

Swamiji's New Year Talk for 2018: Glory of Sanatana Dharma

Namathe:

Swamiji has given a special talk for the New Year and the subject of the talk is Glory of Sanatana Dharma. Please listen to this talk by clicking below:

New Year 2018 Special Talk

Taitryea Upanishad, Class 32

Greetings All,

Ch 2, anuvakaha # 6, shloka #1:

If he knows Brahman as non-existent, he becomes himself non-existent. If he knows Brahman as existent, then (they) the world knows him to be existent. Of the former (anandamaya kosa), the Self is the essence.

Swamiji said, with the end of anuvakaha # 6, the Upanishad concludes the topic of Pancha Kosha Viveka, a method used to obtain Brahma Gyanam. This method was presented briefly in the beginning as well. **Even though Brahman is all pervading, one has to recognize it in one's own mind as the witness conscious behind every thought.**

This witness conscious is not available for objectification.

One has to claim it as “I” the witness consciousness that observes all states “with thought” and “without thought”.

Thus: Brahman=Sakshi=Myself.

Turning the attention from body, very gross, to consciousness, very subtle, all of a sudden is difficult. It is like climbing a mountain; one needs to get acclimatized at different levels. In Pancha kosha viveka we were taken through such acclimatization at different levels of annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vignanamaya, and anandamaya respectively. What you think of, as the blank-less state is not really blank; even that is matter. Then I can go to the final “witness” to the blank state of thought, which is the atma. This is the ananda atma. It is satyam, gyanam, anantam and anandaha. With this Pancha kosha topic was concluded.

Now a student interrupted and asked a question. These questions are known as anuprashnaha.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 2:

Thereupon arise the following questions:

Does the ignorant leaving the world, go There? Or does the knower, leaving this world, obtain That?

In the shloka there is a pluthi denoted by number 3. It means a very long vowel. The teacher answers the question, as he does not want to leave the student with a lingering doubt in mind. The questions are based on the teachings. Two questions are asked, about a wise person and an ignorant person. Both questions have been combined into one, in the shloka.

In the teaching Brahman has been presented as the cause of everything. It, Brahman, is the karanam (cause) and Samsara is the karyam (products, things, beings both sentient and insentient). The student applies a principle in the questioning process:

- At time of creation all products originate out of their cause. It is like the rivers and clouds that originate from ocean by evaporation.
- At time of destruction all products merge back into the cause. Thus, the river merges back into the ocean. So, if Brahman is the cause; at time of our destruction we will all merge into Brahman, our cause.

This is a choice-less situation. It is irrespective of the status of a being. All plants, animals, human beings, all must go back to the cause. So, whether a human being is wise or ignorant (one who has not performed any sadhana), after death they must all go back to Brahman.

Now merging into God has been defined as moksha. Keeping all these in mind student asks, "O guru, will an ignorant person merge into Brahman after death or not?"

The teacher is now faced with a dilemma. Whatever answers he gives will be problematic.

Suppose teacher says, ignorant person does not merge into Brahman; then, it means Brahman is not the cause of everything. Remember everything goes back to its cause upon destruction.

If Brahman is not the cause, even a wise person will not merge. Conversely, if I can merge as an ignorant person, why obtain Gyanam at all?

Shankaracharya makes a point here. It is a comment on a grammatical issue in the shloka that also addresses this question. The word anuprashnaha in the shloka indicates the questions are plural or more than two. Sanskrit grammar recognizes singular, two persons and plural, consisting of three persons or more. Reality in shloka is that we have only two questions from the student. Shankara says this means there is a third implied question as well. What is this implied question? If you go back to the previous shloka one will know

the implied question. In previous shloka Upanishad says some people accept existence of Brahman while others don't. The ones who do not accept existence of God say Brahman is not available for objectification since Brahman is considered beyond all transactions. This is the belief of the nastikas. Dvaitins also don't believe in a nirguna Brahman. If so, is there a Brahman at all? Only after we answer this question can we answer the two questions raised by the student.

The Upanishad answers this implied question in anuvakahas 6,7, and 8 respectively. The answer is a long one. The Upanishad concludes Brahman exists. It gives seven reasons supporting this conclusion. We will take each one of the seven one by one now.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 6, Shloka # 3:(Please note that only the first two lines of the shloka are discussed in the class today.)

He desired, “ I shall become many and be born. He performed tapas; having performed tapas, He created all this whatsoever (we perceive). Having created it, He entered into it. He became the manifest and the unmanifest, the defined and undefined, the housed and the houseless, knowledge and ignorance, truth and falsehood and all this whatsoever exists. Therefore, it is called Existence. In this sense, there is the following Vaidika verse”

Brahman is existent because it is the intelligent cause of creation.

The principle used here is: If I see a purposeful product, say a box, a mike etc., that has a function to perform, it means that product was visualized, designed and manufactured by an intelligent mind. It means there is an intelligent designer. Even if designer is not visible still we can say this cause existed.

Even behind an ordinary clip there must be a proportionately

ordinary intelligence. Extending this idea everything available in front of me is a purposeful product. Thus, I have sense objects and I have food products. Every science reveals the purposeful design of creation. The universe is a well-designed universe. Life is possible due to this intelligent design. Then I infer that this purposeful design must have an organizing principle. Scientists say possibility of creation by chance is almost zero.

If you gave instruction to a computer it can write poetry. A human brain after all created the computer. Can we accept this computer as an accidental assemblage? If not, why should human brain be accidental? So, we think there is an organizing principle called Ishwara.

How would creation come out of this creator? Suppose one has to create cloth? One has to visualize the product. One has to create it in one's mind. For this one has to consider many factors. Where should heaven, hell and earth be located etc.? This has to come in the Maya Tatvam or Total Mind. In Maya, design is visualized and a desire should come. Desire and visualization both are required. That Brahman desired, visualized and created this creation.

In Sanskrit every word has a gender.

Take away

With Best Wishes,

1. Even though Brahman is all pervading, one has to recognize it in one's own mind as the witness conscious behind every thought.

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 100: Chapter 7, Verses 1 and 2

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda started chapter 7 today. He said Gita consists of 18 chapters and they are divided into three groups. Chapters one through six are known as prathama. Chapters seven through twelve are known as madhyama and chapters thirteen through eighteen are known as charama. Since each group consists of six chapters they are known as shatakam. Thus, Shankaracharya's nirvana shatakam verses are famous.

Each of the six chapter segments deals with three specific topics respectively.

Thus prathama shatakam deals with:

1. **Jiva swaroop**a or nature of the individual. Individual is neither the body nor mind. Individual is the chaitanya that is in the body mind container. This satchidananda was brilliantly discussed in the second chapter, from verse 12 to 25; in the third chapter pancha kosha viveka was discussed; in the fourth chapter also, the chaitanya atma was pointed at akarta and abhokta; in the fifth chapter it said (5.13) that consciousness is the essential nature of the individual which does not perform any action. So this Satchidananda atma which is Jiva svarupam was one of the topics which was there throughout the prathama shatakam; the first six chapters.
2. **Karma yoga** as an important sadhana was discussed. It was discussed in chapters 2,3,4 and 6 respectively. Chapter

6 discussed karma yoga at the very beginning. Importance of individual effort and initiative was also discussed. There is a big confusion that Karma theory is fatalistic. Many people say Hinduism is a fatalistic religion and that it is holding back India. **The law of karma, however, says that the present is the result of the past; if that is true, the future is the result of the present action that you choose to do; You are responsible for your life.** All four destinations of life known as purusharthas are all goals chosen by human beings.

3. **Self Effort:** Sri Krishna says you have to lift yourself; I can help you when you do so. Therefore, individual effort, free will is emphasized in choosing a course of action. **When you choose action you are also responsible for the results. Hence the saying:**

Watch your thoughts, it will become your words and actions;

Watch your words and actions; they become your habits;

Watch your habits, they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Therefore destiny is decided by character; which is decided by habit; which is decided by your words and actions and which are decided by your thoughts; therefore watch your thoughts; and direct your thoughts; and **by directing your thoughts in the present, you are ultimately determining your destiny. All is decided by thought.**

Thus three topics are highlighted by prathama shatakam.

Now in madhyama shatakam three more topics are highlighted. They are:

1. **Ishwara swaroopam** or nature of God. It represents macro aspect while Jiva swaroopam represents micro aspect of

God. Therefore throughout the six chapters, Krishna talks about the definition of God, the nature of God, the function of God; the glory of God, all about God alone. And while discussing Jiva svarupam we saw that the body mind complex is the container; the cabinet, but the content, the essential Jiva, is satchidananda atma. Similarly for Ishvara also we have got aspects of the container or superficial aspect of God, and then the essential inner nature of God; deha and dehi; Shariram and shariri; anatma and atma. Just as Jiva as a mixture of anatma and atma; Ishvara is also a mixture of both; saguna and nirguna svarupam. So Ishvara svarupam is topic No.1.

2. **Upasana:** In prathama while karma yoga is shown as sharira pradhana; physical body is active in karma yoga; whereas upasana is mana pradhana, we are gradually going from the grosser instrument to the subtler instrument. In Karma yoga, you are heavily active serving the society, contributing through pancha maha yagnas; whereas in upasana, you learn to withdraw and focus; So saguna Ishvara dhyanam; upasana; this is the second topic.
3. **Grace of God** is an important factor. Ishwara kripa or anugraha is very important. Individual effort alone does not accomplish everything. So one should not be overconfident or arrogant about it. Over confidence means I can do anything. Then he faces failure. He then lapses into fatalism. Reality is, “ I accomplish things through my effort boosted by grace of god.” When we start our classes we say the dhyana shloka. It says that my effort boosted by god’s grace is needed. Thus three aspects of Ishwara swaroopam, Ishwara Upasana and Ishwara Kripa were discussed.

Now moving on to chapter # 7, the first three shlokas are introductory.

Shloka # 1:

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With mind set on Me and dependent on Me and performing Yoga, O Arjuna! hear how you will know Me wholly without any doubt whatsoever.

Sri Krishna says, “ if you follow my teachings, you will come to know Me”. You will get Ishwara Gyanam. There are two aspects to discovering God. First, you will know me completely. I have two natures. A lower nature that is evident in the bodies like Rama and Krishna.

The lower nature is the visible physical nature of God; like Rama shariram; Krishna shariram; which people worship as God. In fact majority of devotees when they think of God; they think only of God only in a particular form; particular body; that is why the dhyana shlokams describe the physical form alone. Sri Krishna says that the visible, tangible form, known as saguna svarupam is also my lower nature.

Saguna svarupam is however subject to arrival and departure. It is limited in space and time and is known as apara prakriti. And Arjuna I have got a higher nature as well; which is invisible, intangible, eternal, all pervading nature, which is called the nirguna svarupam; paraparakrithi; and only when you know both; saguna and nirguna svarupam; finite and the infinite nature of God; your Ishvara Gyanam is complete. And therefore through this chapter, I am going to give you both saguna and nirguna gyanam; only then your Ishvara Gyanam is complete.

Sri Krishna asks how am I going to teach? I will teach so that you are left without any doubts. What are the conditions you need to fulfill? You should have a desire to know Me; else you will be bored. You should have a desire to know if God is your destination. "I" or God must be your goal. Should God be my

goal or moksha? God and moksha are identical. In the language of spirituality it is called moksha while in religion it is called Bhagawan.

Every person wants independence; wants security; wants ananda and wants peace. Therefore peace, security; fulfillment; these are the destinations of everyone.

God alone is ever secure. Anything finite is bound by time and space; anything bound by time and space is subject to fluctuations and destruction; even the stars cannot escape destruction; they might have a very long life; but you ask the astronomers; they will say that even the Sun will collapse but in a few billion years!; therefore we are saved. But remember, the stars explode which is known as nova; and supernova; which indicates that anything finite is insecure; seeking security from finite thing is the most unintelligent approach; Even stars die eventually. Anything finite is insecure. So true security is available only in the infinite called bhagawan. So, it has a symbol in the form of Rama and Krishna etc. Infinite is called Bhagawan in Religion. Moksha and Bhagawan are synonymous.

If your mind is fixed on Me as the ultimate destination and you work, it is known as devotion. This condition one.

When you fulfill an earthly goal you get fulfillment but you start on another goal; as such they are only intermediary goals. Poornatvam alone gives you complete fulfillment.

Yoga in shloka means all the required sadhanas depending on my level. Thus all children cannot be admitted into the same class; depending upon the level of the student; he is admitted in the first standard or sixth standard etc. Therefore depending upon my need, I have to take to karma, or upasana, or sravanam; whatever is required and practice those relevant sadhanas **or put individual effort with the grace of God**. A devotee should not challenge God. Take refuge in God. Citing

an example of a long train being hauled by two engines one in the front and another in the back. Spirituality is similarly an uphill climb and while you can be engine that is pulling you still need God's push. This God's push is bhakti.

Thus conditions imposed by Sri Krishna are:

- Keep God as destination.
- Do what you should or exert self-effort.
- Seek grace of God.

With these three you will attain Me. The secret of knowing Me is same as attaining Me.

Shloka # 2:

Exhaustively I shall set forth that knowledge together with
its realization; once it is grasped, nothing more will remain
to be known.7.2

Exhaustively I shall set forth that knowledge together with its realization; once it is grasped, nothing more will remain to be known.

Sri Krishna continues with the introduction. In shloka # 1, he said you would get divine knowledge or saguna and nirguna Ishwara Gyanam.

Saguna Ishwara Gyanam is Dvaita Gyanam.

Nirguna Ishwara Gyanam is Vigyanam or advaita.

A secret: When a person is at Saguna Ishwara Gyanam, there is a difference between God and the individual.

At nirguna Ishwara Gyanam level the difference between God and individual is removed.

Citing example of wave and ocean, as long as you look at the wave and ocean; from the name and form standpoint; they are different; names are different; one is called wave; other is called ocean; forms are also different; wave has got a small

wavy form; whereas ocean has got an ocean of vast magnitude; So when you observe at the name and form level you see the difference; but when you go to the essential nature of both; wave is essentially water; ocean is essentially water; or satchidananda; and you find that wave and water are no more distinct. Similarly saguna gyanam means bheda gyanam; nirguna Gyanam means abheda gyanam. Bheda means difference between God and Jiva; and abhedananda means oneness; thus Gyanam is equal to bheda gyanam.

Sri Krishna says I will give you this knowledge thoroughly.

What is the benefit of this knowledge? Having gained this knowledge you have nothing more to know. All your intellectual questions are resolved. Samsara is experienced at three levels:

1. At the gross body level people for whom samsara is only at the physical level; they talk about their diseases; they talk about their old age; they talk about their death; their samsara is at the grossest body level.
2. At the emotional level they are not bothered about the physical condition; but they feel the emotional needs of life more; they say, I am very fine; my health is very good; my children take care of me very well; but they do not spend time with me; they do not even know whether I am alive or not.
3. At the intellectual level, such as quest of a scientist. He is intellectual. They have questions, regarding the creation; when did the creation come; when did the first human being come; how did life start; what is the individual; what is consciousness; etc.

Vedanta solves all three levels of fulfillment. it gives you emotional fulfillment; it gives you even intellectual fulfillment; you find all the fundamental questions regarding

Jiva, Jagat and Ishvara get resolved.

Take away:

1. When you choose action you are also responsible for the results.
2. Hence the saying:

Watch your thoughts, it will become your words and actions;

Watch your words and actions; they become your habits;

Watch your habits, they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

3. By directing your thoughts in the present, you are ultimately determining your destiny.

Everything is decided by thought.

4. The law of karma says that the present is the result of the past; if that is true, the future is the result of the present action that you choose to do. You are responsible for your life.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 31

Greetings All,

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, Shloka # 2:

Of that, of the former, this one is verily is the embodied self. Different from this self made up of intellect (vignanamaya) is another self within., formed of bliss (anandamaya). By this, that is filled (by anandamaya the vignanamaya is full). It also has the shape of man. According to the human form of that, is the human form of this. Of it, joy (priya) is the right side, rejoicing (moda) is the left side, and bliss (pramoda) is the trunk. Brahman is the tail support. There is this vaidika verse about it.

Swamiji said we are in the middle of anuvakaha # 5 of Brahmanandavalli. We have gone from vignanamaya to anandamaya. Vignanamaya has now become a kosha. The moment you understand it is a kosha or anatma it means anatma is born out of atma. Vignanamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Vignanamaya is dissolved in anandamaya.

What is the shape of anandamaya? It is in the container called Vignanamaya, which has the shape of manushya. Thus, anandamaya also is in the shape of the manushya. Anandamaya does not have a shape of its own as such it borrows its shape from the container. Thus of all the Koshas only annamaya has its own shape, all others borrow from annamaya.

Now coming to the factors, anandamaya atma's head is priyam. Priyam means happiness. It's right hand side is Moda. Moda means more happiness. Its left hand side is Pramoda. Pramoda means highest happiness.

How to understand these three terms of happiness being used? It is like happy, happier and happiest. Citing an example: You go to a restaurant and see gulabjamun on menu. You like gulabjamun. The pleasure of seeing gulabjamun is priyam, also known as Ishta darshanaja sukham.

Now you order the gulabjamun and it is brought to you. This owning of object of desire is known as Moda or Ishta grahanaja sukham. Then, when you finally taste the gulabjamun you obtain Pramoda or Ishta anubhavajam sukham. This is highest pleasure when the object of desire and one who desires it, become one. Swamiji says, the food and you become one, reflecting advaita. All these three experiential pleasures are anandamaya. The word maya means it is subject to change. Thus all conditional pleasures are anandamaya. Now the Upanishad says, anandamaya is not atma.

In case of anandamaya there are only three factors instead of the normal five. In fact anandamaya is also not the real atma. The real atma is anandaha. The suffix maya is not added to it. Ananda is the non-fluctuating pleasure, the real atma. It is not a changing, experiential pleasure. Once I know ananda is atma then anandamaya also becomes a kosha. Thus all experiential pleasures are anatma. They are subject to arrival and departure. Thus, they have nama and roopa as well. This anandamaya is a mithya. It is also known as kosha ananda.

Then, what is atma-ananda? It is not an object of experience. It has to be understood as myself. Not only is it myself, it has the support of (pucha) in Brahman. Really speaking the Brahman is only an apparent support rather than a real one. Citing an example, Swamiji says, it is like saying outer space is the support of inner space in a pot. Really speaking outer and inner space is one and the same. It is only a superficial difference.

How do we know that Brahman seemingly supports that atmananda? In beginning of this chapter Brahman was defined as Satyam,

Gyanam and Anantam. From this Brahman the creation comes into being. Brahman and Atma are identical.

What is the difference between anandamaya kosha and atmananda?

Anandamaya is an object while atmanada is the subject.

Koshanada is subject to change while atmananda is my self with no arrival or departure.

How can I experience atmanada? Whatever I experience is koshananda. "I" am the experiencer, not the experience.

How can I see my own original eye?

I can never see my own original eye. Even in a mirror we see only the reflected eye. Reflected eye is visible, while original eye is not. Reflected eye can come and go with the mirror while original eye does not change. Even the mirrors reflective quality can change the reflection. The original eye has no arrival or departure.

If original eye cannot be seen and I can see only the reflected eye; if so, what is the proof of the original eye?

The very experience of the reflected eye is proof of the original eye. Every experiential experience is proof of atmananda. So, who am I? I am Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam and Anandaha.

Now the Rig mantra comes in.

Ch 2, anuvakaha # 6, shloka #1:

If he knows Brahman as non-existent, he becomes himself non-existent. If he knows Brahman as existent, then (they) the world knows him to be existent. Of the former (anandamaya kosa), the Self is the essence.

The Rig mantra talks about a serious problem faced by Vedantic students. The student understands annamaya, pranamaya,

manomaya, vignanamaya, anandamaya and now seeks the experience of atmananda as well. In general we all wish to seek to experience the objects we come in contact with.

While Atmananda is eternal, I am seeking for the arrival of the eternal atmananda. How can I look for experience of eternal atmananda? Even in Nirvikalpa Samadhi, ananda goes away when you come out of Samadhi and you feel pain. Highest mystic pleasure is really koshananda. Atmananda, you never experience. Students are not able to accept this fact. This is a universal problem. We conceptualize everything. Our study of Vedanta is often an intellectual exercise.

Nastika is one who says Brahmananda is not a subject of experience. Suppose a person negates Brahmananda, it is equivalent to negating himself. Because, Brahmananda is Yourself. Most contradictory statement is, "I am not existent". Therefore, never negate existence of Brahman. Accept Brahmananda is existence even though it can't be experienced. There is only one thing in creation that is without objectification. It is, "I am". He himself is existence.

There is another meaning to this shloka as well. Suppose a man says Brahman is not existent, Shankaracharya says, such a person is adharmic. It is adharmic because he can't have Brahmagyanam as a goal in his life. For such a person all shastras are redundant. The very purpose of dharma shastras is to prepare one for Brahma gyanam.

In a society that values only money and entertainment, god does not exist. Such a society has no dharmic values. Such a society is exclusively focused on artha and kama.

In our culture artha and kama are perfectly acceptable until one reaches his middle age at around 40 or 50 years of age. After that one's goal is pursuit of god.

Materialists thus become asurah's. Asu means organs and raha

means protector. One who protects his organs for long life. Asuraha is also called Asata.

On the other hand if one believes in Brahman, then Chitta shuddhi and Gyanam become important. He is a spiritual person. He is called a Suraha. Chapter 16 of the Gita discusses asura's and sura's.

If a family is only into material pleasures then it can become separated very easily through divorces, remarriages and inter-racial marriages. In India, family was strong although the trend is changing. In all stages of life family is required when the goal is dharma and moksha. So, accept Brahman. One day you will understand that Brahman is " I am".

Now the Yajurveda Upanishad has completed Pancha Kosha. This is pancha kosha viveka.

In the beginning three questions were raised. They were:

- 1) What is Brahman?
- 2) How to know Brahman?
- 3) What do you mean by knowing the greatest?

We have discussed what is Brahman and how to know Brahman. Now we move to discussing the third question.

However, before answering the third question, a student interrupts with a question. Questions related to a topic being taught are known as Anu-Prashna. We will discuss this first

Baghawat Geeta, Class 99: Chapter 6 Summary

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda summarized chapter six. It deals with one of the most important topics of spirituality, namely meditation. This chapter is also very important as in the entire body of scriptures it is the only one that has dealt with meditation so extensively. Meditation has two roles to play.

- Meditation to be performed before Vedantic Sravanam. This is an upasana to prepare the mind for Sravanam. It includes a variety of saguna ishwara dhyanam. This upasana will lead to self-knowledge through Guru Upadesha.

Suppose a person has not performed this preparatory upsana? His mind is not considered qualified enough to receive the teaching, when he performs sravanam. In such a person while he will receive the knowledge, it will not assimilate within him. It will be like oil and water, each standing separately. What that person knows and what he is will be different. If it is an unprepared mind gyana-nishta does not occur. For such cases Nidhi dhyasanam or Vedantic meditation is a compulsory requirement.

- Nidhidhyasanam is nirguna ishwara dhyanam. It is also known as atma dhyanam. Let us remember that Upasana is saguna ishwara dhyanam.

In Vedantic meditation; a person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one; and

thus Vedantic meditation does not produce knowledge but Vedantic meditation helps in the assimilation of knowledge; it is not the cause of Gyanam; but it is cause of Gyana nishta.

Thus we can summarize the process as follows:

Upasana: Is for obtaining gyana yogyata.

Gyanam: Is to obtain Gyanam.

Nidhidhyasanam : Is to obtain Gyana Nishta.

The word dhyana is used in all three instances, such as upasana dhyanam.

What is the topic of chapter six? Is it upsana or nidhidhyasana dhyanam? Chapter six is focused only on Vedantic meditation or Nidhidhyasana dhyanam. Why does Sri Krishna introduce Vedantic meditation here?

Because, Sri Krishna feels, Arjuna has already done sravanam in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 so this chapter is for assimilation of the teaching.

There are six parts to chapter six. They are:

- Bahiranga sadhanani, general disciplines to be followed daily.
- Antaranga sadhanani: Specific disciplines to be followed just before meditation.
- Dhyana Swaroopam: Actual process of meditation.
- Dhyana Phalam.
- Dhyana Pratibhanda Pariharau; remedies to obstacles to meditation.
- Yoga Bhrashta: Sri Krishna answers a pessimistic question of Arjuna.

Detailing each one of them:

- Bahiranga sadhanani: (Shloka 1-9, 16 and 17).

The general disciplines to be followed daily include: a) Practice karma yoga; it is very important. A karmi cannot practice meditation.

Sri Krishna says a karma yogi is one who is able to accept all the actions that he has to do in life without grumbling. One source of mental disturbance is doing things without loving that job; when I keep on doing things; without having a love for that; there is a split in my personality; mind does not want to do it; body has to do it; therefore there is a stress and strain.

Karma Yogi accepts and performs all actions without love or hate for the action.

He performs all actions with Ishwararpana budhi. He also accepts all fruits with Prasada Bhavana. Thus he has a stress free mind. It is a mind without conflict. It is a mind of samatvam. In such a mind there is no violent reaction. Therefore Karma yoga is a must for a dhyana yogi. Sri Krishna says such a man is as good as a Sanyasi.

Have self-confidence. Never look down upon yourself. Even if you feel you don't have any qualifications, remember that you are a part of the divine. If you feel diffident, surrender to God. God, Guru and Shashtra will help you.

Do not be fatalistic; fatalism is un-vedantic. We think karma theory is fatalism; this is the biggest misconception. Nowhere in the Vedas, fatalism is talked about; it always says, take charge of your life.

1. Practice self-control. When you use an instrument you should have control. Sri Krishna says God has given us this body with all the indriyas. All of them will help, if you control them. Make sure that they do not control you.
2. Practice moderation in everything. Don't indulge too much. Sense pleasures are allowed but don't over do it.

Check yourself once in a while by saying “no” to something you like. If there is a protest it means it is getting hold of you.

3. Antaranga sadhanani: (shlokas 10-15). These are specific disciplines to be practiced before a meditation. Eight disciplines are mentioned. They are:

1. Place of meditation should be clean, secluded and spiritual.
2. Time should be satvik. Early morning or evening hours are acceptable. The time of meditation should not be one, when you are rajasic or tamasic.
3. Proper seat to sit upon. Shastras don't recommend sitting on the floor.
4. Condition of body. It should be straight but not stiff.
5. Condition of sense organs. They should be withdrawn. Eyes partially closed focusing on nose or between eyebrows.
6. Breathing should be smooth and slow. Breath and mind are connected.
7. Condition of mind, one should become a mental Sanyasi for the duration of meditation. Drop all relationships such as husband, wife, child, son etc. Drop all roles. Just be a bhakta or shishya during meditation.
8. Condition of intellect or budhi: I must be convinced of the value of meditation. I must have conviction in meditation. I must be convinced that it will transform my personality.

These are the eight factors to be taken care of before meditation.

Dhyana Swaroopam: Shlokas 18-32. Dhyana swaroopam is the process of meditation. Mind dwelling upon a chosen object is meditation; which means the mind is there in meditation; mind is functioning in meditation; and mind entertains thoughts in

meditation; therefore never think meditation is silencing the mind. Vedantic meditation is not silencing the mind; it is not stopping the mind; it is not curbing the mind; it is not restraining the mind; but it is directing the mind; which means thoughts are there; but the thoughts are dealing with the subject matter that I chose. And that subject matter is whatever I have learned from the scriptures. And what have I learned? That the body is not the real I; it is an incidental instrument which will be there for a few years and will disappear; similarly sense organs, similarly the mind; they are all instruments that I handle, my higher nature is the very chaitanyam; the consciousness principle, which is aware of all of them.

This topic is discussed extensively in Chapter 2, shlokas 12-25 in the Gita. All the knowledge learned from this Sravanam is the recording process. Meditation is the retaining and reliving the teaching. Thus:

Dharana is focus.

Dhyanam is retaining the focus.

Samadhi is becoming absorbed in the subject. Here will is not required.

Sri Krishna gives example of a protected flame to describe the process.

Now seven definitions of Samadhi are provided. They are:

1. Samadhi is that stage, in which chitta uparamanam, mind subsides; mind is absorbed in itself;
2. Atma darshanam; the one's mind is absorbed in the atma darshanam; owning up one's own higher nature;
3. Atyantika sukham, I see my own higher nature.
4. Tatva nishta, is being established in one's higher nature.
5. Atyantika labha, it is a stage in which one has attained

highest in life;

6. Atyantika dukkha Nivrittihi; it is stage in which one has withdrawn from and thus one is free from all the sorrows.
7. dukkha samyoga viyogah; a stage in which a person is no more identified with the gains of anatma.

Sri Krishna then discussed Gyana phalam. This meditation transforms a person. The way I look at the world changes. The world does not change; my way of looking at it changes. One obtains freedom from ragah and dvesha. I do not get attached nor do I hate anything. I may have preferences but no attachments. As I said preferences are different from ragah-dveshah. I would prefer to have a cup of coffee is one thing; I need a cup of coffee is quite different. If you say I prefer; it is available, welcome and good; or else, OK. But when I say I need it means if that is not available; I become non-functional.

One obtains samadarshanam. One obtains equanimity. One obtains jivan mukti.

Shlokas 33-36 discusses obstacles to meditation. The specific obstacle of Vikshepa or restless mind is discussed. Two remedies are suggested for Vikshepa. First is Vairagya and second is abhyasa. Vairagya reduces raga and dvesha. **Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker. We don't have any external enemies at all.** It is raga dvesha that disturbs us. It is our loves and hates that disturb us. I have provided this capacity to disturb me to Raga and dvesha. Vairagyam means reducing the ragah-dveshah slavery.

Abhyasa means practice. So practice of the meditation; here practice makes a man perfect; sheer abhyasa will improve the meditation.

The topic of meditation is now over. Arjuna , now asks a

question.

Shlokas 37-45 is a discussion of this question.

“Suppose I fail in my spiritual journey, what will happen to me?” is Arjuna’s question to Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna answers who ever come to spirituality will gain knowledge and then moksha. Even if he does not obtain moksha he will still obtain swarga. After swarga he will obtain a very conducive birth and continue his spiritual journey taking up from where he left off in previous birth. So don’t be pessimistic Arjuna; enjoy the spiritual journey.

Shlokas 47 and 48 are the concluding verses of the chapter. They are glorification of Vedantic meditation. Of all meditators the Vedantic meditator is closest to liberation, says Sri Krishna.

This chapter is called dhyana yogah; or atma samyama yoga, because the central theme is directing the mind towards Vedantic teaching.

Take away:

1. Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker.
2. Nidhidhyasanam: A person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 98: Chapter 6, Verses 43 to 47

Shloka # 43:

तस्मिन् वा पश्यन् पूर्वजन्तुनां कर्मणां
तस्मिन् वा पश्यन् पूर्वजन्तुनां कर्मणां 6.43

There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in spite of Sri Krishna's encouragement Arjuna became pessimistic with respect to his own spiritual journey. He understood that this journey requires knowledge and purification of the mind. He feels he cannot master his own mind. Mind is after all the most difficult thing to master. That is why victory over mind is considered the greatest victory. Sri Krishna says it is a pre-requisite for gyanam. Arjuna feels he will never be able to obtain it, certainly not in this lifetime. Therefore, he has already started thinking of his preparations for the next life. It is like children who take an exam and know they have not done well, thinking of taking the exam again.

Yogabhrashta is spiritual failure. Sri Krishna has started answering Arjuna's question in shlokas 40 through 45. He points out that a person on this path has no fall at all.

Shankaracharya says, once spiritual teaching is received, it cannot be destroyed. There, however, maybe a stage of temporary stagnation. It is like the glowing ember covered by ashes, even with a little fanning the fire comes back. So also such a seekers' spiritual vasanas come back to life. He picks up the thread in his next life. Spiritual failure of this janma becomes spiritual genius in next janma.

Even if one has failed in spiritual life in this life, he will still get swarga. Then he comes back in another birth to pursue spiritual life. Spiritual life can be clearly obtained only in two lokas. They are Manushya loka and Brahma Loka. If so, why not all go to Brahma Loka? Shankaracharya says going to Brahma Loka is very difficult. Getting manushya loka is also not easy. In manushya loka he or she gets the ideal continuation of his spiritual journey.

How does this continuation occur?

First, an environment for scriptural study should be available. Second, I should have an interest in such a study. Yoga Bhrashta will have both in next life, the environment and inclination. In that ideal environment (India is ideal for spirituality) the spiritual inclination arrives early in a yoga bhrashta. Swamji says any genius in any field (music, science, arts) was a bhrashta in his previous life. At death, jiva takes poorva vasanas with it to the next birth. His inclination towards materialistic world is less. He cannot explain his own inclination other than attribute it to his poorva janma vasana.

Once he has the inclination he can't take this new life for granted. He has to use his free will to promote spirituality. This inclination has to be nourished. Therefore, the Yogabhrashta strives more and more in this new life. Due to his vasanas his effort is considerably reduced. Success of his spiritual journey is assured even with lesser effort.

Shloka # 44:

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Though not a master of himself, he is attracted by his prior discipline. Even he who desires to know about Yoga goes beyond the sphere of Vedic injunctions.

How does this spiritual inclination express itself? Where ever and whenever spirituality is practiced in any form, he has an automatic interest in it. He is helplessly drawn to it. Parents often discourage a child's inclination in this area. They don't understand that child's attraction is due to his or her vasanas. Sri Aurobindo is a good example.

They say of Aurobindo that his parents did not want him to be in Indian culture at all; they liked the western culture; therefore he was given western education and sent to England; and to a materialistic atmosphere. There he comes in contact with people who are working for the freedom of India and he gets associated with those people, and he begins to feel and if I am working for the freedom of my motherland, should I not know about India, what is its culture, what is its history; philosophy and he gradually gets sucked into it and he comes to freedom struggle and goes to Pondicherry and becomes a yogi.

Therefore, if the spiritual fire is there; nobody can stop; and if the spiritual fire is not there; whatever you do it will not work.

People who don't have the spiritual fire within them, should be allowed to follow their materialistic tendencies. Encourage them to worship god. **Spiritual maturity is an evolution, not a revolution.**

Due to his vasanas, a yogabhrashta, starts his interest in spirituality as a casual (hobby) student. But his fire catches

on later. Spiritual fires are of three types: karpura buddhi (camphor), Kari buddhi (coal) and vazhathandu buddhi (banana trunk).

He becomes a camphor student. He transcends shabda brahma or karma kanda. Karma kanda is finite result. He transcends anitya phalam and obtains nithya phalam or moksha.

Shloka # 45:

योगिनो यो यत्नं करोति
सर्वपापं त्यजति ॥ ६.४५ ॥

The Yogin who strives hard and who has been perfected in the course of many lives attains the supreme goal, all his sins having been washed away.

What happens to Yogabhrashta in the present life (as a spiritual genius)? How does he feel the advantage of his vasanas? Sri Krishna says, he is free from impurities; he has a shudha antahakarana or mental purity.

How does mental purity express itself?

In chapter # 5, in the beginning, this topic is discussed. **His natural inclination towards spirituality shows his mental purity.**

How did he get it? Is God partial to him? This advantage he enjoys because he has obtained it from his many, many past lives. He has clarity about life's purpose. He is not hoodwinked by materialistic goals.

Therefore, being an evolved person, he requires very limited effort in this life. His spiritual journey is a most enjoyable one. He effortlessly reaches his destination of moksha. He enjoys following Shruti-viddhi.

Shloka #46:

योगीश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवासिनीति श्रुत्वा
सर्वभूतानां हृदि निवासिनीति श्रुत्वा 6.46

The Yogin is superior to the performance of austerities; he is deemed superior even to the knower of the Vedas; he excels those who do works. Therefore, O Arjuna! be a Yogin.

With the previous shloka Sri Krishna's answers to Arjuna's question is complete. Arjuna need not be pessimistic. Just listening to Gita gets him swarga. The question is raised, if a person has a past dosha (Sanchita karma) what happens to a Yoga bhrashta? His spiritual samskara is so strong that they keep poorva doshas at bay. They are not destroyed, as one needs gyanam to destroy past karmas, but they are kept at bay. So, don't worry about sanchita papam. Don't be pessimistic. Don't ask, when will I get moksha? Rather, enjoy the spiritual journey.

In next two shlokas Sri Krishna comes back to meditation. Here he glorifies Vedantic meditation. He also glorifies the meditator. He says, among all sadhakas the Vedantic meditator is the greatest one.

Yogi's are of four kinds.

- 1) Tapasvi: He is an upsaka, a saguna yogi;
- 2) Gyani: One who has gone through sravanam and mananam;
- 3) Karmi: He is a karma yogi;
- 4) Nidhidhyasanam: Vedantic meditator.

All four are yogis. Among them the Nidhidhayasana Yogi is best of all as he is closest to reaching the goal of moksha.

Therefore Arjuna, to get moksha, you have to do Nidhidhyasanam all by yourself. Unlike in sravanam and mananam no Guru can help you here. So recollect and assimilate the teachings.

Shloka # 47:

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Among even these Yogins, he who, full of faith, worships Me, his inner self, absorbed in Me, him – I deem the most integrated.

Now Sri Krishna concludes the chapter by glorifying the meditator.

Almost same idea as in shloka # 46 is communicated. The one who meditates upon Me, Atma or God as Atma, with shraddha, he will become a jivan mukta. His mind remains absorbed in Me in total concentration.

He is the greatest sadhaka among Yogi's. This is my teaching. This concludes Ch # 6 on Dhyanam. The chapter is also known as Atma Samyama chapter or one on control of mind.

Take away:

1. Spiritual maturity is an evolution, not a revolution.
2. A natural inclination towards spirituality shows one's mental purity.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 30

Greetings All,

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 2:

Different from that made up of mind (manas) is another inner soul made up of intelligence (Vignana) and by that this (manomaya-self) is filled. It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of the previous, is the human shape of this one. Faith (sraddha) is its head, righteousness (Rtam) its right side, Truth (satyam) its left side, Yoga is the trunk and total intellect (mahah) is the tail and support. There is this following Vaidika verse about it.

We are now in anuvakaha # 4 of Brahmanadavalli. The Upanishad has entered Vignanamaya kosha. Initially it (manomaya) is still looked as atma, later as anatma. Once we accept vignanamaya as atma manomaya then becomes its container or deha while Vignanamaya is the dehi.

Knowledge (vignanamaya) does not have a shape. It assumes shape of manomaya or assumes manushya akara.

Once we accept manushya akara then the five factors come into play and they are the head, the right side, the left side, the central part and the support.

The knower principle Vignanamaya is the cause of deliberate action. A man first knows something's, then he chooses one of them and he works towards accomplishing it. One cannot take an unknown thing as a goal. This is a process we perform lifelong. Pramatha, the knower becomes Karta. Shradha, faith in Vedas, guides him to spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge requires shastra pramanam. If you spend a lot of time and effort on the spiritual it requires knowledge of religion. This religion or spirituality requires shastra pramanam. This comes only from shradha in

religion/spirituality.

Heaven or hell has no scientific proof. There is no proof of Pitr puja reaching ancestors. Concepts of punyam, papam, and moksha are all only coming from shastra pramanam.

Mind, different from brain, is not accepted by science. End of brain is not end of mind. Mind is sukshmam, while brain is sthulam, per shastras. However, there is no proof of this.

Therefore, one who does not have an appropriate attitude towards religion cannot accept all these facts. Thus spiritual life requires gyanam and faith in validity of scriptures.

Science too believes in blind faith. They feel sense organs are the only valid way to know sense objects. We, however, believe in non-worldly knowledge of shastras.

Science believes in sense organs because it works. For supra worldly wisdom, belief in shastra works.

We are not insisting you have shradha. Without faith in the eye, you cannot walk even a single step. This faith helps me.

Shradha is head. Ritum is right hand. Sensory perceptions must be understood correctly. As an example: Senses report earth is stationary while the reality is that earth is rotating at a high speed. It is not terra firma. The eyes show stars as small while the reality is that they are several times larger than earth. So, illusion is possible. So, interpretation is required. Scriptural illusion too must be corrected. Mananam after sravanam is performed to correct this illusion. Ritu is right side.

Satyam is utara paksha. Knowledge is not enough. As per Karma kanda knowledge is useful only when implemented.

Therefore, knowledge is incomplete without practice. **Practice of Vedic teaching is Satyam.**

Atma is the central part is known as Yogaha. Yoga means leading a focused life style. The focus should be on life's end goal or moksha. First get gyana yogyata then get gyanam.

Don't lose track of goal. Once in a while perform a check on your course to see if it needs correction. Most people get lost in the complexity of samsara. That is why 41 samskaras are prescribed to be performed by the Vedas. From birth, marriage, deaths etc. are all rituals that remind you of your goal. This constant awareness is Yogaha.

Support is mahaha or samashti Vignanamaya or Hiranyagarbha. Every action has to be supported by God. Sri Krishna says, every organ functions only when supported by the Devata of the organ. Hiranyagarbha is the overarching Devata.

Five factors are now mentioned for Vignanamaya. There is now the Rig mantra glorifying Vignanamaya.

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, shloka # 1 and part of Shloka # 2:

Knowledge performs the sacrifices and it is the real agent of all the physical activities. All the "gods" worship Knowledge as Brahman, the eldest. If a man knows Brahman as knowledge and if he does not swerve from it, he attains all desires and comes to abandon all the sins of the body.

We are entering anuvakaha # 5 with the Rig mantra.

This Vignanamaya atma is the karta. This knowing, judging, fixing capacity called "I" becomes aware of a program. Then Viveka chooses and directs me to the program. Hence Vignanamaya is important. Animals don't have this capacity. It makes humans different from all beings. Vignanamaya atma, the karta atma, alone performs all vaidic upsanas (karmas). Once scriptures go out adrisha pradhana karmas go religion also goes. This happens in inter-caste marriages, when religion and tradition are thrown out of the door. No gothra is required for such a marriage. When marriage is dharma moksha pradhana, couple has a different approach to marriage.

Vignanamaya karma also performs all non-scriptural activities like working for earning etc. Therefore, Vignanamaya is laukika Vaidika (common religion). So, meditate upon this vignanamaya atma. Even Gods meditate on this atma. This knowledgeable one performs the actions. How do they meditate? They meditate on Samashti Hiranyagarbha, the first-born Vignanamaya.

Hiranyagarbha is responsible for rest of creation. Hiranyagarbha is Brahman and he comes out of the navel of Ishwara. Vyashti-Samashti Upsana is to be performed.

The benefits of this upasana are:

- Sakama: Suppose a person performs meditation on Vignanamaya Samashti aikyam through out his life then he will drop all papams born out of individuality, even as he drops his body. Gita, in chapter # 8, says **whatever you constantly think of at time of death, you reach that after death.** This upasana drops all papa karmas. He gets only punyam. He gets Brahma Loka. He. However, cannot get moksha, as he still needs gyanam for that.
- Nishkama karma: Chitta shudhi, expansion of mind and focus of mind all improve. Individuality is dropped in meditation. It dilutes the ego by visualizing totality. If I prepare long enough I will be prepared for anandamaya atma, the next step.

What is advantage of Brahma Loka? This loka has all possible material pleasures one can think of. The environment, objects and instruments are all ideal. The Rig mantra is complete with this.

The Yajur mantra takes over now.

Here person values knowledge. People who were involved in India's freedom struggles, their Vignanamaya atma was strong. This is Vignanamaya abhimana topic. Now we are entering next

sheath of ananda maya or Karana shariram.

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, Shloka # 2:

Of that, of the former, this one is verily is the embodied self. Different from this self made up of intellect (vignanamaya) is another self within., formed of bliss (anandamaya). By this, that is filled (by anandamaya the vignanamaya is full). It also has the shape of man. According to the human form of that, is the human form of this. Of it, joy (priya) is the right side, rejoicing (moda) is the left side, and bliss (pramoda) is the trunk. Brahman is the tail support. There is this vaidika verse about it.

We are entering the subtler layer. Really speaking Vignanamaya is not the atma. Atma is different. Atma is now anandamaya. It is the real atma. Where is it located?

It is within vignanamaya. With this vignanamaya becomes anatma or a kosha. Every thing including anatma is born out of atma. Vignanamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Vignanamaya is dissolved in anandamaya. Microcosm is dissolved in macro cosm. Macrocosm also gets resolved.

Take away

1. Gita, in chapter # 8, says whatever you constantly think of at time of death, you reach that after death.
2. Practice of Vedic teaching is Satyam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 97: Chapter 6, Verses 37 to 43

Greetings All,

Shloka # 37:

संन्यासो योगो वा
योगो वा संन्यासो वा योगो वा संन्यासो वा
योगो वा संन्यासो वा योगो वा संन्यासो वा योगो वा संन्यासो वा 6.37

Arjuna said:

What fate, Krishna! is in store for the lax practitioner of Yoga whose mind is rich in faith but who fails to reach perfection in Yoga?

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has comprehensively discussed all aspects of Vedantic meditation, which has to be practiced after a thorough study of Vedantic scriptures. Nowhere else is meditation discussed in such great detail. For this reason alone Chapter 6 is an important chapter. He has also talked about obstacles to meditation including mental distraction and its remedy. To succeed in meditation one has to develop Vairagya or detachment. Without Vairagya meditation is not possible. Without meditation an assimilation of teaching does not take place. Without assimilation of teaching one cannot obtain mukti. Hence Vairagya is very important, per scriptures. Now Arjuna seeing himself wonders if he can ever get Vairagya. He becomes pessimistic about obtaining moksha in this life. Swamiji says this is a universal problem. Every seeker becomes pessimistic, at some point or other, wondering, "Can I ever obtain moksha in this life?" **Pessimism is a common**

obstacle for every seeker.

Arjuna has identified with majority of people and thus presents his problem. Shlokas 37, 38 and 39 respectively deal with Arjuna's pessimism. After shloka # 37, Arjuna asks what happens to a person who comes to Gyana yoga without going through Karma marga. In this process such a person faces obstacles and is not able to complete the path of knowledge. It is not due to lack of faith but mainly because of obstacles that he is not able to obtain moksha. His is a situation of incomplete effort although he had the faith.

So ayathihi means alpa prayathnah; a person of incomplete effort; not because of lack of faith, faith is there; sincerity is there; but because of obstacle, one could not get Gyanam. And, therefore, naturally, gyana phalam of moksha he could not attain. Then at least should have attained the karma phalam of svarga. Arjuna feels that he would not get karma phalam also, because he left the karma and spend the karma time for Gyana; with the hope of getting a higher result; I do not want svarga and came to moksha; and svarga he dropped and moksham also he did not get; which is called typical trishanku.

Trishanku left the earth for the sake of attaining heaven and he was not granted entry in the svarga loka, and therefore he came down and Vishvamitra said do not come here and go up and Vishvamitra pushing up,

Indra pushing down; he was caught between heaven and earth.

What will be his lot? Arjuna clarifies his pessimism next.

Shloka # 38:

[illegible]

Having fallen off from both (karma and yoga) confounded and

un-established in the path of Brahman. O hero does he not perish, like a scattered cloud?

In the previous shloka Sri Krishna said a seeker who places insufficient effort would not get moksha; also because he came to Gyana marga without going through karma marga he will not get swarga. Why did he not perform karmas; because, he chose to spend his time on gyana marga. Thus, neither did he have the support of karmas that could have given him swarga nor did he have complete gyana to give him moksha.

Citing an example his condition is likened to a small cloud that has been separated from the larger cloud. Wind cannot disperse a large cloud. However, wind will dissipate a small cloud. Vedantic teachings usually give examples from nature. In those times people spent a lot of time in nature and with nature unlike today. So this seeker is also like a small cloud without support of Karma or Gyanam.

Imagine a person gets out of the society and he does not have the support of a guru or ashrama; what will happen; the mind does not have karma hold; the mind does not have shastra hold, shastram has been dropped; svadharma has been dropped; thus his mind will dwell upon only sensory pleasures or other immoral things and the person ends up a mithyachari and that person can fall. That is the reason they say Sanyasa is such a highly risky ashrama because one can go out of both shastram and Varna ashrama dharma and like the cloudlet will he not get into destruction?

Hey Krishna, having fallen from the path of brahman or brahma marga or Gyana margah and from karma marga too, will he not perish; this is Arjuna's fear.

Shloka # 39:

○○○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○ ○○○○○○○○○○○○○6.39○○

- Avantara phalam, secondary benefit or by-product

Explaining the two phalams, when you plant a mango tree; the primary benefit you expect is mango fruit; but there are so many by-products, you get the shade of the tree; and the temperature will be lesser; the roots of the tree retain some water; and therefore in the surrounding area, there is more coolness.

Mukhya phalam: If a person has all required qualifications, he will get gyanam and punyam. If he does not have sufficient qualifications, he will just get the secondary phalam of punyam alone. **In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita , without understanding it, it produces punyam.** It is similar to sahasra nama japa. Punyam here means one gets swargam.

Oh Partha: for a Gyana margi, a person who has come to shastra sravanam, there is no downfall at all either in this janma or after death; there is no question of spiritual fall. What is the reason? Because such a person happens to be mangala-karta, he is doing a noble action, even listening to Gita is a mangala karma, which

Sri Krishna called in the fourth chapter, as Gyana yagna.

Even though no homa kunda is involved; even though no oblations are involved; this Gyana yagna will give as much punyam as any other vaidika karma; and that punyam is the minimum result that one will get. But if he has got qualification, he would not require this punyam; because Gyanam itself is going to give him moksha; therefore kalyana krit is equal to mangala karta.

Such a person will never have a downfall.

Shloka # 41:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥

Reaching the spheres of the meritorious, and after sojourning there long lasting years, the one who has slipped from Yoga is born in a home of pure and prosperous householders.

This shloka discusses what happens to such a seeker, a Yoga Bhrashta, after death. Such a person, who has accrued punyam by listening to scriptures, obtains as secondary benefit, swarga.

Madhusudhana Saraswathy Swami quotes a verse and he says that one minute of Vedanta sravanam is equal to 100 of yagas and it is equal to giving the danam of the entire earth; not one acre or two acre; the entire earth is gifted; all those punyams will come by Vedanta sravanam ; the idea is that this itself is a very sacred karma.

He will remain in swarga for many years. He will enjoy pleasures as well. Then God gives him an appropriate birth to continue his spiritual journey.

He will be born in a prosperous and cultured family. Only in such a family can one pursue spirituality. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.

Suppose one is born in a family with prosperity but without culture? Sri Krishna says, this will not help him. Money without culture is dangerous; because all the money will be used on purely materialistic pursuits such as clubs, alchohol etc. Such a person performs no pooja, has no religion, has nothing; that is in fact worse than being born poor.

In the new life he will use all his prosperity for spiritual growth. He will perform more of nishkama karma; he can do more of service because dharma is there in the mind; money is there; when dharma and artha come together, he will use all the money for noble activities; nishkama karma will be more and all those karmas will give him more purity and sadhana

chatushtaya sampathi. In the purva janma he failed because of his incomplete qualifications; now all those qualifications will be completed in the next janma and he will be ready for Gyanam.

Now, Sri Krishna gives a second possibility although it is a rare one.

Shloka # 42:

योगीनां भवति पुनरपि पुनरपि पुनरपि
योगीनां भवति पुनरपि पुनरपि पुनरपि 6.42

Or , he is born in a family of wise yogins. This sort of birth , however, is far rarer in the world.

He is born to a Gyani, although they may not be in prosperity. Not born in prosperity here means they lead a very simple life. **When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse.**

It will be considered as an ideal thing for following tapas. You do not have to specially practice sanyasa; because you have to have something to renounce; therefore I need not work for sanyasa. Being born to Yogi's he need not go in search of a guru as well.

Fewer possessions mean less to worry about.

Thus, such a birth, as child of a gyani, is a rare one. It is rare because Gyanis themselves are rare and a grihasta gyani is rarer still.

The next question was: Will I start my spiritual sadhanas from scratch again or is it a continuation of my knowledge into the next birth?

Sri Krishna says, "You will be born with spiritual knowledge of the previous birth." He is thus a spiritual genius. So, a spiritual genius was probably a Yoga Brashta in his previous birth.

Shloka # 43:

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There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

In the new birth, in a prosperous family or Gyani's family, this jiva gets associated with spiritual gains of his previous birth.

Why is it so?

As per shastras, between the two janmas, body is different but not the mind. While body dies, the mind does not. Sukshma shariram does not die.

A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every child comes into this world with his or her own Vasanas. In the early years the vasanas remain dormant but manifest themselves in later years.

How do you know a child is a spiritual genius? From it's inclinations. In Vedanta class's people who attend are of various age groups, young and old. Age is of the body, not the mind. Gyana Vrudha (old) is a mature person. Body is 15 but Gyanam maybe 95 years old.

Take away:

1. Pessimism is a common obstacle for every seeker. Will I ever get moksha in this life?
2. In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita without understanding it, it produces punyam.
3. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.
4. When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse. Poverty

here means leading a simple life.

5. A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every child comes into this world with his or her own vasanas.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 29

Greetings All,

Chapter 2, Anuvaka 3, shloka 2:

Of that former annamaya, this pranamaya is the atman. Different from this pranamaya-self made up of pranas, there is another self constituted of the mind. With that self, made of mind, the pranamaya is full. This is also of the form of man. Its human form is according to that of the former. Of it, Yajus is the head, Rk is right side, Saman is the left side, the scriptural injunction (adesa) is the trunk and the group of hymns of Atharva –Vada is the tail and support. There is the following Vaidika verse about it.

We are in anuvakaha # 3 of Brahmanadavalli. The Upanishad has entered Pancha Kosha Viveka. This viveka is supposed to sensitize the mind. Mind has to become very sensitive. Citing an example: An axe is used to cut a tree; a blade is used to shave your face; the blade is subtler than the axe. A laser is

used in eye surgery; it is an even more sensitive instrument. Thus sensitivity of instrument depends on subtlety of operation. Here, for understanding the atma, something inconceivable, the mind has to be very subtle. The subtlety of mind has to develop gradually. Thus, we started from annamaya and went to pranamaya; or from anatomy to physiology. Physiology is not tangible. Thus, functioning of eye can only be detected by testing it and not by a direct check. Pranamaya is thus subtler than annamaya.

Upanishad has made Pranamaya the Atma now. So we have to dwell on Prana. A Rig mantra was used to tell us this. Every physical body is a bead and through every body the life principle passes through. It is that which makes us alive and is called Sutra upasanam. If one practices this upsana two benefit accrue.

Sakama Upsana: One gets a long life.

Nishkama Upasana: One gets Chitta shudhi, Chitta Ekagrata, Chitta Vishalata. The mind becomes sensitive enough to go to next layer called manomaya.

In shloka # 2 we are also now entering manomaya. Really speaking Pranamaya is not atma. The atma is actually monomaya. Where is manomaya located? It is within pranamaya. With this pranamaya becomes anatma or a kosha. Every thing including anatma is born out of atma. Pranamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Pranamaya is dissolved in manomaya.

Another important point to note in this meditation is that we are practicing annamaya and samashti annam aikyam. Then we practice pranamaya and samashti prana aikyam. It shows Vyashti and Samashti aikyam at every level. The resolution of

microcosmic also results in resolution of the macrocosmic.

Now, we are at manomaya. This manomaya (the content) fills pranamaya kosha (the container). What is shape of manomaya? Manas does not have a shape of its own. It is like water. It assumes the shape of container. It takes shape of pranamaya. Now, pranamaya also has no shape of its own. So annamaya lends shape to pranamaya. Pranamaya in turn lends shape to manomaya. Thus, manomaya atma has manushya akara. It is a borrowed akara.

Once this is accepted, Manomaya has five factors. Atma is the head as Yajur Veda mantra. Rig Veda mantra is right hand side or south side. Sama Mantra is left hand side. Scriptural injunctions also known as adesha or Vidhi vakya, is the trunk. Atharvana Veda mantra is the tail and thus the support.

Shankaracharya says, Atharvana Veda is meant for health wealth etc. They provide Iha Loka Phalam. Whatever your goal is in life, one has to take care of health. Money, health, mental health's are all important. Before going for adrishta phalam one has to obtain drishta phalam.

Shankaracharya now discusses a specific problem in this shloka. In annamaya its five factors are an intrinsic part of annamaya. In Pranamaya the five factors are also part of pranamaya. However in Manomaya the five factors are Vedas that are external to manomaya. How have outside factors become part of manomaya atma?

Answering his own question, shankaracharya says, Vedas are wisdom in form of thought or manovrithi. Rig mantra is Rig manovrithi. In Vedas, thought is converted to sound and then re-communicated as a thought. Every mantra is Vrithi; it is converted to sound and then thought. Thus Yajur, Rig, Sama are all Vrithi's (thoughts). Therefore Rig mantra is on right side and Sama on left etc. Vrithis are a part of manomaya atma.

Last line of this shloka says with respect to manomaya atma

there is a Rig mantra.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 1: Rig mantra.

Whence all speech turns back with the mind without reaching It (The eternal truth or Brahman). He who knows the bliss of eternal truth, the Brahman, fears not at any time. This mind is the embodied soul of the pranamaya. Of this pranamaya the manomaya is the Self.

Now we are entering anuvakaha # 4, shloka # 1, a Rig mantra. The mantra starts at Yato and ends at Kadachaneti.

Here the upasana is a Vyashti samashti Upsana. The goal is Vyashti samashti aikyam.

Hiranyagarbha (brahman) is total manomaya. This is glorification of Hiranyagarbha. He being Samashti or the total, individual mind cannot conceive of it. Hiranyagarbha is inconceivable to the mind. Vyashti cannot measure Samashti. Hiranyagarbha is embodiment of highest ananda (brahmanada). This ananda is meditated upon. Samashti hiranyagarbha in Vyashti Manomaya is meditated upon.

The benefits of Manomaya meditation are:

1. Sakama: The person will not have any fear at all. Hiranyagarbha gives him highest security in relative terms as possible.
2. Nishkama karma: Gives Chitta shuddhi, Chitta Ekagrata and Chitta Vishalata. Mind becomes sensitive enough to go to the next step.

This manomaya atma is called sharira atma. Annamaya and pranamaya are respectively shariram or the Deha while manomaya is the Dehi.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 2:

Different from that made up of mind (manas) is another inner

soul made up of intelligence (Vignana) and by that this (manomaya-self) is filled. It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of the previous, is the human shape of this one. Faith (sraddha) is its head, righteousness (Rtam) its right side, Truth (satyam) its left side, Yoga is the trunk and total intellect (mahah) is the tail and support. There is this following Vaidika verse about it.

Here Upanishad is taking us to the next step or layer. Manomaya is not really the atma. The Atma is Vignanamaya atma. Where is this atma located? It is located within manomaya. Thus, now, manomaya has become an anatma.

Manomaya becomes a Karyam. Anatma is always a product. Whatever is a product is only a nama and roopa. Thus, Karyam is only a nama and roopa. Therefore, anatma is called mithya as it depends on something else. **Anatma has only a borrowed existence;** it does not have its own existence. As such it is as good as non-existence. Therefore, manomaya does not exist. This is known as Pravilapanam or the intellectual denial of the existence of manomaya. Manomaya atma is swallowed. Vyashti and Samashti are both resolved in the process.

Vignanamaya also has Manushya akara. It is a borrowed akara from manomaya. Thus Vignanamaya is in a manushya container.

The five factors of Vignanamaya or knowledge are now defined. Knowledge is required for karma. Manas stands for doubts. Thus, the more subtle knowledge destroys doubts.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 96: Chapter 6, Verses 35 to 37

Greetings All,

Shloka # 34:

मनो हि क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं
मनो हि क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं 6.34

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

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in the first part of Chapter six Sri Krishna has completed his discussion of topic of meditation. This topic has four parts to it. They are the general disciplines to be followed before meditation (Bahiranga Sadhanani), specific disciplines (Antaranga Sadhanani) to be followed before meditation (Dhyana swaroopam), the actual process of meditation and finally benefits of meditation (Dhyana Phalam). After completion of this topic, Arjuna asks a question about obstacles to meditation. Scriptures discuss four types of obstacles. Arjuna, however, mentions one of them namely the wandering nature of the mind. With a wandering mind it is difficult to focus during Vedantic meditation. Mind should focus, but it does not. This is known as Vikshepa or chanchalatvam. This was discussed in shlokas 33 and 34 respectively. Arjuna says, I have the mental steadiness to receive your teaching but I am not able to retain it. Arjuna is a Madhyama adhikari. In such a person Gyana Nishta does not take place. What should I do? This mind is a slimy thing. I am not able to control it. In shloka # 34, Arjuna cries out to Sri Krishna, saying the mind wanders. It goes where it wants not where I want it to go. Its disturbance gets passed on to

my sense organs as well. In a disturbed mind, the hand, feet, and other organs are agitated and move. This transfer of disturbance to sense an organ is known as Pramathi. Pramathi is a nature of the mind.

The disturbance of mind is also very strong. I thought I was the master; I now realize I am only a helpless servant. Mind even overrules the intellect. Even arguing with the mind does not help. The mind gets stuck on a topic to its liking. Its hold on external world, Anatma, is very strong. Unless I pull the mind from anatma how can I channel it towards the atma? An extrovert mind cannot perform Atma dhyanam. I find it difficult to discipline my mind. Mano jayah is biggest victory in life, per scriptures. I need your help. In shloka Sudushkaram means very difficult to control.

Shloka # 35:

मनोऽहं विमर्शयामि

मनोऽहं विमर्शयामि मनो विमर्शयामि मनो

मनोऽहं विमर्शयामि मनो विमर्शयामि 6.35

Doubtless, O hero! The mind is difficult to control and fickle. But by means of practice and detachment, son of Kunti! It may be held in check.

Sri Krishna said:

Here Sri Krishna presents the remedies to Arjunas problem in shlokas 37-39. It is also known as Vikshepa Parihara. Vikshepa is extroverted-ness of mind while parihara means its remedy. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna his problem is not unique. It is a universal problem. That is the reason it is addressed by the shastras. First, one has to acknowledge the problem, and then the solution comes.

Sri Krishna says while handling the mind is difficult, it is not impossible. He presents two methods to overcome the mind

problem. They are:

- 1) Abhyasa and
- 2) Vairagyam.

What is abhyasa? Abhyasa means practice. We should remember the mind dwells on anything it has an interest in without distraction. Thus, while reading a novel one can get so engrossed in it that one forgets time. In this case the mind is able to focus fully & effortlessly. We as humans do have the ability to concentrate; the question is concentrating on what? How to develop an interest in the field? By learning of its value says Swamiji.

Thus, interest leads to love; and love leads to concentration. This is called viveka abhyasa and leads to Nithya-Anithya viveka.

And how do you develop a value; only by trying to understand its superiority; and this process is called viveka abhyasah. One sees the superiority of something by repeatedly reading about it; talking about it; sharing it; you develop a value for it; it is called nitya anitya vasthu vivekah. So develop healthy habits by knowing the greatness of dharma, by knowing the greatness of moksha. This will lead to developing an interest in dharma and moksha; and this is called viveka abhyasah. It is all about the study of scriptures. Scriptural study initially talk about the superiority of God and how depending upon God is the only worthwhile thing in life; and how dependence on any other unpredictable factors in life is going to be risky.

The more I understand that dependence on unpredictable fluctuating factors is unintelligent, and dependence on the predictable and infinite God alone is worthy in life, means I am in the right path.

One learns to move from World dependence to God dependence to

Self -dependent.

World is highly fluctuating as such risky. Sorrow is because of dependence on something. What is Nithyam and anithyam, one has to learn from shatras. We learn God dependence is good. My life style changes depend on God more. Religious life is God dependence. God dependence is considered Shubha Vasana.

You live among perishable? Citing an example, suppose there is a cardboard chair. You can do a lot of things with it except you can't sit on it. The only chair you can sit on is God dependent.

So sitting on a strong chair is viveka; coming out

of the weak chair is vairgyam. Giving up of emotional dependence, giving up of that weakness is called, vairagyam. Another way of presenting it is to say drop the attachment.

People say Vedanta is dry but once you get into it is very juicy.

Shloka # 36:

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I hold that for the man whose self is uncontrolled, Yoga is hard to achieve. On the contrary, it can be won by him who has disciplined it by employing appropriate means.

So the same idea Krishna is clarifying further. Viveka and vairagya are only the two methods by which the mind changes its interest from the perishable to

the imperishable. It changes its interest from something fake to something real. And if that mind has not practiced viveka and vairagya; such a mind is called asamyatatma mind;

Atma here means mind; asamyatam means not channelized;

channelized from the perishable to imperishable; from the unhealthy to healthy; from artha kama pradhana to dharma moksha pradhana.

In shloka, atma means mind. For such a person, without control of mind, meditation is difficult.

Whereas when you have got interest for something your mind will be only dwelling upon that; whatever I love, the mind effortlessly dwells on that; pasyan, srinnvan, sprrsan jignan; it will think of that only; similarly when I have got a value for that; the mind will naturally run towards that.

When I have high value for spirituality mind runs towards it. One becomes like a new mother who has given birth to a child. A mother's mind is always on her newborn baby. A mother values her child. So, also does the person who has discovered a new value in life.

Thus, one with Viveka and vairagya, will have a mind without distractions and he will be able to perform Vedantic meditation. One who has disciplined his mind through viveka and vairgyah should read the scriptures, dwell upon the basic teachings of our scriptures, and understand how from world dependence one moves to God dependence and then to self-dependance. He should see the abstract benefit of scriptural knowledge. Sri Krishna says, have whatever you want but depend upon Ishwara.

Shloka # 37:

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Arjuna said:

What fate, Krishna! is in store for the lax practitioner of Yoga whose mind is rich in faith but who fails to reach

perfection in Yoga?

With previous shloka Sri Krishna concludes his answer to Arjuna's question on how to handle a restless mind. What is the solution? Solution is viveka and vairagya, which means developing an interest in the object of meditation; which is possible only by reading those books which talk about the glory of those objects; and also through satsanga; having friends who have got such values.

Satsang is very important. Shankaracharya says the following about Satsang:

satsaṅgatvē nissāṅgatvaṁ;

nissāṅgatvē nirmōhatvaṁ |

nirmōhatvē niścalatattvaṁ

niścalatattvē jīvanmuktiḥ ||

Nissangatvam means Vairagya.

The Satsang's values also come to you. Thus, your values change. Anything you get addicted to, you find a way to get out of it. Satsang helps with our addiction. Instead of Viveka the word abhyasa is used in shloka. With Chapter # 6 topic of meditation is over. Now Arjuna asks a question. He is pessimistic about managing his mind. This pessimism is also a human weakness. Sri Krishna says faith in one self is very important. In the beginning of the 6th chapter, Krishna said never look down upon yourself; never be diffident; because if I do not have self-confidence; atma kripa is not there. Arjuna's question is, will all the sadhanas that I have performed in this life be wiped out in next life and do I start anew?

Shlokas 37, 38 and 39 are Arjuna's pessimistic questions. Those who struggle in spirituality are called Yoga Bhrashta. Failure comes only to those who attempt. What happens to them

in next birth?

Yoga bhrashta is described as one who has fallen from spirituality. Chalit manas means he has fallen. He fell due to lack of insufficient effort. Effort was not enough due to many obstacles. Obstacles are of three types. They are:

- Supernatural;
- Surroundings; and
- One Self, such as ill health etc.

Even though he could not put in enough effort, he was sincere. What happens to him? He could not obtain moksha despite his sincerity. To be born a human being with interest in spirituality and being able to pursue it requires a lot of punyam. So, what happens in his next birth? Arjuna explains his pessimism in this shloka.

Take away:

1. Viveka Abhyasa and Vairagyam are essential for control of mind.
2. Control of mind is difficult. Mind likes to focus on things it likes. Thus, we can get absorbed in a novel or a movie we like. The mind has to develop a liking for Vedanta. Over time the mind will come to love Vedanta. It will then be able to focus on the teachings.
3. Satsanga is also important to bring about Vairagyam.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy