

Bagawat Geeta, Class 33

Greetings All,

Continuing his talks, Swamiji reminded us that we are in the final portion of Chapter 2 discussing the topic of Sthita Pragyaha. He is one who has acquired self-knowledge and converted it to emotional strength. Talking about the Sthita Pragyaha, Sri Krishna presents the following two topics:

1. Sthita Pragyaha Sadhanani that tells us how to become a Sthita Pragyaha and
2. Sthita Pragyaha Lakshanani that describes the traits of a Gyani.

Shlokas 55-57 describes Lakshanani while Shlokas 58-68 describes Sadhanani. Now in Shloka # 69, Sri Krishna is back again talking about Lakshanani. A Sadhaka is one who is in process of transformation while a Sidha is one who has been transformed. Shlokas 69-72 are about Lakshanani.

Shloka # 69:

The restrained ascetic (the sage) is awake in what is night for all living beings, while, when these latter are awake, it is night for the silent sage who perceives.

All these shlokas are important ones. Shlokas 69 and 70 are especially important ones that glorify the Sthita Pragyaha. In this shloka the Gyani is compared to an Agyani. The idea being conveyed is that both Gyani and Agyani face the same world. World cannot be changed. Vedanta does not attempt at changing the people or the world. It is very difficult to bring about such a change. What Vedanta does try is to change one's response to the world. Vedanta tries seeing this corrupt world in a somewhat different light.

Even a Gyani has Prarabdha karma, although he avoids Sanchita and Agami Karmas. So, if both live in such a world, what is the difference in their respective responses to the world?

Giving an example, Swamiji says, it is like two people sitting on the seashore and watching the waves. They both see the same waves. However, one person knows the truth of the wave, that it is water. The wave itself is just a name and a form. He focuses on the immortal water (Advaita) and not the perishable Wave. The other person, in the meanwhile, does not know this truth and is caught up in the name and form of the wave. He is, thus, immersed in the mortal wave.

Thus:

One person sees the Dvaita Anitya Tarangani

While the other person sees the Advaita Nitya Jalam.

Because of this perspective the ignorant person feels happy when the wave rises and feels unhappy when the wave subsides.

The Gyani sees birth and death belong to name and form only. There is neither elation nor depression over the rise and fall of a wave.

Another example cited was that of a movie. At the start of the movie it is just a white screen. Once movie starts I am absorbed in the superficial characters on the screen. I lose sight of the truth, which is the white screen. I feel the shadows on the screen are real. We get absorbed in the movie. The reality is that there is no hero or villain, it is all make believe. One who knows the truth understands that the white screen is the truth. Such a person is not carried away by the images projected on the screen.

Therefore:

Advaita Drishthi belongs to a Gyani. Dvaita Drishthi belongs to an Agyani. One who has the advaita knowledge is free from joys and sorrows of this samsara.

In shloka # 69 Sri Krishna now provides another example. An ignorant person is compared to an owl that keeps awake in the night and the nightlife while the Gyani is compared to a human

being.

Daytime is compared to Advaita while nighttime is compared to Dvaita. The human being, the Gyani, is awake to the day or to Advaitam and asleep to the night that is Dvaitam. An owl, considered an Agyani, is asleep to the day, that is Advaitam, while he is awake to the night that is Dvaitam. In the shloka: Ya means Advaita, Nisha means asleep to and Samyami means Gyani.

Swamiji also gave example of a wooden elephant that was wrongly identified by a person as a real elephant. Once he was taken close to it, by a wise man, he realized it was only a wooden elephant. He lost his fear for that elephant. The world is a frightening place to an Agyani, full of troubles. For a wise man, it is a harmless place or Sarvam Shivamayam.

Shloka # 70:

“He wins peace into whose mind objects of desires enter as waters flow into a full and stable sea that is being filled; and not he who yearns after objects of desire.”

In this shloka Sri Krishna provides another example. Swamiji says, Vyasa muni when he dictated the Mahabharata to Lord Ganesha, Ganesha's condition to him was that, Vyasa had to tell the story without stopping. Vyasa's request, in turn to Lord Ganesha was that, even as he wrote them, he understood the shloka's as well. This way, Vyasa was trying to get some time to think. To gain time, Vyasa would once in a while compose a shloka that was difficult to understand. They were known as Granthi shlokas or knotty shlokas. Shloka # 70 is one such knotty shloka.

In this shloka a Gyani is compared to an ocean. What is the glory of the ocean? It is ever full and independently full. It does not depend on any external factor. The ocean knows the rivers depend upon it for water. The ocean is also not easily polluted. Similarly the Gyani's mind is ever full (and not of

samsara). Agyani's mind is never full and it is dependent on external factors. A Gyani is Samaha (equanimous) in all conditions. The Gyani's mind is like an ocean. Even though pollution enters the mind it is always calm and poised.

Shloka 71:

"The man who, giving up all objects of desires, moves about seeking nothing, and rid of all sense of "mine" and "I", wins peace."

Sri Krishna continues his description of the Gyani's state of mind. He is one who enjoys a poised mind. Swamiji says we have a poised mind when it comes to our neighbors as we can look at them dispassionately. He suggests we should also look at ourselves in the same dispassionate manner. This poised state of mind comes and goes in us. In a Gyani, however, his poise is always maintained.

Gyani does not depend on any external factors. Swamiji says divorce is big issue in India as relationship depends on the other person. If another person does not like me, I am affected. Gyani, however, has love for others without seeking their love in return. He does not have body identification. I may love my body, however the reality is that one day, nature will take it away from me. Gyani remembers that: I am not the body and nothing belongs to me. He thus enjoys life thoroughly.

Shloka 72:

"This status of Brahman, Arjuna!; attaining it, none gets deluded (any more). Abiding in it, at least at the hour of death, one gains super-consciousness in Brahman."

Sri Krishna says this state of mind, of a Sthita Pragyaha, is born out of Vedanta Gyanam. Shlokas 12 through 25 are important ones. We need to read them again and again. Based on this state of mind one obtains the Brahmi state. Once he

reaches this state of mind he cannot fall back into the state of mental conflicts. He is in this state until his Prarabhdham. Then he will attain Videhi Mukti meaning freedom from the cycle of birth and death. At that time all three bodies (Karana, Sthula and Sukshma sharira) of his merge into totality.

This knowledge, once it is obtained at any time in life, will get you moksha.

This is the conclusion of chapter 2.

With best wishes,
Ram Ramaswamy