadam or God's will. Each experience is considered a lesson, good or bad. Sri Krishna says such a person can also be considered a meditator.

After all meditation is mind dwelling on a field. A karma Yogi is not agitated about past or worried about future. He is fully available to the present.

He is not worried about result. He has a focused mind. He is practicing open-eyed meditation. He offers all his actions to god (see ch.3, shloka # 30 and ch.5 shloka #10). Every action is an offering to god. This is nothing but meditation. He is a karma yogi.

A sanyasi in ocher robe, while in meditation, is thinking about his foreign trip, number of disciples etc., he is only an external sanyasi. He is not a karma yogi. However, a householder who is active is a karma yogi, if his activity is focused.

Shloka # 2:

ॐ ऋषिर्गणेशाय नमः ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥
ॐ ऋषिर्गणेशाय नमः ॥ ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ 6.2 ॥

That which they call renunciation, know to be yoga, O Pandava Prince! None indeed who has not discarded mental constructions can become a yogin.

In previous shloka we learnt that a Karma yogi is the real sanyasi and not the person in ochre robe. Here Sri Krishna justifies it.

What is renunciation? Sri Krishna wants to say that external renunciation can never be considered a real renunciation; because self-knowledge is not connected with the external body rather self-knowledge is connected with the mind or intellect. So by making a few external changes if the mind continues to be the same what is the use? External renunciation is not real renunciation. Many take sanyasa and regret the decision, as it is a one-way traffic, one cannot go back to grihasthashrama again. For real renunciation, one needs to be free from concerns about future. What will happen to me? What will my wife do? If wife dies, what will I do? Most of our time is spent in planning for the future. Until one gives up thought of the future, you cannot have meditation. This is true for Sanyasi as well as Grihastha. Renunciation of the worry regarding future is true renunciation. Such a person is a karma yogi and a sankalpa sanyasi (one who has given up worry about future).

Now worrying about future is different from planning for future. Planning is a deliberate action. Worrying, however, is impulsive and can happen at any time. While planning is acceptable worrying is an obstacle. Worrying makes one inefficient. **One who does not worry is a Sanyasi.**

Take Away:

1. Meditation is mind dwelling on a field. Thus, anybody, performing any activity, totally immersed in it, is in meditation and as such a karma yogi.
2. A Karma Yogi is not agitated about past or worried about future. He is fully available to the present. One who does not worry is a Sanyasi.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad Class 11

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 6:

These above mentioned four are themselves fourfold and the four Vyahrtis are each four in number. He, who knows these, knows Brahman. All the devas carry offering unto Him.

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda said, we are completing anuvakaha # 5 dealing with Vyahrati Upasana, the second upsana. The first upasana was Samshito upsana. In Vyahrthi upasana four objects were invoked one on each of the four Vyahrthi's and an upasana was performed on each of them. This process was performed four times, each time with varying four objects. Thus, all together, they became a composite upsana at four levels.

Shankaracharya says objects of meditation should always be in proper sequence. First is Rg (Bhu), second is Sama (Bhuvaha) and the Third is Yajur (Suvaha). This sequence should not be

changed. Objects should also not be interchanged.

Now the phalam is discussed.

Suppose one practices these four Vyahrithi upsanas as mentioned in Upanishads, one is actually practicing Hiranyagarbha Upasana. In the shloka, Veda means upasana. Brahman, in shloka, means Hiranyagarbha. In previous shloka Brahman meant Omkara. Such an Upasaka will become one with Hiranyagarbha through this upasana.

What is Hiranyagarbha? It is samashti chaitanyam. It is reflected consciousness reflected in sukshma sharira. Therefore, Hiranya garbha =Total mind (all minds) +Total Prana.

Now shankaracharya raises a question. If a person is practicing Vyahrati Upasana, why does he obtain Hiranyagarbha as Phalam? He is, after all, not performing Upasana on Hiranyagarbha? When one performs saraswathi upsana one gets knowledge. When one performs Lakshmi upasana one obtains wealth. But, here, why is it different? Swamiji says, it is a question of interpretation. Shankacharya answers his own question and says when Vyahrati upasana is performed with Hiranyagarbha upasana one obtains Hiranyagarbha as phalam. The next anuvaka, number 6, in fact starts off with Hiranyagarbha upasana.

One obtains this Hiranyagarbha phalam only after death. The advantage of Hiranyagarbha phalam is that he obtains infinite power of the Totality. Therefore, all devatas worship him as well.

How do you say all devatas worship hiranyagarbha? Surya represents chakshu or total eye power. Dig devata (god of space) represents total hearing power. Thus, each devata represents the total power of each sense organ. Hiranyagarbha represents total power of all indriyas, pancha pranas and manaha. So, he is total power. Therefore, all devatas worship

him.

What benefit accrues to an upasaka? The upasaka becomes one with Hiranyagarbha after death. He will be worshipped by all devatas. This phalam is obtained only through a sakama upasana. If one is not interested in Hiranyagarbha phalam, can one practice this upasana as a nishkama karma? Yes. This upasana then provides chitta shudhi and chitta vishalata (expansion of mind). What is benefit of chitta shuddhi and chitta vishalata? It gives the seeker nirguna brahma aikyam.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 1:

Here in this space within the heart resides the intelligent, imperishable, effulgent "Purusa" or "Entity". Between the palates, that which hangs like a nipple (the uvula), that is the birthplace of Indira, where the root of hair is made to part, opening the skull in the center.

Starting anuvaka # 6, swamiji said, in this shloka he is invoking hiranyagarbha or total sukshma shariram (total knowledge). The meaning of the word Hiranya is gold but here it means knowledge. Why compare gold with knowledge? The reason is both of them shine. Thus knowledge removes darkness of ignorance; hence it is compared to gold, like shining knowledge. The word garbha means inside or within. The one within who is of infinite knowledge is called Hiranyagarbha. He is to be meditated upon.

Since it is difficult to conceive of Hiranyagarbha in our minds, due to its huge size and its invisibility as a subtle body, how do we conceive it? Here, we use a symbol or an alambanam to conceive it. Thus, a flag stands for a country. So, too, the symbol for Hiranyagarbha is my own individual mind. Vyashti manas is the alambanam for Total mind. Often one thinks of God as someone outside of us. It is our orientation. So long as we think of him as outside of us, Vedanta vichara becomes difficult. After all, in Vedanta, God is conceived as

within me or as Me. In Karma kanda, however, the thinking is different. There, I am a Dasa while You are Swami. I am small and useless. Vedanta however teaches that I am the purest of pure Brahman. How do we reconcile this huge gap in understanding? In this shloka this understanding is reconciled by invoking God in your self. May my Dvaita budhi vanish gradually. May my Bheda Budhi (god and I are separate) also vanish gradually. This process is known as Aham Graha upsasana. Here God is invoked in myself. Lalita sahasranamam and Sandhya vandanam both include Aham graha upasana. Here one starts to think first as an imagination (aham graha) then converts it to a fact, aikya gyanam.

Where is this individual mind located? Shastras talk of a mind, which is different from brain. Science only recognizes the brain. It does not recognize a mind as in Vedanta. Mind is subtle while brain is physical. Brain is burned after death. The Mind, however, continues after death and travels in search of another body.

Every subtle instrument, indriyam, has a physical location called Golakam. One can see the golakam but not the indriyas. Thus, ears are the golakam while hearing ability itself is the indriyam. Scriptures say mind is in the Hridayam or heart. Which heart? It is the physical heart that resides in the left side of the body. In this physical heart resides antahakaranam where the mind resides. In jagrita avastha the mind functions all over the body. In sushupti avastha it withdraws into hridayam alone. In hridayam there is an inner space. The space is as big as the thumb. The heart is as big as the size of a fist. The fist covers the thumb like space. In this thumb like space is the individual mind. In this mind one invokes Hiranyagarbha. What type of Hiranyagarbha is invoked? One who has many virtues. The virtues are:

- Mano mayaha. The Total mind pervades the individual mind as well.
- Amrita: immortal one. This immortality is relative only.

It just indicates that Hiranyagarbha has a very long life. Brahma's life is supposed to be 2000 chatur yogas. Hiranyagarbha's life is shorter than that.

- Hiranyamaha: He is everywhere.

Such a hiranyagarbha should be invoked during meditation. Now, the phala sruthi starts. If I meditate upon him, what happens? The Hiranyagarbha upsaka, after death, will go to Brahma loka. Who actually goes to Brahma loka? It is not the sthula sharira, as it is burned after death. Atma cannot go, as it is everywhere, as such it cannot travel. So, only sukshma shariram travels via Shukla gathi. Shukla gathi is known as the well-lit path. Shukla gathi starts at Hridayam. Sukshma shariram is withdrawn at death into hridayam. Several nadi's go out of Hridayam. Nadi's are subtle paths. Sushumna Nadi originates from Hridayam and travels through the middle to the throat and then to head and then to the top of the skull (uchi). The brahma-randram is the opening on top of the skull. The sukshma shariram passes through Brahma randram through solar disc via shukla gati and reaches the Brahma Loka. This path is also called Indriya Yoni or Brahmaji's marga leading to Brahma Loka.

Some word meanings: Taluka means inner throat; Sthana means nipple; Keshanta means roots of hair are parted.

When a Sanyasi dies we do not know if he was a gyani or not. Sanyasi has two goals. If he gets gyanam he a slo gets moksha as such there is no travel. Even without gyanam he will still go to Brahma loka. This is the reason some people, just before death, tend to take sanyasa and it is called Apat sanyasa.

How about a Grihasta? He too will go to Brahma Loka if he practices this upasana.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 10

Greetings All,

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 3:

May I become successful among the people. Svaha. May I become superior among rich. Svaha. O lord of Prosperity, may I enter into thee. Svaha. Mayest thou enter into me. In that Self of Thine with a thousand branches. O lord may I purify myself from all of my sins. Svaha. As water flows downwards, as months fly into years, so too O creator, may students of Brahma Vidya come to me from everywhere. Svaha. Thou art refuge! Beam upon me! Come to me!

Continuing his teaching of the Upanishad, Swami Paramarthananda concluded the Anuvakaha # 4. In summary, this anuvakaha talks of two sadhanas, Japa and Homa. Both are meant for Gyana Yogyata as well as Gyana Praptihi. These sadhanas can be performed both as Sakama Karma as well as Nishkama Karma. Sakama Karma is for fulfilling worldly desires while Nishkama karma is performed for Chitta shudhi without any specific desire. Kama karmas must always be performed properly, if not the results may not be positive. Nishkama karma always produces positive results.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 1:

Bhuh, Bhuvah, Suvah are the three short utterances of mystical significance. In addition to these, there is, the fourth one Mahah, made known by seer, Mahacamasya. That is Brahman. That is the body; other gods are its limbs.

This is the second Upasana of Shikshavalli named Vyahriti. As a reminder, the first Upasana was Samshito Upasana.

In Samshito Upasana we took four factors that served as symbols for invoking various objects. We meditated upon those objects. A symbol is known as an Alambanam in Sanskrit.

Now, in Vyahriti Upasana, the Vyahriti mantras are used as alambanam. On these mantras four objects are invoked. What are these four mantras? They are Bhu, Bhuvaha, Suvaha and Mahaha. Why is it called Vyahriti mantra? It is so called because Brahmaji took the essence of the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama) to create AUM, the Omkara mantra. Omkara expanded is Vyahrithi and Vyahrithi expanded is Gayathri mantra. Brahmaji uttered the Vyahriti mantra for the first time hence it is very sacred. A second meaning is that since Brahmaji uttered it and since it is an extract of the Vedas, it is very sacred. Chanting this mantra removes all papams. So second meaning is that it is a destroyer of all papams. Later a fourth mantra, Mahaha, was added.

These four mantras are symbols or alambanams. We invoke four objects on these symbols and meditate upon them. By chanting the mantras Bhu, Bhuvaha, and Suvaha everything is sanctified. These mantras are used in many rituals including Karma Kanda, Upasana Kanda and Gyana Kanda. Bhu, Bhuvaha and Suvaha all together become Vai. The word Vai then becomes Vaa as per rules of Sanskrit grammar.

Now the fourth Vyahriti is added. Who discovered this fourth vyahriti? Sage Mahachamasya, son of Mahachamas, discovered it. Mahachamas means one who uses big spoons in a yaga. He is supposed to have revealed the fourth Alambanam.

Now the objects are introduced. What types of objects are introduced? One is a main object and others are subordinate objects. Main object is called an Angi while subordinates one's are called angani. The glory of the main mantra pervades

all subordinate mantras as well. It is like a prime minister who dominates his ministers.

In this shloka, the fourth Vyahriti, Mahah, is the main while other three mantras are subordinate ones. Since Maha is main mantra it is also called Atma.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 2:

Bhu is this world. Bhuvaha is the sky. Suvah is the next world. Mahah is the sun. It is by the sun that all worlds are nourished.

Four objects are invoked. They are in the form of four Lokas or known as Adhilokas. The four objects are taken from Adhilokas. So, imagine four chairs.

They are:

Bhu: Bhu Loka (The chair is Bhu and Bhu Loka devata is sitting on it)

Bhuva: Antariksham or Bhuvan Loka

Suvaha: Suvar loka or Swarga Loka.

Mahah: Aditya Loka.

All Lokas function due to grace of Aditya or Sun. Hence it is main Loka. In the Gita too Sun is glorified. The four lokas have been identified. Here, Surya is the Angi. After meditation the Lokas are requested to move on.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 3:

Bhu is fire. Bhuvah is air. Suvah is the sun. Mahah is the moon. Indeed, it is by the moon that all vitalities thrive.

The next four objects are now selected. They are from field of Devatas. Thus they are:

Bhu: Agni

Bhuvaha: Vayu

Suvaha: Aditya

Maha: Chandra

Why is Chandra Devata Mahah? All other devatas are glorious due to blessing of Chandra Devata. How can Chandra Devata bless Surya? After all Chandra Prakasha is borrowed from Surya? We are discussing about Devatas not physical objects, here. Devatas have powers. Thus:

Aditya presides over Chakshu indriya.

Chandra presides over antahakarana or the mind.

Thus, organs cannot function without the mind. Swamiji says some people in our class can't hear as their mind is elsewhere. You are here but don't hear. Mind, however, can function without sense organs as evident in the state of meditation. Hence Chandra is the Angi and others are Angani.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 4:

Bhu is the Rk. Bhuvah is the Saman. Suvah is the Yajus. Mahah is the Brahman (as represented by the symbol Om). It is by Brahman, indeed, that Vedas thrive.

Continuing the Vyahriti Upasana another four objects from field of Vedas are chosen. Thus, it is known as Adhiveda Vyahriti.

Bhu: Rig veda

Bhuvaha: Sama Veda

Suvaha: Yajur Veda

Mahah: Brahma or Omkara.

Brahma here means Omkara. Omkara has the essence of three Vedas. Omkara pervades all Vedas. All Vedas get glory from Omkara.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 5:

Bhu is prana. Bhuvaha is apana. Suvaha is Vyana. Mahah is food. Indeed, it is by food that the pranas thrive.

This is the fourth and final Vyahrithi Upasana. Objects are chosen from field of Prana hence it is called Adhi Prana Vyahrithi Upasana.

Bhu: Prana

Bhuvaha: Apana

Suvaha: Vyana

Mahah: Annam

All pranas function only with food. Without food they become weak. All pranas are glorious until food is available. Hence it is called Adi Prana Upasana.

A total of 16 objects are invoked in Vyahrithi Upasana.

Chapter # 1, Anuvakaha # 5, Shloka # 6:

These above mentioned four are themselves fourfold and the four Vyahrtis are each four in number. He, who knows these, knows Brahman. All the devas carry offering unto Him.

This is the concluding shloka. In this manner four Vyahrithi's are meditated upon in four fold ways. Four objects are meditated upon in each Vyahrithi. Thus, a total of 16 objects were meditated upon. Shankaracharya says, one has to invoke the deities in the same order as prescribed in the Upanishad

With Best Wishes,

Baghawat Geeta, Class 79 – Chapter 5 Summary

Gita, Class # 79, Ch 5, 7/15/17:

Continuing his teaching of Gita and concluding chapter five Swami Paramarthananda summarized the chapter today.

Sri Krishna has given us the entire teaching of the Gita in chapters 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Chapter 5 is a summary of all the previous three chapters and in a sense it gives us the very essence of the Gita and the Vedas. This chapter can be classified into following four parts.

- Nishta Dvayam or two types of life styles.
- Sadhana Dvayam or two types of spiritual disciplines.
- Sadhana phalam or benefits of these sadhanas.
- Introduction to meditation as foundation for chapter six.

The Nishta- dvayam are: 1) Grihasthashrama, and 2) Sanyasashrama. In grihasthashrama one has possessions and is part of society while in Sanyasahrama one has no possessions nor is one a part of society. Grihasthashrama is called Pravrithimarga, an active life, and Sanyasashrama is called Nivrithimarga, a secluded life.

The other two ashramas, Brahmacharya and Vana-prastha, are preparations for these two lifestyles. Thus brahmacharya is a preparation for grihasthashrama. vanaprastha is a preparation

for sanyasashrama. These ashramas are called nishtas. The two lifestyles have been prescribed by the Vedas.

In chapter five, Arjuna starts off the chapter saying he is confused about Sanyasa. He wants to know if Sanyasa is a requirement for liberation. Answering him, Sri Krishna says that Sanyasa is not compulsory. Any one of the two life styles can be chosen. Thus, we have a choice with respect to ashrama or lifestyle. One has to decide if one wants to be a monk or get married. There are advantages and disadvantages to both lifestyles. In Grihasthashrama the advantage is that one has wealth and supportive people. This gives him a feeling (real or unreal) of security. Sanyasi does not have wealth nor people and thus no security as well.

The disadvantage in grihasthashrama is that one has a lot of responsibility that can be burdensome. Sanyasi does not have this responsibility. In life, whenever a choice is involved, conflict always comes in.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that the Grihasthashrama is more suitable for him. He says this ashrama is suitable for most of the people. Human relationship is very important in maintaining mental sanity. Thus, both ashramas are acceptable. However, only a prepared person should consider taking up sanyasashrama. Shloka 1 through # 6 discusses this topic of lifestyle.

2) **Sadhana Dvayam:** They are Karma yoga sadhana and Gyana yoga sadhana. Both sadhanas are required to be followed. Sri Krishna says there is no choice between the sadhanas.

Swamiji says there is a very big misconception in this area that there are several paths to liberation. Thus, some people feel karma yoga alone will lead to moksha while others feel bhakti yoga alone will lead to moksha. Others think raja yoga will get them moksha while still others think kundalini yoga will also get them moksha.

He clarified that neither the Vedas nor Gita supports this point of view.

Everybody has to go through Karma yoga followed by Gyana yoga. They should be performed, in sequence, one after the other, that too gradually. Karma Yoga has to be learnt and adopted first, as it is a required preparation for Gyana yoga. Then, through Gyana yoga, one obtains liberation. This is the Vaidic margaha. Thus, in first phase, karma yoga is dominant while in second phase Gyana yoga is dominant.

Karma Yoga: Shlokas # 7 through 12 deals with karma yoga. Chapter # 3 also discussed karma yoga at great length. **Karma Yoga can be defined as Proper action performed with a Proper attitude.**

Proper action: Proper action can be graded based on the spiritual progress that it can provide. In this gradation, selfless actions come on top, as most people are benefited by such actions. Nishkama karmani also called satvika karmani are the best kind of actions that contribute to the maximum purity and spiritual progress.

Therefore, a karma yogi should give utmost importance to satvika karmani and then to rajasa karmani and lastly to tamasa karmas. Performance of Tamas karmani should be negligible or none at all. This is called proper action.

Sakama karma is action that leads to benefits for one-self. They are Rajasic in nature and provide least benefit spiritually.

Tamasic karmani are actions that are harmful to society. Here I get the benefit but society is injured. They pull down a person spiritually.

Therefore, in karma yoga, our focus should be on actions that are Satvic in nature.

Proper Attitude: Here I perform all actions as worship to God. All my actions (satvic, tamasic and rajasic) are dedicated to God. And then, whatever the consequences of my action, I accept it as a prasadam. This is the proper attitude.

Citing an example, swamiji says, even thieves in India were devotees. They prayed to God before going on a theft. Even their mind changes with time through association with God. Shankaracharya says even a nishidha karma should be performed as an offering to God.

Every experience in life is a result of my own actions. What have I done for this great suffering, when I have not done any great wrong, is a question that comes to our mind. Remember our experiences include ones from our previous lives as well. Whatever I get, I deserve. Don't ask, "why me", at all. Rather ask, O God, give me the strength to go through this and learn. This attitude called padmapatram iva ambasa and has been defined in chapter 5, shloka # 10. This is proper action with the proper attitude.

And what will happen as a result of karma yoga? The result is that the mind becomes oriented towards the spirit, materialistic tendencies weaken, spiritual tendencies strengthen and interest in Gita increases. With this interest in the shastra also increases.

Thus, everyone has to go through purifying actions. Even a Sanyasi has to go through them. While the type of actions may differ, between a Sanyasi and a Grihastha, both have to go through karma yoga.

Gyana Yoga Sadhana: Shlokas # 13 through 21 deals with this topic. Gyana yoga is a requirement for moksha. Many consider Gyana yoga a dry path while they consider Bhakti yoga as a wet path. It is considered a wet path as you shed tears in a state of bhakti. Swamiji says this again is a misconception. Chapter # 7 discusses Bhakti yoga.

So, what is Gyana yoga? It is Vedanta vichara consisting of sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. It consists of the systematic, consistent and continuous study of scriptures under a competent acharya. Jumping from one Guru to another is not recommended as each Guru will have a different way of communication.

What will such a study lead to? This study will lead to the recognition of atma, the real nature of every individual. This study will lead to the recognition of atma, which is the real nature, the essential nature, the core nature and the higher nature of the individual.

What is the nature of this discovery or the nature of atma?

We have studied this elaborately in the Chapter 2.

Krishna hints at it here again as follows. The atma is of the nature of consciousness. What is the nature of consciousness? Important features of consciousness include:

- Consciousness is not a part, property or product of the body.
- Consciousness is an independent entity that pervades and enlivens the body.
- Consciousness is not limited by the boundaries of the body. In short, it is all pervading.
- Consciousness survives or continues to exist even after the fall of the body.
- Consciousness is the only one, that pervades all the bodies of the creation, which means bodies are many, but the pervading consciousness is one.
- Consciousness being one and all pervading like space; it is free from all the actions.
- Consciousness is not only an akarta but also an abhokta as well.
- Consciousness is, thus, also free from all karmas. Therefore, it also does not have papam or punyam.

Citing an example, while all actions occur in space, space itself does not act. Similarly while light illumines, it does not act. So also with consciousness, it does not act.

The stages of Gyana yoga:

First stage is identification with this consciousness. Citing an example, when I ask you what is here you will say there is a hand. Even if I ask you 100 times you will still say it is only a hand. Then, when I tell you that this hand itself is seen because of a light principle that is pervading the hand only then you realize that the light alone is pervading. Consciousness is like the light. This is the teaching of the Upanishad.

Second stage is learning to identify with the consciousness as myself. At present we have learnt to identify with the body; and this learning is so intense and so ingrained in our mind; that the moment we use the word I, we remember, I am a male, I am a female, I am so many years old; I am the child of so and so. In fact, you remember all the bio-data associated with the body alone. So, therefore, we have to do a lot of unlearning. And the new process is learning to identify with the consciousness and instead of saying I-am-the-body I have to learn to say that I-am-the-consciousness-pervading-the-body. This body is subject to arrival and departure. This body belongs to the material world. This body is a temporary gift from the Lord. I can use it for sometime, as a medium of transaction but I cannot hold on to it permanently. So, I have to learn to say that " I am the consciousness in the body" and not "I am the body". This is shifting the "I".

If I know I am consciousness, I will look at you as well as the consciousness of your body. Right now I only see your physical personality. I am atma, You are also atma. This unity of vision is possible only through unity of spiritual wisdom. All other talk of unity is only lip service. On one side we all say we are Indians, but we still fight and kill others. We

can never have a true transformation without getting this wisdom.

With this knowledge the fear of mortality also goes. I realize that I am the immortal consciousness functioning through this body. Our problem is not with mortality of body, rather it is that I think " I" am mortal. This notion changes with Gyanam. I realize "I" am immortal. This leads to wisdom and poornatvam.

With this, Sri Krishna concludes the topic of gyana yoga, shlokas #13. to 21. Here karma yoga was the first stage and gyana yoga the second stage. Gyana yoga leads to the wisdom that I am full, that I am immortal and Aham poornah. This is freedom from limitation.

Benefits of Gyana Yoga :

Shloka 21 through 26 discusses benefits. One benefit is the development of the spiritual value known as Vairagyam. Vairagyam is independence from external factors for happiness. We normally tend to depend upon external factors for our happiness and this poses a big problem. External factors are not in my control. Most situations that we come across related to family, servant, children etc. are not in our control. Psychological dependence is sorrow. Physical dependence may be difficult to avoid. The problem is with us and not with the world. The solution is to go from dependence to independence. Learn to depend upon your Self (higher self) for security, shanti and poornatvam. This attitude is called Vairagyam. This is dropping psychological dependence.

The benefits include: Jivan mukti. It means inner independence here and now. Regarding outer freedom, I am still bound by rules of society. Chapter # 2 discusses Sthitha Pragyaha Lakhanani. So this is jivan mukthi and he will live like that until the prarabdha karma is over. Until then the physical body will continue.

Therefore, as long as karma is there the body survives. Once the karma is gone, body also goes and thereafter he is one with Brahman, without any individuality. This stage is called videha mukthi and Sri Krishna calls it brahma nirvana.

With shlokas # 22 through # 26 the chapter five's main purpose is over.

In Shloka's 27-29 Sri Krishna introduces meditation.

The last three shloka are beeja shlokas. They are seed verses for the tree of 6th chapter, which is to come next.

This chapter, the sixth, is called sanyasa yogah or karma sanyasa yogah. Here Sri Krishna clarifies what is sanyasa to Arjuna. What is this clarification? That, the outer sanyasa is not important rather it is the inner sanyasa alone that is real. That external renunciation is not compulsory, however, inner renunciation is the real renunciation.

Take Away:

1. Karma Yoga can be defined as Proper action performed with a Proper attitude.
2. Every experience in life is a result of my own actions. What have I done for this great suffering is a wrong question to ask. Karmas from our past lives are also a factor.
3. " I am the consciousness in the body" and not "I am the body". This is shifting of the "I".

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy