

Bhagawat Geeta, Class 91: Chapter 6, Verses 23 to 25

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has been talking about vedantic meditation as a means of assimilating self-knowledge. He does not prescribe meditation for gaining self-knowledge. Shankaracharya says self-knowledge can take place only from the teachings of a Guru. If one does not gain the knowledge by listening the first time one has to listen to it again and again, from the teacher, until it dawns in you. If this process requires another life (or lives) so be it. This is the only method of obtaining Atma Gyanam. Meditation is not prescribed for obtaining Atma Gyanam. Meditation is however accepted by the scriptures for assimilating Atma Gyanam. Citing an example it is the digested food that we assimilate into the body and not the amount of food that we eat. So what we listen to is not as important as to what we assimilate from listening. **It is the replaying of Sravanam that is Nidhidhyasanam.**

Steps of meditation are Dharana, Dhyanam and Samadhi. First withdraw mind from worldly personality. And bring the mind to vedantic teaching; this bringing the mind to the teaching is known as dharana; and then trying to dwell upon the teaching continuously is dhyanam; and then I am absorbed in the teaching, which talks about my higher nature, that I forget all my relative personality; this is Samadhi. One forgets family, relationships, friends etc., they all become incidental. In this stage only a thought such as Aham Brahma Asmi, Aham atma asmi etc., dominates.

As Wayne Dyer, beautifully says; **you are not a human being with a spiritual experience; but you are a spiritual being**

with an incidental human experience. Do not look for a spiritual experience; when you are looking for a spiritual experience you are just a human being seeking a spiritual experience. That is the worst that can happen.

On the other hand, through teaching, what we have to assimilate is: I do not seek spiritual experience, I want to own up to the fact that I am a spiritual being, all the time; while the human experience is something which comes and goes.

The steps of meditation of dharana, dhyana samadhi culminates in a state of total absorption. One is absorbed in "satchidanda svarupah asmi". This absorption is called nirvikalpaka Samadhi. Nirvikalpaka samadhi is the phalam of ashtanga yoga.

Sri Krishna is giving seven definitions of nirvikalpa Samadhi from different perspectives.

1. **Chitta Uparamanam:** in which the mind is totally relaxed, tranquil, at home, at peace and at poise. Chitta means mind, and uparamanam means quietude. It is not a thoughtless mind, but one without disturbance. Thoughts should not disturb. Knowledge is also a thought but not a disturbance. You can have thoughts with a quiet mind. Nidhidhyasanam is a quiet mind with Vedantic thoughts or it is quiet due to Vedantic thoughts.
2. **Atma Darshanam:** is a state in which one invokes, in his mind, the knowledge he has received. The knowledge received is that: I am not the body, I am not the sense, I am not the mind, and I am the consciousness principle, different from the body, pervading and illumining the body. This owning up to my own nature is atma darshanam. This was the second definition.
3. **Atyanta sukham:** It means the highest happiness, in which I own up to the fact that my very nature is happiness. It is not an experiential happiness. Experiential happiness is finite, because it is time bound. This is a

happiness born out of the knowledge that I do not miss anything in life; I do not lack anything in life; I do not have any imperfection; this very understanding gives me a sense of fulfillment. This knowledge born fulfillment is called atyantika sukham.

4. **Tatva nishta:** Which means that it is a state in which a person abides in his true nature; that he will not slip out of his svarupam even during transaction. So this is called not losing the center of gravity. The center of gravity is aham satchidanandasvarupam. This is called tattva nishta or also sahaja samadhi.
5. **Atyantika Labha:** it is the greatest and latest accomplishment in life. It is coming back to myself after going in search of peace all over and discovering that peace and fullness is my very nature. So, a person who discovers his svarupam has got a sense that I have come back. So this is called atyantika labha the highest gain in life.
6. **Atyantika dukha nivriti:** that gaining which a person does not know how to grieve in life; there is no more sorrow in life; even the worst crisis does not shake him; because he is very clearly aware that the whole anatma consists of body-mind and the world. This anatma is unpredictable and fluctuations will take place anytime. At the physical level any kind of change including death can occur at any time.

He is aware that similar changes can occur at the mental as well as world level as well. He is aware of anatma and is mentally prepared for all eventualities. Nothing comes as a shock for him. His initial reaction to a situation may be "what?" but it is soon converted to "so what?" He recovers very quickly. This is the sixth definition, atyantika dukha nivritih or total freedom from sorrow.

Now Sri Krishna provides the seventh definition in the next shloka.

Shloka # 23:

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥ 6.23 ॥

Know that to be styled Yoga which consists in disjunction from experienced-pain. This Yoga has slowly got to be practiced with an undejected mind.

It is a technical definition to avoid confusion. Confusion can come from third definition of Athyantika Sukham. One may think knowledge and Samadhi will bring the highest happiness. This is a mistake as anything that comes in time will also be lost in time.

If one gets pleasure from meditation, when you are out of meditation, it will go away. So, never seek mystic pleasure, says Vedanta. Some people who experience nirvikalpika Samadhi say after Samadhi they experience pain.

Therefore even mystic bliss if it arrives, it is subject to time, and therefore Krishna wants to say that, infinite ananda should be that which never arrives. If it should be infinite ananda; it should never arrive at a place, or time or in particular condition; infinite ananda is possible only if it is already here and now. Infinite by definition is that which is here and now.

Then how to get infinite ananda? Infinite ananda in Vedanta means you remove superimposed sorrow or obstacles in your swarupam. Thus, when a doctor treats you he is not giving you health. We have acquired a disease and doctor has removed the disease, which is an obstacle to one's health. I have just come back to health. Swasthaha means being in one's own nature. When we enjoy ananda we are in our natural state. Sorrow is due to our misconception and is removed by atma gyanam.

Every sorrow is unnatural. It belongs to body, mind or world

and none of them is your nature. Hence the shloka, Chidananda rupaha shivahom shivoham. **Dissociation from association is ananda**. We have associated with sorrow due to ignorance. And, therefore, **samadhi is dissociation from association with sorrow**. We have associated ourselves with sorrow, because of our ignorance, and that wrong association we now give up.

We do not develop a new association with happiness because we need not associate with happiness since happiness happens to be our svarupam. **So the seventh definition of nirvikalpika Samadhi is dissociation from sorrow.**

Now Sri Krishna gives advise to Vedantic students. One should practice this yoga of Bahiranga sadhanani, Antaranga sadhanani and meditation. Only practice will transform a personality. One should practice with perseverance. We must practice meditation without a depressed mind. Keep in mind that in meditation our worries come up. Never get frustrated. Work on meditation with an optimistic mind.

Shloka # 24:

उत्सर्जन् विषयान् कर्मान् चित्तमिन्द्रियैश्च
 सुखदुःखैर्गणितैश्चान्तर्मनश्च प्रथमम् 6.24

Giving up wholly all desires born of mental constructions and controlling, on all sides, the senses with the mind.

Sri Krishna talked about dhyana phalam in these verses, beginning from shloka 20 up to shloka 23. Sri Krishna is not totally satisfied and therefore once again he goes back and talks about dhyana svarupam for what is to be done in meditation for our reinforcement.

He says turn mind away from worldly thoughts, both past and future.

The word Kama in shloka means future plans or expectations. We rarely live in the present. Everyday I prepare for tomorrow.

For 20 minutes, every day, drop your plans for the future. And, how to do that? Any thought at its beginning stages is not powerful. It arrives feebly like a ripple in a lake. Then, with support of wind, the ripple becomes a wave. We keep thinking of the same subject and reinforcing it. So, don't let thought linger. Anger, jealousy etc., are all thoughts built up. Repeated thinking creates anger. So, in its seed stage itself divert the thought away.

Then withdraw the sense organs, which are the gateways, through which the external world enters your mind and disturbs. Then close the gate so that external world does not enter your mind. With the help of your mind itself withdraw from the external world totally. Indriyagram in shloka means group of indriyas. Gram means cluster. Viniyam means withdraw.

Shloka # 25:

विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन्
विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् विवक्ष्यन् 6.25

Withdraw gradually, with the help of the resolute intellect; anchoring the mind in the Self, think of nothing whatsoever.

Withdrawal must be done gradually. Atma is the subtlest nature of mind. Mind can't turn from gross to subtle immediately. There will be intermediate stages. Make mind subtler and subtler. Move mind away from gross. The whole world is given to you for your inner growth.

Mind dwells upon a object due to which we have either aham abhimana, or mama abhimana; I am yours; you are mine. In reality nothing is yours,

nothing is mine; everything belongs to God alone. We

are fundamentally related to God or Paramatma; that is the only permanent tie that we have, the moment I put that in my mind, attachment is dropped and there is a relaxation. Once

you have withdrawn, the mama abhimana goes away.

Nobody is indispensable. You cry for a few days after a month you have even forgotten that person. While body is mine, it is also anatma.

And therefore withdraw from the external world; then coming to the body dismiss the body as anatma. It is only made of matter; therefore you withdraw from world to annamaya kosa; annamaya kosa to pranamaya; pranamaya to manomaya; manomaya to vigyanamaya; vigyanamaya to anandamaya. Body is gross; mind is subtle, mind is gross, consciousness is subtle.

I am not thought or mind; although, I am aware of thought and mind. I am not thought. I am witness consciousness. This must be done gradually to withdraw from all five koshas.

In mind don't be lost in thought rather becomes the witness consciousness. Once mind is in Atma, let it dwell there. Let it dwell on the features of Atma such as: I am the consciousness, which goes beyond the body; I am the formless consciousness; I am uncontaminated consciousness etc.

Hence, meditation is not possible without knowledge from a guru. Dwell even on a word such as: Aham Apanga.

How to do it?

Mind should remain in atma. What does it mean? Atma is all pervading. Mind is not away from atma. Nothing is away from atma. So, placing the mind means entertaining the thought of atma or centered on atma. Thus, thinking of Badrinath means your thoughts are on Badrinath. So, mind should have thoughts centered on atma. Thoughts such as: Aham brahma asmi. Even when thoughts are changing, I don't change. This is called akhanda akara vrithi or atma centered thoughts. **Flow of atma thought to the exclusion of anatma thought is meditation.**

Take away:

1. I do not seek spiritual experience, I want to own up to the fact that I am a spiritual being, all the time, while the human experience is something which comes and goes.
2. The seventh definition of nirvikalpika Samadhi is dissociation from sorrow. (shloka # 23).
3. Dissociation from association with sorrow is ananda.
4. In mind, don't be lost in thought rather becomes the witness consciousness.
5. Flow of atma thought to the exclusion of anatma thought is meditation.
6. It is the replaying of Sravanam that is Nidhidhyasanam.
7. You are not a human being with a spiritual experience; but you are a spiritual being with an incidental human experience.

With Best Wishes

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