

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

Greetings All,

Shloka # 34:

मनो हि क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं क्लृप्तं
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:

मनो मनुष्याणां धर्मः कथं विदुः ॥

मनुष्याणां मनो मनुष्याणां धर्मः कथं विदुः ॥
मनुष्याणां मनो मनुष्याणां धर्मः कथं विदुः ॥ 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:

असंयतचित्तश्चैव यो गच्छति विचक्षणः
वैराग्ययोगयोगिनो यो गच्छति विचक्षणः॥6.36॥

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 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 vairagyam, 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 nirmōhatvam |

nirmōhatvē niścalatattvaṁ

niścalatattvē jīvanmuktiḥ ||

Nissangatvam means Vairagyam.

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