

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 142 – Chapter 11 Viśva Roopa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 4 to 6

Scriptures and puranas describe the vision of Eeswara darshanam as a thrilling and fulfilling experience. Any experience involves two things. One is the object of experience which should be available. It is not enough that the object of experience is available, we require a subject of experience is also available. Object of experience should be available, and we also require a subject of experience; an experiencer who is prepared to appreciate experience. Generally, we focus on the object, but not on the preparedness of the experiencer. Viswa roopa is nothing but the lord in the form of entire universe. Viswa roopa darshanam is available for us, but if we do not get the thrill of the darshanam, it is because of the non-preparedness of our mind; that is purity of the mind. Just like gold is available in the ornaments, viśva roopa darshanam is always available but what is not present is a prepared experiencer. The prepared mind is called the third eye or divya shakshu. Arjuna asks Krishna to grant him this divya shakshu.

Verse 4

Oh Lord! If You consider that it can be seen by me, then, You show me Your inexhaustible form, Oh Lord!

Purity of mind is a tedious time-consuming process which requires lot of karma yoga and upasana yoga and it is a slow gradual transformation. Showing the viśva roopa darshanam is not required, but what is required is removing the impurities of mind.

Verse 5

The Lord said – Oh Arjuna! See My divine forms of various kinds, various colors and forms, in hundred and in thousands.

Even though purifying the mind is a slow and gradual process, Arjuna asks Krishna for a temporary purification of mind. This is similar to someone getting the vision by some grace. But the problem is it will only be temporary. When it is artificial purification, the full impact is not gained. It cannot be an experience that can be assimilated. Because of Arjuna's request, Krishna grants Arjuna temporary purification of mind so that Arjuna can see many varieties and colors of Lord's form. We should understand that it is not a particular form that appear, we should learn to see and appreciate various forms and colors as different forms of the Lord.

Verse 6

Oh Arjuna! See adityas, vasus, rudras, asvins, and maruts. See many wonders which are not seen before.

Verse 7

Oh Arjuna! See here and now, in my body the entire universe with the movable and the immovable placed together and also anything else that you desire to see.

Krishna says see the eight vasus: Eight natural principles: Vayu, agni, water, earth, andhariksha, sun, moon, stars. The 12 Aditya are the 12 months. Ashwini kumara represents principles presiding over prana. Martus represents different forms of Vayu.

All of them belong to viśva roopa. We don't generally notice any of these wonderful principles. We must purify our mind by avoiding raga, dwesha and lōbha. When puranas describe Krishna as blue skinned, it represents the vastness of blue sky. The whole universe is contained in Lords body.

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 141 – Chapter 11 Viśva Roopa Darshana Yogaha, Verses 1 to 3

The word Yogaha at the end of every topic means a topic. viśva roopa darshana means the vision of the Lord as viśva roopa, which is the name of the Lord. Viśva roopam means the lord whose form is nothing but the very universe itself. How can one have darshana of the lord in the form of the world itself? Direct vision of the lord of Rama, Krishna etc., the scriptures prescribe tapas. Tapas is nothing but concentration or meditation. One has to learn the dhyana sloka, concentrate and visualize on that particular form and chant the mantras. If a devotee follows this process, the devotee will give darshana in that particular form. We have many puranic stories describing the devotees getting the darshana of the lord.

If you want to have the vision of the lord, as the world itself, then you have to invite the lord to come in the form of world. Should we invite the lord in the form of the lord? Even before our birth, the lord in the form of viśva roopa has already arrived. What should I do to have the darshana of the lord in the form of the world? Learn to see the world in the form of the lord. Train the mind to look at the world as the manifestation of the lord. Understand and assimilate the teaching that lord alone as the material principle of the world. Everything appearing before me is a form of lord. Clearly understand and assimilate this teaching. Only then the perspective and vision will change. This vision is divine

vision or divya shakshu. The world has a different feature that is divine – that is world is a manifestation of lord. I need not invite the Lord; the Lord is available all the time as the world.

The first eight verses we get an introduction to this viswa roopa darshana. It begins with Arjuna's summarization of the first ten chapters.

Verse 1

Arjuna said – This supreme secret teaching named adhyatmam has been imparted by You for blessing me. This delusion of mine has gone by that.

In this verse, Arjuna summarizes the first six chapters. The essence is jiva swaroupa varna. The description of the essential nature of jiva, which is not physical body which is only temporary. Similarly, the mind is also a temporary instrument. So, I am neither the body nor mind but consciousness. The features of consciousness are:

- Consciousness is not a part, product, or property of an individual.
- Consciousness is an independent principle, pervading body and making it alive.
- Consciousness is not limited by boundaries of the body.
- Consciousness survives the fall of the body.
- Surviving consciousness is not accessible because there is no medium.

This consciousness is my nature. Krishna describes this nature in chapters 2 to 5.

Arjuna states that with the teaching his delusion is gone, and the doubts are cleared as he listened to the teachings of Gita.

Verse 2

Oh Krishna! Verily, the origin and dissolution of beings as well as (Your) inexhaustible glory were heard by me from You in detail.

From chapter 7, 9 and 10 Lord Krishna described Eeswara swaroopa, defining the Lord as jagat karanam or material cause. That is the lord is the cause of shristi, sthithi and laya karanam of the beings, similar to ocean is the material cause for wave. There are no waves separate from the ocean. Wave is only another name for ocean. Similarly, god alone exists in the form of world.

Verse 3

Oh Lord! It is just so as You describe yourself. Oh Lord! I desire to see Your divine form.

In this verse, Arjuna adds Parameswara and Purushothama as the name of the Lord. Purushothama means the supreme lord; In Chapter 15, Krishna will tell that philosophically Purushothama also means nirguna brahman.

Arjuna says he has no resistance in accepting the teaching. Intellectually Arjuna is able to understand that the whole world is divine, and there should be no raga and dwesha. But that is not the case. We always have raga and dwesha against one thing or another. Arjuna requests Krishna to teach how avoid raga and dwesha and see divine in everything.

Saddarshanam, Class 24

Greetings All,

Shloka # 41:

When there is the sense of bondage, anxiety for liberation is there. By the inquiry "for whom is the bondage?" one's own Self, the ever free, is itself established. Then where is the thought of bondage and where is the concern for liberation?

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, all the Darshanas are systems of philosophy. They all have one goal and it is Moksha. They all say our Bandhas (attachments) are the cause of human problems. These Bandhas are also known as Samsara or Universal bondage. Every Darshanam also presents a solution for Bandha Vimukti. However, contradicting all this now, Vedanta says, there is no such thing as Moksha. It says moksha is neither possible nor required. The problem of bondage is an assumed problem. In Vedanta, Bandha itself is non-existent. If so, then where is the question of Moksha? However, the whole of humanity has been programmed and wants Moksha. They also want Moksha Sadhana(s) or solutions. Therefore, Vedanta has to present them solutions for liberation as well. It is more a marketing tool with the purpose of getting attention of a seeker. So Vedanta compromises and says I have moksha Sadhana. It asks the question Moksha from what? It asks us to look at bondage first and then discuss Moksha later. Upon enquiry, we find the nature of bondage as "I". Who is this "I"? Then, we realize that "I" has no bondage. This negation of bondage after seeing the irrelevance of Moksha is figuratively called Moksha.

Citing an example, Swamiji narrated a story. He and others were getting ready to go to airport to receive Dayananda Swamiji. The person, a devotee, who was to pick them up, did not show up. They all panicked. One tried calling a taxi. Another tried contacting the devotee. Another went inside the Ashram and called the airport and learned the flight was delayed. When he came out to communicate the delay, others were so engrossed in their actions; they did not listen to him. He had to shout. This is the state with humanity as well. They

don't listen to a wise person.

So, the solution is Shravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam to know that there is no need for Moksha.

If there is the idea of bondage of the Self, who is bound? We know body is mortal. We know Atma is immortal. If so, who has the bondage? This is the enquiry. This is a systematic enquiry of Vedanta also called Guru Shishya Vichara. We will clearly understand that Svatma, our real nature, is ever free. If so, where is the thought of bondage? Once body is negated, where is question of liberation? No Gyani ever says, " I am "now" liberated". A Gyani's perspective will be that I am beyond bondage and liberation.

Shloka # 42:

The knowers say that liberation is of three forms- with form, without form and of the nature of both. The destruction of that "I" notion which analyses these three is supreme liberation.

In Vedanta we say that duality and division are the cause of all problems. Transcending duality is called Moksha. However, people study Vedanta and then divide it into several types. Mukti by its nature is division-less, but is now divided, a contradiction in itself. The three types of Mukti are:

1. Rupini mukti
2. Arupini Mukti
3. Ubhayatmika Mukti

Rupini is embodied mukti. It is attributed to Sage Jaimini. Thus, Moksha is obtained while body is in existence. This is also called Jivanmukti.

Arupini Mukti is Mukti without a body. This is attributed to Sage Badrihi. This is also known as Videha Mukti.

Ubhayatmika Mukti is referencing both types or Jivan mukti and

Videha Mukti.

Bhagwan Ramana Maharishi says people have analyzed different types of Mukti. However, if you ask me about Mukti, it is the end of that Ahamkara that enjoys dividing Mukti into several types.

I am the all-pervading Consciousness with many bodies in me. Mithya body does not make a difference. Jivan Mukti and Videha Mukti are all fictitious differences. Ahamkara manages to continue, in the name of classifying Mukti. Let the classifying Ahamkara go away. Any classification means Dvaitam.

When the phrase “destruction of Ahamkara” is used, it means understanding it is Mithya. Without Ahamkara we wont be able to perceive this world. Ahamkara is required. Thus, if a Gyani loses his Ahamkara, he will die. So, destruction of Ahamkara means it is only a Vyavahrika Satyam. Let Vyavaharika Ahamkara continue to function. “I” am Paramarthika Satyam. This is Saddarshanam. To summarize the teaching:

1. Ahamkara is the cause of all problems.
2. It is not the world or people who are the cause of all problems.
3. Tackling Ahamkara is the only solution. Realizing Ahamkara will always be with us, what is the poisonous part of Ahamkara? Our “attachment” of “reality” to Ahamkara is the poison. Once you realize it is unreal, you can then wear it as an ornament. (We need detachment from Ahamkara).
4. Ahamkara can be tackled only by knowing Atma.
5. Atma is of the nature of Sat or pure Existence. It is not a part or product of the body. It is eternal, independent of everything, all pervading, ever the Experiencer and free from all modifications. It is Sat. Hence the name Saddarshanam.
6. Atma darshanam is possible only through Atma Vichara. It

has to be performed in a systematic manner under a qualified Guru. It is the study of Vedanta.

This is essence of Saddarshanam teaching.

Shloka # 43:

Vasishta Muni composed this "Sadshana" in the language of the immortals (Sanskrit), having translated the pure and superb composition written by Sri Ramana maharsi in the Dravida language (Tamil).

This shloka is one of the concluding notes about the two authors.

- Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi wrote this text in Tamil. It was called *Ulladu narpadu*, "Forty Verses on Reality".
- Vasishta Gapanathy Muni translated this text in Sanskrit.

It is considered a pure work without any defects such as Shabda (grammar) or artha (logic) dosha. It is dealing with Para Vidya or the greatest knowledge or Utkrishta.

Shloka # 44:

The words of the Muni shine like a wall reflecting the rays of the divine utterances of Sri Ramana, conveying the essence of the Truth in simple form and giving joy to the seekers of Liberation.

Here glory of the Sanskrit version is described. It is also an excellent work. It is giving teaching of Reality in a simple form. Normally the word "Existence" is used as an adjective. Here, however, it is used as a noun indicating that it means the Ultimate Reality. The teaching gives one the great joy of Moksha Ananda. It gives joy only to a prepared person or Mumukshu. A Mumukshu is also one who is Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampana. Ganapathy Muni says his work is only a mirror reflecting the teachings contained in Ulludu Narpadu. Bhagawan

Ramana Maharishi is described as an extraordinary human being or an Avatara.

This concludes Saddarshanam.

Take Away:

Our attachment to Ahamkara or ego-consciousness or “I-this awareness” is the root problem. We need to detach our self from this attachment.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddharshanam, Class 23

Greetings All,

Shloka # 39:

To say there is duality during the inquiry, but non-duality in the knowledge of the Supreme is not right. The tenth man's tenth-ness is one and same when he is lost before the search and when he is found later.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, this is a very important shloka. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talks about the nature of Advaitam. He says a clear understanding of Advaitam is required for understanding mukti, knowledge and bondage. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi points out that Advaitam is not an event produced in time or in the future. It is not even a particular state such as say a mystical state. It is also not part of an experience we work for. We need to be clear

that Advaitam is not an event nor a state nor an experience. All the three are bound by time or they occur in time. Therefore, the Advaitam or Non-duality that one obtains in Samadhi, Sushupthi or Pralayam is a misnomer. It is actually a temporary state of Advaitam. Sushupthi Advaitam is temporary because it occurs only in Sushupthi. It is the same with Samadhi as well where the state is available only in Samadhi. Temporary Advaitam is a false name for Dvaitam or unmanifest Dvaitam. All three states are Dvaitam. Thus, Advaitam in Sushupthi becomes Dvaitam upon waking. So it is for the other two states as well.

True Advaitam is a fact that obtains all the time. Vedanta says a fact has to be understood as an eternally occurring fact. This understanding is called Advaita Gyanam. This knowledge, Advaita Gyanam, is not an experience. Experience is a mental event, which will be displaced by other events. An experience is a displaceable mental event. However, Knowledge is a mental event that cannot be displaced by any future experience. It is permanently there. Thus, the knowledge that $2+2=4$ continues, even if you are feeling happy, sad, hot or cold. It is not displaced. So, knowledge does not go with experience.

So, what we need is Advaita Gyanam not Advaita experience. Knowledge is always associated with fact(s). An experience may or may not be related to a fact. Thus, Sunrise is an experience. Sunrise, however, is not associated with the fact that earth is going around its own axis. While we experience the flat earth, it is not a fact. Thus, experience can be a fact or a myth.

Here knowledge related to facts is being described. Knowledge of Advaitam, since it is associated with fact, can't be displaced by a future Dvaitam. Therefore, while the Advaita Gyani continues to experience Dvaitam in waking, sleep and dream states it will not disturb his knowledge of Advaitam. This is highlighted in the expression "Aham Brahma Asmi". "I

am Brahman" is to be known as a fact. Once known, this knowledge will not be displaced by any other experience including Dvaitam.

At the time of Sadhana there is Dvaitam or bondage. At time of knowledge of Reality there will be Advaitam.

Advaitam and moksha are synonymous. "I will become free later" is the biggest mistake made by a seeker. It is not a future event. Even so, we often ask, when will I get Moksha? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says such a statement is not correct.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gave the example of the tenth man referenced in Vedanta. Very briefly, ten boys were crossing a river. One of the ten was their leader. After crossing, to ensure all crossed safely, the leader counted them. He counted only nine. He reportedly missed counting himself. He is the famous tenth boy, who was thought to be missing but never was.

So too in life, we look for peace and security just as looking for the tenth boy (man). The boy was the tenth boy before and after the knowledge. At that particular time and moment this was a fact. By knowledge, he just dropped the notion that the tenth boy was lost. Nothing new was involved. It was just the dropping of a notion. While dropping the notion "the boy was lost" was simple, the emotional consequences of this are enormous. For Ananda, for spiritual awakening etc., we are looking for the tenth man. Shastra calls the tenth man the Brahman. After getting this man we still continue hunting for Brahman. Here Shastra tells us the tenth man is not an event. It says, " You are Brahman, You were and You will always be". Once this knowledge comes in, all future experiences cannot displace this knowledge. " I am Brahman despite my emotional condition."

The tenth man was there all the time, but was thought to be lost. Before enquiry, after enquiry and when the tenth man was attained, the tenth man never went anywhere. He was always

there.

Therefore moksha is not an event. It is a fact. Advaita is a fact. You only need the knowledge to know it.

This shloka was about discovering the tenth man the Atma.

Shloka # 40:

When man thinks “ I do work”; he becomes bound to enjoy the fruits of action also. If the doer-ship is washed away by inquiry, the results of the three types of actions perish. That alone is liberation.

Almost the same idea presented in previous shloka is discussed here, only this time from perspective of the individual or Jiva.

Moksha is dropping of a notion. When I say Aham, there are two parts to it. One part is Chaitanyam (Atma Amsa) and second part is Ahamkara Amsa consisting of the body-mind-complex with borrowed Chaitanyam. The Ahamkara Amsa is also called Chiddabasha. This mixture of Atma with Ahamkara is the “I”. Atma cannot say “ I” as Atma cannot perform transactions. Ahamkara itself exists due to Atma. Of this inseparable mixture, Atma is Satyam while Ahamkara is Mithya.

Kartrutvam, doership, belongs to the unreal Ahamkara Part. Doership does not belong to Atma. This mixed “ I” is performing all transactions. The same mixed “ I” attains knowledge as well. In ignorance, I am not aware of my Atma nature. So, I take myself to be Ahamkara. However, when reality is known, unreal becomes real. When waking is not known, dream is real. During ignorance, I am Ahamkara and it is real. For this Ahamkara, doer-ship is real. Therefore, all Karmas with their resulting Karma Phalams are also real. This is what makes astrological charts important.

Once the three Karmas are real, the Bhokta also becomes real,

as does Samsara with its Sukha and Dukha. All this happens due to Ahamkara being considered as real. Until this truth is known, Samsara cannot be destroyed.

Therefore, Ahamkara must be made unreal. Dream can be converted to unreal when you wake up to a higher reality. Therefore Original Consciousness (OC) must be claimed as myself. This is Atma Gyanam. Falsification of Ahamkara through Atma Gyanam is moksha. Atma Gyanam is knowledge not an event or experience.

Thus, Vedanta teaches you that you are not a Karta nor the Karma nor the resulting Karma Phalam. This teaching is performed through Guru Shastra Vidya. Here, Ahamkara (or body) is not physically eliminated; rather we are falsifying the body. In spiritual awakening the body does not disappear. It is just a change in my understanding. It is similar to our understanding that the earth is round while our experience is that it is flat. This is called falsification. Doer-ship is falsified. With this falsification, all three Karmas (Sanchita, Prarabhdha, Agami) are destroyed. Prarabhdha experience continues and is real for the body; however, the Gyani sees it as a Mithya.

Therefore, all are falsified. This falsification of Karmas is Mukti.

This shloka is about falsification of Ahamkara and with it, all the three Karmas.

Shloka # 41:

When there is the sense of bondage, anxiety for liberation is there. By the inquiry "for whom is the bondage?" one's own Self, the ever free, is itself established. Then where is the thought of bondage and where is the concern for liberation?

The nature of Advaitam must be understood as well as Moksha. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says, really speaking Moksha is not

possible. Moksha is defined as removal of bondage. Vedanta says there is nothing called bondage. It is only a notion. When this is the case where is the question of removing it? Therefore accepting moksha means accepting bondage. However, moksha means freedom just as in the Rope and Snake metaphor. There is really no snake to be removed. Reality is known once I understand that there is no snake to be eliminated. In Vedanta there is no Moksha. It is only a figurative expression for “no bondage”. Knowledge of the “absence of bondage” is figuratively called Moksha. Therefore for a Gyani there is neither bondage nor Moksha.

Take Away:

1. Advaitam is not an event nor a state nor an experience. It is knowledge even as $2+2=4$.
2. True Advaitam is a fact that obtains all the time. Just as the knowledge $2+2=4$ is there all the time.
3. Shastra calls the tenth man the Brahman.
4. We need to discover our inner tenth man.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 22

Greetings All,

Shloka # 37:

The knowledge of the established Truth itself is an accomplishment. Other accomplishments are indeed comparable to

a dream. How can a dream be true to one who has woken up? One who abides in Truth does not enter Maya again.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said,

in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi points out what the attitude of a Vedantic student towards Sidhi or miraculous powers should be. These Sidhi's are described in Puranas as well as in Yoga Shastras. The Ashta maha Sidhi's are:

1. Anima: To become small or reducing one's body even to the size of an atom.
2. Mahima: To become large or expanding one's body to an infinitely large size.
3. Laghima: To become light in weight or becoming almost weightless.
4. Garima: Size being same increase in weight or becoming infinitely heavy.
5. Prapthi: Capacity to reach any place at will by thought or having unrestricted access to all places.
6. Prakama: Capacity to perform anything at will or materialization or realizing whatever one desires.
7. Ishtwa: Being with God or being over nature or possessing absolute lordship.
8. Vastva: Controlling others including their minds or the power to subjugate all.

In addition to above many smaller Sidhi's also are described in shastras. Means of attaining these Sidhis are also described. Thus: Gems, Mantras, Aushadha (herbs) and Yoga Chakras will all get us Sidhis. Poorvajanma, past life, also can give us Sidhis. Even the Bhagavathpurana has described many Sidhis.

Describing the attitude a Vedantic student should take to Sidhi, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi suggests the following:

1. Sidhis do exist. They are in Shastra Pramanam.
2. Sidhis have nothing to do with spirituality. Spiritual

wisdom is possible without Sidhis. Acquisition of Sidhis does not necessarily get you spiritual knowledge. Many Rakshasas were Sidhas who observed it in an Adharmic manner.

3. All Sidhis come under Karma and Upasana phalam. So, they fall under Maya or Samsara.
4. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi points out if a person does not understand the limitation of Sidhis he will get distracted in spiritual pursuit. He will get attracted to Sidhis and Sidhas more than Gyanam. Sidhis cannot give one, Self- Knowledge. Bhagawan says don't value conventional Sidhis. He suggests ignoring them. We need to understand that the greatest Sidhi is Self-Knowledge. All conventional Sidhis will keep a person in Samsara. Self -Knowledge alone will take him out of Samsara.

In Sidhi, jealousy, quarrel etc., occur. All Sidhis will keep one in limitation or in Samsara. Remember, a Gyani is a true Sidha and Gyanam is the real Sidhi.

Explaining the shloka, Swamiji said, Atma Gyanam alone is a real miracle. Atma Gyanam will liberate you. All other Sidhis do not matter. They are like a dream and are Mithya. Only Gyanam is required. All other Sidhis indicate ignorance. Shankaracharya's greatness is often cited more because of his Sidhi's than his knowledge. So too with Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi; People say he underwent surgery without any anesthesia. The greatness of Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi is that he encouraged Atma Vichara.

Dream appears real during the dream. Upon waking the dream disappears. So too with conventional Sidhis, every time one uses a Sidhi, it depletes ones Tapas.

With Self -Knowledge there is no depletion or decrease. Giving knowledge to others does not deplete one's Gyanam.

Patanjali's yogasutra considers Sidhis as obstacles to moksha.

The word Atma Nishta means Atma Gyanam Nishta or non-forgetfulness of Atma Gyanam. Sahaj Samadhi means Atma Nishta. Such a person will not fall under the spell of Maya or ignorance.

idya (wealth) is the only thing that increases in a person by giving knowledge. So, the right attitude is not to respect Sidhis.

Shloka # 38:

In the state of thinking that the body is the Self, the contemplation of "He am I" is helpful to the search of the Supreme. In the accomplishment of the oneness of one's Self, that (He am I) contemplation is, again, without purpose, just as, to a man, the knowledge of hid manhood is of no help.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi warns Vedantic students not to enter Vedantic study mechanically. Original purpose of Vedanta is to be free one of all dependencies.

A student can get addicted to Vedantic study and it can become bondage. Such a student is likely to get upset if he sees any obstacle to the study.

While initially the student has to bond with the Guru and be attached to Shastra and God, he should grow with knowledge and at some point drop all such attachments.

In the initial stages this Soham Vichara is essential and beneficial. This Vichara leads to Paramatma and Jivatma Aikyam. It is a means of acquiring knowledge. It is useful until one reaches the stage where one (Sadhaka) reaches the Sadhyam "Aham Brahma Asmi". So long as you are a finite Jivatma requiring a transformation (struggling to become someone else, in mind), till then you are in the present "I" working towards a future "I". Bhagwan says so long as this condition exists it is a misconception about your Self. Satisfaction is not connected with completion of any project.

The moment you connect it to a project it becomes Samsara. Therefore, Vedantic study should not become another project. As long as you look at yourself as an ego (connecting to completion of a project) you have to study Vedanta. One has to keep checking if I am in an ego state or not. "I am satisfied" in spite of an incomplete project, this is Gyanam.

I never connect project to its completion. It is ego that converts everything into a project. This postponement of fulfillment is Samsara. Once you reach Gyanam drop the Vedanta Vichara. You can enjoy the classes as a non-binding desire.

Pramanam is irrelevant after Gyanam. A person need not perform the Japa " I am human". A fact is not meant for Japa. If I know "I am Brahman" and it is a fact for me, then I do not have to perform Mahavakya Japam anymore. Mahavakya needs to be understood and once you get the knowledge, you should drop it.

Therefore for a wise person (Gyani) "Aham Brahma Asmi" japa is not required.

Shloka # 39:

To say there is duality during the inquiry, but non-duality in the knowledge of the Supreme is not right. The tenth man's tenth-ness is one and same when he is lost before the search and when he is found later.

This is another important shloka. Moksha is not an external event occurring at Anatma level. Don't look for any transformation in the outside world. If you practice Yoga, you may acquire a glow in your body. This, however, has nothing to do with spirituality. Spirituality will not give you a halo. Gyanam has nothing to do with changing the world, body or sensory perceptions. The change occurs only in our intellect and in understanding that the World, God and "I" are one.

Take Away:

1. Gyanam has nothing to do with changing the world, body or sensory perceptions.
2. In Gyanam, the change occurs only in our intellect and in understanding that the World, God and "I" are one.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note:

Sidhi's:

Ten secondary siddhis

In the *Bhagavata Purana*, Krishna describes the ten secondary siddhis:

- *anūrmimattvam*: Being undisturbed by hunger, thirst, and other bodily appetites
 - *dūraśravaṇa*: Hearing things far away
 - *dūradarśanam*: Seeing things far away
 - *manojavaḥ*: Moving the body wherever thought goes (teleportation/astral projection)
 - *kāmarūpam*: Assuming any form desired
 - *parakāya praveśanam*: Entering the bodies of others
 - *svachanda mṛtyuh*: Dying when one desires
 - *devānām saha krīḍā anudarśanam*: Witnessing and participating in the pastimes of the gods
 - *yathā saṅkalpa saṁsiddhiḥ*: Perfect accomplishment of one's determination
 - *ājñāpratihatā gatiḥ*: Orders or commands being unimpeded^l
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Saddarshanam, Class 21

Greetings All,

Shloka # 35:

“I am not myself” or “I know myself”... such expressions of man are a laughable matter. Is the Self two-fold, by the division of the Seer and the seen? In the knowledge of the oneness of one’s Self, indeed, there are no divisions.”

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said,

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has been talking about Atma Gyanam as a means of falsifying Ahamkara. Here he points out the many misconceptions about Atma Gyanam. He says this aspect needs to be clarified. Atma Gyanam is not an event where the unknown Atma becomes known. There is no question of knowing an unknown Atma. If so, it will mean objectifying Atma. An event in time means objectification. Before it was unknown and later became known. This is not possible with respect to Atma. Atma happens to be of the nature of consciousness. Consciousness is not objectifiable. Who will objectify it? Matter cannot objectify it. Matter is inert. Can a second consciousness objectify the first one? This is also not possible as there is only one consciousness. One part of Consciousness also cannot objectify another part of it because Consciousness does not have parts.

Therefore, matter, second consciousness or part of consciousness, none of them can objectify Consciousness. Therefore objectifying or knowing it as an event is not possible.

Experiencing also cannot be done. Knowing, experiencing etc., are all misconceptions. Such an event is not possible. Our Consolation is that one need not objectify it. Knowing is required only if there is ignorance regarding something. Nobody is ignorant of the Consciousness. Unlike an inert object, everyone knows “ I am a conscious being”. Therefore,

where is the question of knowing it? It is not required. Atma Gyanam is not a conventional process of knowing. So, people who say they know or don't know are all joking.

Expanding on the shloka Swamji said, the expressions " I don't know myself or I know myself" both are laughable statements, as they don't exist. They both objectify knowledge. Both knowledge and ignorance are not possible with respect to Self. Subject and Object cannot be the same. The eyes see but they cannot be the objects of seeing. Does Atma exist as the subject and Object? If it exists, as subject it cant be an object and if it exists as an object it cannot be the subject. It does not exist in a two fold manner. Atma gyanam is thus a logical contradiction. It cannot happen in time. Since Atma is only one, there is no subject object division possible. No Gyani can claim, " I know Atma". If this is the case then what is Self Knowledge? Who is an Atma Gyani? What is it?

First: There is no "knowing" of Atma. There is also no "ignorance of Atma" as well. I am a "conscious" being. Nobody needs to be taught this.

Then, what is the aim of Self Knowledge?

We have some notions regarding Atma. These notions are the objects of our knowledge. Atma itself is not the object of our knowledge.

Citing an example: I am a mortal; this is a concept of me. I am located here; this is yet another concept of the me. I am so and so many years old; yet another concept of me. Scriptures deal with these conclusions of "me". Vedanta asks us to question these conclusions. It questions these notions of our mind. Vedanta is not a study of Atma rather it is a study of attributes we have given to Atma. Atma Gyanam is about attributes I have attached to Atma. I concentrate on those attributes such as happy, angry, jealous, old, young

etc. We are focusing on mortality, happiness and other such attributes rather than Atma.

After studying I conclude these attributes do not belong to me. All emotional problems that I attach to myself do not belong to me. All attributes are Mithya. They do not belong to me. Since they are Mithya, they cannot affect me at any time. Attributes do not belong to me. They don't taint me. Thus, Atma Gyanam is the knowledge about attributes that I attach to myself. Why call it Atma Gyanam and not Attribute Gyanam?

This is so because attributes were once attached to Atma and now have been taken away, hence it is called Atma Gyanam. It is a figurative statement. The reality is that we are studying attributes to see if they belong to me or not. Shankaracharya says Atma Gyanam is negating all attributes. I know myself very well. Vedanta helps remove all our attributes.

Shloka # 36:

Not having gained abidance in one's true nature, in the self-evident abode of Truth by reaching one's heart, loud talks mainly as to whether the Self is real or unreal, with form or without form, many or one, is all the play of Maya.

The approach of Vedanta is to eliminate attributes from the Self evident "I". If a person does not do this, then Vedanta study becomes just an academic exercise. Vedanta says all struggles in life change our attributes. Thus, the struggle to earn money is to change attribute from poor "I" to rich "I". Similarly when one gets married it converts the bachelor "I" to a married "I". It the same with children to become the father "I". One who understands Vedanta will not try to change attributes. He will stop adding attributes. Otherwise Vedantic study becomes another part of Samsara. Even the struggle to change attributes is part of Samasara. So, do not convert Vedantic study to another form of attribute or Samsara.

One has to turn attention to mind(Hrut), which is the locus

of the Sat or Consciousness principle. **Consciousness is present in mind as presence or absence of thought.** I am conscious of both states. Blankness means, consciousness is aware of blankness. Consciousness is witness of this state. So, how do I turn to consciousness? Entertaining the thought that consciousness is Myself and turning attention to it. Witness consciousness is not an object but Myself. "I" am aware of presence or absence of thoughts. It is the entertainment of appropriate thoughts that all attributes:

- do not belong to me.
- do not taint me.
- are Mithya.

And I am that (the Self without attributes).

This thought is called Atma nishta.

Entertainment of this thought is called abidance. Abidance is a mental action. Entertaining appropriate thoughts one should come to this abidance.

Upalabhya in the shloka means abidance in one's real nature that is naturally evident. Vedanta tells us attributes are not me. It means it is to know that "I am" without attributes. This is known as abidance.

Anupalabhya means without getting this abidance. Scholarly discussions are a waste of time. Pravadaha means prattling. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi criticizes academic exchanges. He calls it the success of Maya. Maya can convert Vedanta into a Vedanta trip. It will discuss Sat, Asat, Saguna and Nirguna, plurality and duality, Dvaita and Advaita etc. If these discussions do not lead to Nishta they are useless. Ask yourself, "Am I studying Vedanta to change myself? Have I changed my understanding of my self?" The same ideas were also discussed in shloka # 34.

Shloka # 37:

The knowledge of the established Truth itself is an accomplishment. Other accomplishments are indeed comparable to a dream. How can a dream be true to one who has woken up? One who abides in Truth does not enter Maya again.

Here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi removes another big misconception about Self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is associated with mysticism and wise people are known as mystics. Truth is that Self-knowledge is an understanding that takes place in the intellect through Guru Shatra Upadesham. Once you make “knowledge” to be a mystic, then people they think one has extraordinary Siddhi. These Siddhi belongs to the world of Anatma. We don't question the extraordinary powers. However, they don't have any connection to Atma Gyanam. Thus, we can see following kinds of people: No knowledge, no power; No knowledge with power; with knowledge and no power; with knowledge and with power. Knowledge means liberation with or without powers. Powers are Mithya.

Best Practices: Atma Gyanam is not study of Atma. Rather, Atma Gyanam is the knowledge about attributes that I attach to myself. Shankaracharya says Atma Gyanam is negating all attributes.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddarshanam, Class 20

Greetings All,

Shloka # 32:

Having reached within the heart, by the search, the "I" notion whose head is broken, falls. Then, another " I" which is the main one shines forth. It is not ego, but it is Supreme fullness alone.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi presents the result of Self Enquiry or Atma Vichara in a poetic language. Here displacement of Ahamkara by the higher "I" is discussed. After Self Enquiry, now, Atma has become the master. The higher "I" replaces the lower "I". So, how does this feel displacement in practical terms? Does one see a new & shining Atma? What does one feel in practice? Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says the change is only in our understanding. Detachment of Ahamkara occurs only due to a change in our understanding. Originally, I thought, I was a mortal Jivatma and all transactions reflected this misunderstanding. **However, I am now the immortal Atma. This radically changes all my transactions as the motive behind them has changed.**

The second change is that removal of Ahmakara does not mean Ahamkara is totally destroyed or banished. It just means Ahamkara's position has been scaled down. Master Ahamkara has been demoted to being just an instrument of transaction. The Swamy now is the higher "I", Ahamkara has become only a means or medium for transaction. For a Gyani, a Jivan Mukta, the Ahamkara is only an incidental mithya medium. In a Videha Mukta, Ahamkara is completely dissolved.

For the Gyani, Mithya Ahamkara is required for all transactions. It is actually a "requirement" for performing transactions. Thus, even to say, "Aham Brahma Asmi" requires Ahamkara.

However, to be in Brahman, I do not require Ahamkara. Therefore, to say and teach Aham Brahma Asmi, I still need Mithya Ahamakara, knowing it is incidental.

Thus, Gyani uses Ahamkara. Ahamkara is not removed completely. It is a demoted version of the original. Gyani knows "I am the Atma behind it".

Shloka # 33:

What is there that remains to be done for him who shines, having devoured ego? He knows nothing other than Self. Who is capable of conceiving his state of being?

Once this displacement takes place, the Gyani enjoys poornatvam. Gyani does not struggle any more to accomplish things in life. His mission in life is accomplished. Rest of his life is available to Lord to use him in anyway he wants. He is like a flute for Sri Krishna. The flute is empty inside with nine holes. A human being is also like a flute that once emptied of ego, God can play him and great music comes out. The same body flute when played by the ego emits Apasruti. Such a Gyani stands out in society. His face is without tension. This Gyani need not perform Dharma, Artha and Kama as they are all part of moksha. The infinite includes all finites. He is no more a karta or bhokta. He does not have any worldly duties to fulfill. In Indian society duty is a big burden on an individual. Vedanta says you can never complete your duties so long as you are a karta. If Gyani has duties, they are now transferred to mithya Ahamkara. It becomes part of a drama. He does not have sleepless nights for not fulfilling his duties. While he still performs, he does so in a relaxed manner. **This is the description of a Jivan Mukta. He does not perceive anything other than Atma. Everything he sees is Atma. What about Anatma? They are seen as non-substantial Nama and Roopas imposed over the Atma.**

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says I am struggling to describe a Gyani. To describe the state of mind of a Gyani is very difficult. Only way is to become one. So, become one says the Bhagawan.

Shloka # 34:

The Veda has said clearly, "That thou art". Even then, not having obtained abidance in the Supreme Self, to inquire again indicates the debility of the mind. That Reality indeed shines always as one's Self.

This is an important shloka. Here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gives an important clue to his thinking. He accepts Vedanta Vichara as Atma Vichara. Many believe Self Enquiry does not require Vedanta. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi clarifies here how to use Vedanta Vichara. It is an important means. Any means is a blessing if handled properly. If not, then there are two problems:

- The method may not give expected result.
- It can create a negative result.

Vedanta Vichara is a sacred instrument if used properly. If not, its results can't be good. **What is Vedanta Vichara? It is meant for securing emotional independence from everything secular and sacred.** Even dependence on God is dependence. Dependence by its very nature indicates Samsara. Vedanta also should not be an object of dependence. It should give independence from everything including Vedanta. I should use it to enlighten myself. If I forget this, then it becomes a means of enjoyment and entertainment. Vedanta is a means of revealing myself as a source of Joy. It itself is not a source of joy. If used as a source of joy, we become attached to Vedanta. It then becomes a source of dependence, causing anger, anxiety and stress.

Vedas say " You are the Brahman" the source of Joy and peace. Even a Guru does not want his Shishya to be dependent upon him. If one loses purpose of Vedanta Vichara then Vedanta Vichara becomes an addiction. Therefore, performing continuous enquiry mechanically, losing sight of original purpose, is an addiction and is due to immaturity of mind.

If you remember the goal and continue enquiry it is purposeful. It will give us final independence. Any addiction makes mind weaker including on Vedanta Vichara.

That Paramatma is always accessible as your own nature for peace and joy. It is your own nature. Vedanta just tells you "You" are the source of the joy.

Shloka # 35:

"I am not myself" or "I know myself"... such expressions of man are a laughable matter. Is the Self two-fold, by the division of the Seer and the seen? In the knowledge of the oneness of one's Self, indeed, there are no divisions."

Here, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi, talks of uniqueness of Atma Gyanam. It is distinct from all other knowledge. It also occurs in the intellect alone. Hence purification of mind is required. Body is not the locus of knowledge nor is Atma. Intellect alone is the locus of this knowledge. All knowledge requires an appropriate means to obtain it. In this, Self-knowledge is similar to other forms of knowledge. **The uniqueness of Self Knowledge lies in the fact that in this knowledge the Subject and the Object are one and the same.** I, the Self and I, the Object, are the knowledge. Logically, in any process, including the process of knowledge, subject and object can never be the same. It is a universal law that subject can never be the object. Citing examples of this, thus, the eyes can see everything but themselves; one can taste everything with the tongue but it cannot taste itself etc. Then, how does this Self-knowledge occur?

Best Practices: Since we are all practicing Vedanta Vichara we should keep following concepts always in mind:

- 1. What is Vedanta Vichara? It is meant for securing emotional independence from everything secular and sacred.**
- 2. The uniqueness of Self Knowledge (Vedanta Vichara) lies**

in the fact that in this knowledge the Subject and the Object are one and the same.

3. This (Self Knowledge) radically changes all my transactions as the motive behind them has changed.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Foot Note: The **Jivanmukta** (one who is in Jivanmukti) has gained liberation while in the body, but in this case, the individual regains full awareness of the world, simultaneously with awareness of the “The god is within me and everyone, everything” state. According to Advaita, a liberated human being (jivanmukta) has realised Brahman as his or her own true self.

Videha mukti (Sanskrit, “liberation after death”) refers to the moksha, or “liberation attained by a person after death”. It is a concept found in Hinduism and Jainism in relation to ending the samsara (the cycle of rebirth), and the concept contrasts with Jivanmukti which refer to achieving “liberation while alive”.

Saddharshanam, Class 19

Greetings All,

Shloka # 31:

Diving in silence by the mind, inquiring about one's root alone is true Self-inquiry. "This I am" and "This I not my nature" these thoughts are a limb of true inquiry.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi, after dealing with the nature of Ahamkara as a mythical entity, one created from borrowed attributes of Atma and Anatma, now points out that to achieve moksha Ahamkara has to be eliminated.

Ahmakara leads you to a false world. We have to eliminate this false world. We can eliminate it only by an enquiry into Atma. Enquiry into and discovery of Atma is the only solution. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi calls it Ahamkara Moola Vichara.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi did not give details of how to perform this Vicahra. For this we have to go Vedanta. Independent (ignorant) mind cannot perform this Self Enquiry. When an ignorant person asks the "Who am I?" it should be answered by a wise person. Therefore, mind (of the ignorant) comes up with its own misconceptions. It can reach silence but it cannot go beyond the silence. This requires an external support. Just as a microscope can help us see small objects and a telescope see far away objects, we need an external support that can lead us to this knowledge. Therefore, Shankaracharya says mind has to make the enquiry, but it has to be supported by:

- Shastra
- Acharya
- Upadesha and
- Application of our mind

Since this application is not mentioned in the Saddarshanam it has created a misconception among some people. They feel just asking the question "who am I?" will lead to Gyanam.

Discussing the third line of the shoka Swamiji says Vedanta Vichara is divided into three segments. They are:

1. Jivatma Vichara or Tvam Pada Vichara. This can also be compared to the truth of the wave in the water-ocean analogy.
2. Paramatma Vichara or Tatpada Vichara. This is Vichara at macrocosm level or on God. This has also been compared to the truth of the Ocean.
3. Focusing on the truth that nature of individual and of the total are one and the same. It is also known as Aikya Vichara or Adipada Vichara. Here one becomes aware of the incidental wave, the incidental ocean and the essential water. Essence of both Jivatma and Paramatma is the Atma. Jiva and Param are only incidental nama and roopa's, in reality there is only one Atma.

Eliminating the Pancha koshas where one sees every one of them as incidental attributes is performing the Tvampada Vichara. The body is incidental. It is like a worn out cloth that gets discarded after some time. Similarly, this body is also discarded after some time. This is known as Panchkosha viveka.

After negating all objects we come to a state of blankness. Here Guru and Shastra will point out that the blankness or silence is the objectless consciousness. This silence is my nature. I have to own up to it.

This silence cannot be objectified. A lot of Vedanta has been captured in line # 3 of this shloka. This knowledge of the essential nature of the individual is part of the Vichara. If a person performs only step # 1, Jivatma Vichara, he will conclude Atma is the essential nature. He will also conclude wrongly, that each person has an essential Atma or it leads to the conclusion of many Atma's. This is the theory of Sankhya philosophy. Therefore steps # 2 and # 3 are essential.

Shloka # 32:

Having reached within the heart, by the search, the "I" notion whose head is broken, falls. Then , another " I" which is the

main one shines forth. It is not ego, but it is Supreme fullness alone.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says by performing this Vichara successfully Ahamkara will be resolved. Dream is unreal while Waker is real. I wake upto "I" the Waker reality. Once I wake up, the dream will resolve into the waker. The source or the ground of this resolution is the Adhishtanam Atma. From ignorant (unknown) Atma Ahamkara rises and it resolves in the Known Atma. Citing another example, unknown rope resolves in known rope. This is the conversion of unknown rope to known rope. Similarly, unknown waker converts into known waker. Therefore the purpose of Vichara is to convert the unknown "I" to known "I". Through this Vichara Ahamkara falls and it is destroyed. There are many methods by which Ahamkara can be temporarily destroyed, but in all of them Ahamkara keeps coming back. Thus, in both yoga Samadhi (with vedantic knowledge) and andha Samadhi (without vedantic knowledge) extreme bliss can be experienced. However, once the Samadhi ends, Ahamkara rises again, since the ignorance has not yet gone. Vedanta says, Samadhi wont solve the problem. Even drugs can lead you to Samadhi experience. Swami Dayanada used to call them Bhang Sadhus. What is required is the knowledge that can falsify Ahamkara.

After this knowledge the Gyani will still use the word Aham, but here it means Swaroop Atma and not Ahamkara. He realizes Aham Atma Asmi. **He realizes I am not the body rather I am the atma into which the whole world is born.**

Gyani looks at every galaxy as a bubble, which is born in him. He comes to the realization that "I am atma in all avasthas". The small "I" merges into the big "I". Atma is not a particular product. Consciousness is present in all worldly experiences. The glory of the new "I" is that it is free from Ahamkara. Ahamkara is limited, has a name and is a Samsari. The new "I" is not limited and has no name attached to it and it is Param Poornam. Even the word subject is not used anymore

for Atma. Initially Atma is called subject. Later you have to drop the subject as well. No word can describe it. It is complete without limitations. Poornam is not another adjective. It means absence of any attribute. Thus, it is like the word bald that means no hair. So, Atma is nirguna.

After gaining this knowledge, I am Atma, when we come to transactions, when you are asked where is your father; you have to use Ahamkara Vesham (disguise). This is required for decent Vyavahara. Always remember it is a Vesham. Remember I am not the Vesham. I am Atma.

Word meanings from above shlokas:

Charcha, Gaveshanam and Chayanam all mean Vichara. Etat means the five koshas.

Iti Prama: This knowledge of the essential nature. Ahanta: Ahamkara.

Hridantara: Adhishtana Atma.

Pari Bhugna: Falling head down.

Aham is used to mean Gyani not Ahamkara.

Anyat means the new I.

Prakrishtam: means the main.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddharshanam, Class 18

Greetings All,

Shloka # 29:

That is true Being, where the ego does not rise. That again will not perish without a search for its place of emergence. If that does not perish, can there be the Being in the form of oneness with one's self.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi talked about Ahamkara in Shloka's #23 through #25. In shloka # 26 he points out that Ahamkara is the basis of Samsara. It is finite and will end. He also points out that it is also a karta and a bhokta. Therefore moksha is possible only if Ahamkara is eliminated. So, we must find a way to eliminate it. Shlokas 27-29 are describing the methods of elimination of Ahamkara. The methods include suppression, escapism and use of palliative. In sleep, Ahamkara is temporarily resolved. Sense pleasures take us to Ananada Maya Kosha. Music, food etc. belong to this Kosha. During such experiences too we go to a state of Nirvikalpa Avastha. Temporary forgetfulness occurs, one merges into the music and Ahamkara is resolved. In all experiences of pleasure Ahamkara is resolved. This is known as Ahamkara Laya. The yogic method of nirvikalpa samadhi is also an Ahamkara Laya. However, once you leave the pleasure, Ahamkara roars back. Nirvikalpa Samadhi, however, does remove Ahamkara permanently as such it also does not take you to moksha. Even after a maha-pralaya the old Ahamkara comes back. Only a permanent destruction of Ahamkara leads to moksha. Atma Gyanam is the root cause of Ahamkara. Atma Gyanam is the solution as it leads to understanding that Ahamkara is Mithya. It is like the destruction of a pot by a hammer or by throwing it down or through wisdom where one realizes that there is no such thing called pot and that only the clay exists. Realization dawns

that other than Atma nothing else exists. This destroys Ahamkara. I may use the pot functionally but I also am aware that it is really clay. Only understanding the Adishtanam can falsify the pot. This falsification is called Ahamkara Nasha. Once Agyanam is eliminated it does not comeback. A Jivan Mukta knows Ahamkara is mithya or rather that it is a vyavaharika Satyam.

In the shloka Aham means "The I" and not just I. Citing an example, a devotee asked a sage "when will I be immortal"? The sage replied, "when the I dies".

Udayastan: means Atma Vichara.

Shlokas # 27-31 are all about Atma Vichara as a means of Ahamkara Nishta.

Shloka # 30:

As one dives in a well of deep waters, in the same way having controlled the breath and speech, with an extremely sharp intellect, having dived inside, inquiring, one gets to the root of one's ego.

People ask if Self-enquiry is easy or difficult. Some say it is difficult. Others say Nama Smaranam is easier in kaliyuga. Some say Vichara is a straight and easy path. So is it difficult or easy? Katho Upanishad says it is difficult like walking on a razor's edge. Sri Krishna says, however, it is very easy.

Swamiji says when the question asked is not right one, the answer also cannot be right. For whom is it easy or difficult? It depends on the person making the enquiry. For a prepared person it is easy. For an unprepared person it is not even appealing. For him Bhakti may be more appealing.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi says first prepare and then enter the Vichara. Many people get into Vichara without preparation.

Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi is required for such Vichara. All four qualifications are required. An integrated personality that can withdraw from Samsara should be in place. One should be mentally become a Sanyasi. You have to die to your role. This is called Indriya Nigraha or sensory withdrawal. In this state one should enquire. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi cites an example of the rope of a village well. Once it snaps a man has to go down deep into the well to bring it out. Like a well diver both qualities of Prana Nirodha (pranayama) and Vang Nirodha (control on mouth) are required. Fourth chapter of Gita also talks of Pranayama to make one's mind quiet. One also has to control the mouth, that is, eating and speaking. These two Sadhanas are indicated through the well driver analogy. After performing these two Sadhanas one should perform Atma Vichara. He says one should not go into Vichara without preparation. Even Patanjali talks of seven yogas to be practiced before Atma Vichara.

The Vicahra should be performed with a refined intellect. This involves Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. Transcending and suppressing the intellect will not help. Only by refining intellect can one enquire. Through this enquiry one should know the mithya ahamkara's adishtanam or the Atma.

Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi does not discuss the process of Atma Vichara. He is silent on this topic. This has resulted in the creation of a cult who practice "Who am I" meditation.

In the Gita, Sri Krishna tells us how to perform the enquiry. He tells us one has to go to a qualified Guru. The traditional Guru will tell you to follow Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam. Sri Krishna is doing exactly that with Arjuna; he is teaching him.

Never take a prodigy as a model. Saints like Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi probably had their learning in a previous birth. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi has not mentioned or negated the Guru Shastra Upadesha. This is the difference between

tradition and cult.

Shloka # 31:

Diving in silence by the mind, inquiring about one's root alone is true Self inquiry. "This I am" and "This I not my nature" these thoughts are a limb of true inquiry.

Here again Atma Vichara is discussed. Here yet another Sadhana is also discussed. Mano-Nirodha or Kshama is discussed. Mauna is of two kinds. One Mauna is to be without speech. The other mauna is to be without the chatter of the mind. Mauna means fully focused on the words of the teacher. The word Majjam in shloka means immersed in. Citing Janaka Maharaja's story, Janaka and others were listening to the teacher, when a fire broke out. All others ran out except Janaka, who was focused on the words of the teacher. With such a silent mind one should enter a dialogue with the Guru on Atma Vichara or Ahamkara moola Vichara. This enquiry has two parts to it. They are:

- Seeing what I am not.
- Seeing what I am.

Picking every object and negating it by Neti or saying " I am not this or that".

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Saddharshanam Class 17

Greetings All,

Shloka #27:

The ghost of the ego is born amidst forms, based on a group of forms, the eater of forms, who has given up and held forms, is by itself formless and runs away at the time of inquiry into itself.

Continuing his teaching, Swami Paramarthananda said, in this shloka Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi deals with the anatomy of Ahamkara. It is not an independent substance; rather it is a mixture of Atma's features and Anatma's features. If these features are given back to Atma and Anatma respectively, Ahamkara will disappear. When we introduce ourselves we say, "I am" so and so. The "I" indicates the Consciousness (Atma) and "am" indicates Existence. Both "I" and "am" are borrowed features from the Sat (existence) and Chit (Consciousness) of Atma. Having borrowed two features from Atma, other features following "I am", such as my biographical qualifications such as my age, are borrowed from Anatma. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi calls these features Rupani or qualifications. Many of them are borrowed from Annamaya, Pranamaya and Vignanamaya koshas. These features are all roopams or properties borrowed from Anatma.

Thus, features of both Atma and Anatma exist in Ahamkara. Of them, the Atma feature does not change. The "I am" or Sat Chit does not change. At all ages you say "I am" and it remains same. Atma's features do not cause the variety in Ahamkara. Variety is caused by Anatma features such, as I am old or young etc. They are borrowed from the four Koshas. So, Ahamkara is born out of Anatma's features. Since Anatma's features are constantly changing Ahamkara also changes with it.

In sleep, Ahamkara does not exist. "I am " is nirvikara, while other features are vikara. So dismiss all those vikara attributes and reach Atma.

Ahamkara =features of Atma + features of Anatma.

Ahamkara does not have intrinsic features of its own. When these features are removed from both, there is no more Ahamkara left, it is a myth. Therefore, it is considered Virupaha (disfigured). It lives on borrowed life. Citing example of a Reflected face in a mirror, it is a third entity, which is other than the original face and the mirror. Upon enquiry we find that reflected face experienced by me, has some features of the original face and some of the mirror as well. When these features are removed there is no reflected face anymore. Even the motion of the reflected face is borrowed from the mirror. Even though it does not have its own existence it is still available for experience. Hence it is called Mithya or Maya.

Because it is a mythical and mysterious substance it can be destroyed only by enquiry. Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi gave example of the man who attended marriages uninvited. The bride's side thought he belonged to the groom. Groom's side thought he belonged to the bride. He got away with it until someone enquired about him. Then he disappeared altogether. So also, upon enquiry, Ahamkara disappears.

Shloka # 28:

In the being of the ego, all this shines. In the dissolution of the ego, nothing at all shines. Therefore, all this is of the form of ego. The search for it is the way to all victory.

The mythical Ahamkara can be ignored if it does not make problems. Our own shadow or reflection is also mythical. Unfortunately, Ahamkara is the cause of all problems in life. It is the Karta, Bhokta and has all Karmas including Prarabhdham. This Karta Bhokta status is because of Ahamakra.

As long as you are fighting prarabhdha karma, you are fighting it with your hands tied. You can't see it, but it can see you. It can punch you at any time. This is the lot of Ahamkara. There is only one way to uproot Ahamkara. Only Atma-Anatma Viveka can uproot it.

Citing an example, in the waking and dream state, Ahamkara is present and we have suffering. In sleep state there is no Ahamkara and there is no suffering. So, the "Wakeful sleep" state is the state of wisdom. In this state you are awake but Ahamkara does not appear. This wisdom is called "wakeful sleep".

So, Ahamkara prapancha is Mithya Jagat and Mithya Ishwara. So, don't struggle changing the world or the situation. It is like shifting load from one shoulder to another. You may get a respite but pain will come back. So, enquiry into Ahamkara is the only path for total victory. Punyam, Papam, Dharma, Artha, Kama are all only temporary solutions to Ahamkara.

Shloka # 29:

That is true Being, where the ego does not rise. That again will not perish without a search for its place of emergence. If that does not perish, can there be the Being in the form of oneness with one's self.

Here Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi tells us what is a temporary solution and what is a permanent solution to the Ahamkara dilemma.

Temporary Solution:

Here Ahamakara is suppressed or evaded. In sleep, Ahamkara is dormant or evaded. Listening to music or admiring a work of art can also place Ahamkara in a dormant situation. All sense pleasures, moral or immoral, can suppress Ahamkara. Music and alcohol can suppress Ahamkara, placing it in Layaha state or state of dormancy. Even in Maha Pralayam, Ahamkara is dormant.

It comes back to life at the next creation. So, death is also not a solution.

Permanent Solution: is Ahamkara nasha. Ahmakara should not rise again. This is possible only by removing the root of Ahamkara. The cause of Ahamkara is Ignorance. Ignorance of what? It is ignorance of Adishtana Atma. This can be accomplished by only one method. It is through Atmagyanam. This can only come through Atma vichara. Until this is performed Ahamkara may become dormant but it will continue to rise again.

Satya sthithi or Moksha is that state wherein Ahamkara can never raise its hood again. Ahamkara will never leave us permanently without enquiry.

Suppose a man does not want to destroy Ahamkara. After all, shatras impose detachment as an essential for this Vichara. But detachment is difficult to achieve. This is acceptable if you accept Prarabhdha Karma. Therefore, insure yourself with Gyanam against Ahamkara. Moksha is security. Therefore go to advaita nishta. Insure yourself when things are going well.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy