

Baghavat Geeta, Class 28

Greetings All,

Shloka # 55:

Sri Krishna answered:

“When one wholly discards desires of the heart and becomes exclusively content with the Self, one is called a sage of stable wisdom. O Arjuna.”

Refreshing our memory, Swamiji says, we have come to the fourth and final topic of Sthitha Pragyaha. Arjuna asked Sri Krishna if a person who has gone through all Sadhanas and become a Gyani, how does such a person face life? How does he respond to situations? What are his Lakhsanani's?

Before a person becomes a Sthitha Pragyaha he has to follow the following three steps:

1. Lead a religious life following path of Karma Yoga.
2. Study Vedanta scriptures under a competent teacher following Sravanam and Mananam.

These two steps will make him a Pragyaha or one with conviction in the teachings. At this stage knowledge is still at the intellectual level.

3) But even this prajñā status is not enough, because the knowledge remains at the intellectual level and therefore in the third stage, he has to convert the intellectual knowledge into emotional strength, because throughout the life, it is our emotional personality that is interacting. Emotional personality is the one that stands out in all of us. Any little disturbance bothers us. This personality bears the brunt of every situation. And if that emotional personality is not transformed, knowledge will be there at one level, but in my day-to-day life, I may continue to go through the turmoils

that I went through before. And therefore, if Vedanta should be of any practical use, I have to spend time, converting this knowledge into emotional strength, which is called Sthitha (Sthira) Pragyaha. This status should be great help, especially during a crisis.

And this process of converting prajna into sthita prajna, jnanam into jnana nishta is the third stage and that person who has purified his mind; who has gained the knowledge and who has derived emotional strength from that knowledge, such a person is called sthitaprajnah; such a person is also called jnana nishta, atma nista as well as jivan mukthaḥ. He has insulated himself, like a person who has insulated his hands and legs and can now touch a live wire and it will not shock him.

Arjuna asked Sri Krishna, What kind of a person is this?

The Gyani is not controlled by external emotional factors. He is happy within himself. Citing example of a man with a walking stick, once he gets the strength back in his leg, he drops the stick. So also, a Gyani drops all his Kama. So, his Poornatvam leads him to Kama Tyaga.

Kama here means desired object although it can also mean desires. Desire is in the mind wriggling like worms. Wherever we go, we cannot drop it. It follows us everywhere, disturbing us all the time.

Tyaga or renunciation is of two types.

1) I cannot reach the grapes so I walk away calling it sour grapes. A man goes to Hrishikesh running away from his family's problems. These are examples where my desires are suppressed. This is not true renunciation.

2) Walking away from situations due to my Self Knowledge leads to a desire-less stage or true renunciation.

Swamiji says there are two types of desires:

- 1) Allowed desires and
- 2) Not allowed desires.

Allowed desires: For a desire to be allowed it has to fulfill three conditions.

1. Legitimate: The desire must be legitimate or Dharmic. Desire for one's children's welfare is legitimate. Desire for a home for the family bought through honest earnings is legitimate.
2. Moderate: When worldly desires reach such levels that spiritual pursuit is forgotten, it is not an acceptable state. Human beings have a material aspect as well as a spiritual aspect. Whatever I do, I must remember that material things including this body are all impermanent and incidental. Our real core is spiritual. So, provide time for spirituality first and then pursue material goals.
3. Desires must be non-binding: Convert desires into preferences. Or make it non binding. When a desire is binding it can upset you or uplift you. In pursuing a desire you may or may not obtain it. Any dream can shatter. A binding Kama is a time bomb. Defuse it by proper understanding. I have a desire. I work for it. But, there are chances it may not be fulfilled. When the desire is not fulfilled, one must be mentally prepared for the disappointment as well. Citing an example consider you are watching your favorite TV show when the power goes off. I must be mentally prepared for this disappointment. This is converting the Kama from binding to non-binding or Shuddha Kama (Legitimate, moderate and nonbinding). Shudha Kama is allowed. Even Shankaracharya had desires that allowed him to write the Bhashyam. As per Vedas, even Bhagawan had desires.

If a Gyani is desire-less, then how come desire is allowed?

Shankaracharya himself raises this question and he answers saying that Bhagavan's and jnani's kamas are Shuddha kama's; if they are fulfilled, wonderful; if not fulfilled also it is fine.

Jnani has got motive coming from within him to work hard; but that motive is without a sting. So, whatever happens, it does not hurt him. And therefore, Jnani renounces all ashuddha kamas; whatever kamas he has, they are shuddha.

So, Ashudha Kama should be renounced.

Shloka # 56:

"The silent sage is said to have stable wisdom when sufferings no longer perturb his mind, when he ceases to cling to pleasures, and he is rid of attachment, fear and wrath."

How does a Gyani respond to unfavorable situations in life? A Gyani too cannot avoid unfavorable situations. We all have prarabhda Karma to work out as does the Gyani. Gyani may not acquire any Agami Karmas, but whatever he has acquired they have to play out.

Gyani's mind is emotionally so strong that disturbances are minimal. As we assimilate the teachings the mind gradually becomes strong. How to measure our selves? Swamiji cautioned us that we should not measure others, only measure our self.

Check for the following:

1. The frequency of mental disturbances, are they becoming less? Consider maintaining a daily diary.
2. Watch the intensity of mental disturbances. When intensity is small, the reaction goes away soon. When reactions are strong, it can overflow into the organ of speech. Speech can become harsh. If it overflows to physical body, shivering and other symptoms occur and

both body and mind are affected.

3. How much time do I take to recover balance? Emotional trauma can take a long time to recover sometimes weeks, years, or even a lifetime. With knowledge recovery should be faster.

All these disturbances can also occur due to positive emotions as well. A man won an election after many attempts at it. The emotion of the win gave him a heart attack.

Gyani is one who is not carried away even in a positive situation. Gyani is free from:

1. Ragaha: emotional attachments
2. Shoka:
3. Moha:

(Note: *Raga*, *Shoka* and *Moha*. *Raga* means dependence, attachment. *Shoka* means grief, sorrow. *Moha* means conflict, confusion caused by *Raga*. It also means depending on external things or people or situations to be happy.)

Attachment comes from dependence or a weak mind. Attachment is always asking what will "I" get out of it. Attachment thinks, since I want to get a benefit, I want to control the other person or it establishes possessiveness.

Love, however, comes from a strong mind. Love comes with the mindset asking: "What does the other person get out of it? What can I give?" To love is not to control, but give freedom to the other person.

Gyani has love in his heart.

Take away from this class:

1. Consider keeping a daily emotional diary.
2. Concepts of love versus attachment taught today try to bring it into your daily life.
3. At the last Kaivalya class, there was a passionate

discussion about Karma yoga and if it is teaching us escapism? In this Gita class, Swamiji brings answers that provide greater clarity to this question. So, is desire for material objects acceptable? Can a workingman aspire for a higher position, say, to become a CEO? The answer is, it is absolutely all right to have such desires so long as they fit into the requirements of "Acceptable desires". It is perfectly **legitimate** to seek any advancement including to the position of a CEO. The challenge is, in the process of advancement, one has to bring in **moderation**. Spiritual goals should continue to be primary, materials goals being secondary. In climbing up the ladder one can fail. The failure should not result in creating emotional havoc. One should be able to accept it with minimal shock. This is the **non-binding desire** aspect. One should thank God even for the failure for he may have saved you from something much worse such as a broken family, estranged wife and children etc. I suspect future classes will elaborate on some of these themes.

With best wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy