

Baghawad Geeta, Class 156: Chapter 12, Verses 2 – 4

Shloka # 2:

The Blessed Lord said Those who meditate on Me by fixing their minds on Me with steadfast devotion (and) being endowed with supreme faith-they are considered to be the most perfect yogis according to Me.

Continuing his teachings

Swamiji said, the chapter # 12 begins with a question from Arjuna. He asks, if Saguna Dhyanam is superior or Nirguna Dhyanam? Saguna Ishwara Dhyanam means meditating on God with attributes while Nirguna Ishwara dhyanam means meditation on the attribute-less Ishwara. The question also implies which type of devotee is greater.

Sri Krishna answered; the question itself is wrong. question of superior or inferior is not valid as that involves comparison. Between Saguna Dhyanam and Nirguna Dhyanam there is no choice. Everyone has to go through both stages. Both Sadhanas bestow different benefits.

Once both are compulsory,
how to practice them?

They can't be simultaneously practiced. They have to be practiced in a graded manner meaning

one after the other. Saguna Dhyanam prepares one for nirguna Dhyanam. It purifies the mind. So, Arjuna, don't ask what is better. Sri Krishna says, Saguna Bhakta is superior to nirguna bhakta; however, Nirguna bhakta reaches Me. Saguna Ishwara and Vishwa Rupa Ishwara are two forms of Saguna Ishwara. Fixing their minds upon me, they practice with full commitment and without fail. They are endowed with intense faith in Me. **God does not present material growth; he gives purity of mind, a non-tangible result. So we have to have intense faith, as no tangible results are forthcoming.**

Those who practice Saguna Dhyanam are indeed superior.

Shloka # 3:

Those, however, who meditate in every way on the Immutable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, which is all pervading, incomprehensible, change-less, immovable and constant.

Some other people follow nirguna Brahma Dhyanam as a part of Gyana Yoga. It is highest stage of Bhakti yoga.

Therefore in these three verses, Krishna is introducing Gyana yoga sadhana, which is the practice of Nirguna Ishvara dhyanam. Meditating on my highest nature. A description of

Nirguna Ishwara includes:

1. Akshara: Nirguna
Brahman.

2. Avyaktam; Ishwara in highest nature is not perceptible to **sense organs of Shabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa and Gandha. Nature consist of these five sense attributes hence it is called Pra-Pancha.** Once five sense organs are closed, our world disappears. So, here, original Sri Krishna can't be touched, smelt etc. There are many things that can't be perceptible but can be ideas that can be conceived as a concept. There are many things, which cannot be perceived by the sense organs but they can be conceived by the mind; there are so many emotions; love; anger; happiness; etc. they are not perceptible; many mathematical scientific concepts and laws; you do not see; but they are ideas; Ideas cannot be perceived by the sense organs; but they can be conceived by the mind; that is why they are called concepts; so, can you say Nirguna Krishna can be conceived by the mind?

3. Achintyam: I can't be conceived in mind. I am unobjectifiable, inconceivable. If God can't be conceived, how can one talk of God? When we see an object, we give it a name as it can be perceived or conceived. But God can't be perceived or conceived.

4. **Aprameyam:** Lord can't be described, indescribable or un-objectifiable. The various pramanama's can't prove it. Hence called Aprameyam.

5. **Sarvatragam:** Sri Krishna adds he exists everywhere. He says he is Achalam, he can't move. Saguna Krishna moves but Nirguna

Krishna can't move, as he is formless and all pervading. To have form, it needs a boundary. If God has no form, there is no boundary; so, God is like space, all pervading, space also does not move, neither does God. Saguna God is subject to arrival and departure; Nirguna God is not.

5. **Kutastham**: He is free from all modifications. We have seen six modifications on the part of the physical body; do you remember; asthi, potentially existent; jayate, born; vardhate, grows; viparinamate, metamorphoses; kshiyate, declines; vinashyati, dies. These are the six-fold modifications caused by the time principal; so anything that exists within time; anything that is influenced by time will grow with all the six-fold modifications. The Nirguna Sri Krishna is free from all modifications.

6. **Kutaha**: means anvil of a blacksmith. The metal undergoes change but the anvil does not change at all. So, a changeless substratum is required for all changes to happen. It is a witness to all changes, while witness itself cannot change. Suppose I say that the morning class students are different from evening class; and evening class are different from morning class; you know that the students change; but the teacher is avasthatraya sakshi; If morning class teacher is different; and evening class teacher is different; I will never be able to say that the morning class students are different; evening class students are different. And therefore the knower of changes should not be subject to change. And therefore the witness consciousness principle is compared to kutah; an anvil; upon which the body-metal and the mind-metal is hammered by the various experiences of life; every letter you received; every phone call you get; they are all hammering on your head; When all these hammerings takes place, your body changes; your mind changes; but there is the changeless one. And therefore Nirguna Sri Krishna is called the changeless substratum, which remains like an anvil; that which remains

changeless like an anvil. Thus, the witness consciousness principle is compared to an anvil.

7. **Dhruvam**: He is eternal. He is beyond space and time. This is the God that is meditated upon in Gyana Yoga. How can we meditate on a featureless Brahman? Sri Krishna says one has to prepare for this.

Shloka # 4: By fully controlling all the organs and always being even-minded, they, engaged in the welfare of all beings, attain Me alone.

Preparatory qualifications for Nirguna Ishwara Dhyanam are:

Four fold qualification of Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi; I will just enumerate them for my satisfaction: discrimination, dispassion; discipline and desire; the 4 D's.

The four qualifications are presented here:

One has to master extrovert senses organs.

Why master them? Sri Krishna says Nirguna Ishwara is one who is not experienced as an object, yet such a God exists.

And why should we master the extrovert sense organs. What is the reason; I will give you a clue here. Previously Krishna has described His higher nature; Nirguna Ishwara as unobjectifiable one, Unobjectifiable means not experiencable as an object. And if Nirguna Ishwara is not

objectifiable and still such an Ishvara exists, that Lord can exist only

in one way. There is only one thing in the creation; which is unobjectifiable; There is only one such thing that exists.

Thus, the eye can't see itself. This subject eye can't be seen. Similarly, the

higher Sri Krishna is nothing else but the Observing Consciousness principle.

Nirguna Ishwara meditation is meditating on myself, not my body; this is Atma

Dhyanam or meditating on the meditator.

Since I don't objectify; my

sense organs don't have anything to dwell on. So **Indriya-nigraha** is a qualification.

Equanimity

under all circumstances, a poised mind; without ego and Dvesha; committed to

the wellbeing of all beings; not a narrow mind, but an expanded mind. I should

feel pain of other people, an empathetic mind.

How can I do so? **Daily chant one prayer; it will give you**

punyam; distribute this punyam to all the living beings. This prayer will make

mind sensitive.

Those who have these

qualifications, they will attain Me.

Shloka # 5:

For them who have their minds attached to the

Unmanifested the struggle is greater; for, the Goal which is the Unmanifest is

attained with difficulty by the embodied ones.

Here Sri Krishna openly

admits Nirguna Dhyanam is extremely difficult. The path of Gyana yoga consisting of Sravanam, mananam, and nidhidhyasanam is a difficult one.

There are big obstacles to be faced by people committed to Nirguna Ishwara Dhyanam. It is like walking on a razor's edge. The destination of a formless one is indeed difficult to reach for ordinary people.

The biggest and commonest obstacle to Vedanta is strong attachment to one own physical body, which makes the mind grossest mind; because we are identified with our grossest personality; To remember yesterday's class; grossest is annamaya kosa abhimana; he does not have even time to think of improving the mind, because where is the time of think of improving the mind, when I am all the time busy improving the body; And therefore I am obsessed with the body; I am obsessed with the protection of the body; therefore I am obsessed with the procurement for food, clothing and shelter and I am obsessed with the procurement of these three after retirement; that also has been seen; there will be no income; and the inflation; diseases comes; who will pay for the medical bill; are the children reliable; seeing them; it is not; they may be reliable; but what type of daughter in law will come I do not know; Therefore all the time worried about my physical security; and such a mind cannot think of anything beyond the physical body; and once I am attached to the physical body; through the physical body, I will be attached to the people around; directly proportional to the physical attachment is: attachment to various relations because every relation is through the body. And therefore I have a very strong individuality; limiting me; localizing me; and therefore such a person cannot imagine the unlocalised formless; it

cannot transform itself;
transform is transcending the form, is transformation; And
therefore Krishna says:
stronger the bodily attachment; more difficult is Gyana yoga;
the details
in the next class.

Take away:

God does not present
material growth; he gives purity of mind, a non-tangible
result. So we have to
have intense faith, as no tangible results are forthcoming.

Nature consisting of the
five sense attributes of Shabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa and
Gandha is called
Pra-Pancha.

Sadhana chatushtaya
sampathihi are:

discrimination,
dispassion; discipline and desire; the 4 D's.

For an Empathic mind: Daily chant one prayer; it will give
you punyam; distribute this punyam to all the living beings.
This prayer will
make mind sensitive.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy