

Baghawad Gita, Class 178: Chapter 13, Verses 27 to 30

Shloka 13. 27:He sees who sees the supreme Lord as existing really
in all beings, and as the Imperishable among the perishable.

Continuing

his teachings Swamiji said up to the 24th shloka, Sri Krishna dealt with all the six topics that Arjuna wanted to know: Prakrti, Purusha, Kshetram, kshetragnya, Gyanam and Gneyam. And thereafter, from shloka No.25 up to 27 in three shlokas, Sri Krishna talked about the sadhanas or preparatory disciplines required to gain this knowledge; Knowledge given in the first 24 shlokas. And he talked about all the levels of sadhanas, starting from Karma Yoga, and then passing through Upasana, then Shravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam and that the culmination of the sadhana should be only in knowledge.

And also Sri Krishna pointed out why he is insisting on knowledge, the reason is that the problem of samsara is because of an error with regard to our perception of ourselves. So self-error, or error with regard to self-understanding is the problem and any error is caused by ignorance alone and therefore without the removal of ignorance, self-delusion cannot go away. And therefore, knowledge is compulsory and through the knowledge self-delusion goes away and through that the samsara also

goes away. Thus the sadhanas were talked about in three shlokas from shloka #25 to 27 and then from 28 onwards Sri Krishna is talking about the phalam, the benefit of this knowledge. In shloka # 28, one gets the right vision of the world, a complete understanding of world, and a proper perspective. Proper perspective is that the whole universe is a mixture of Prakriti and Purusha. Just as a child has features of both father and mother, our vision will be right and balanced only if we are aware of Prakriti and Purusha.. If we are preoccupied with just anyone of them alone it can be a problem. Every living being is a mixture of Prakriti and Purusha. The Prakriti part is solidly visible; it is Saguna, Savikara, Mithya and Achetana Tatvam. While Purusha is Nirguna, Nirvikara, Satyam and Chetana Tatvam that is not visible to physical eyes and one has to appreciate it through our understanding. Just as in an electric fan there is the physical fan and the electricity principle. Fan we can see but electricity we have to appreciate it through our knowledge of physics. So, the Shastra Gyana Chakshu (understanding) helps us see the Purusha. Our two eyes will see Prakriti and the third eye will see Purusha. Here we should note that Prakriti changes while Purusha does not change. Prakriti is variable from individual to individual; varna bheda is there; ashrama bheda is there; linga

bheda

is there; it is vishamam, whereas Purusha is samam in all the people.

Therefore

Sri Krishna says parameshvaram

is Purusha. Do not imagine a personal God is sitting in everyone. Here, the

word parameshvara represents

Nirguna, Nirvikara, Sathya, and Chetana Tatvam Parameshvaram.

And that

does not mean in his preoccupation with Purusha darshanam, he loses sight of Prakrti; he

sees the Prakrti also, he is also aware of the

Purusha; Just as I

appreciate both the fan aspect, as well as the electricity aspect. And according

to the context, he emphasizes Prakrti or Purusha. But

there are occasions when Prakrti creates problems. Mortality frightens. Actions

become a burden. Life becomes a bore. And when a person troubled by life, when

it appears noisy, constant activity and becomes

a drag, then a person requires a different channel. Then change the channel.

When you look for stability, when you look for permanence, when you look for purnathvam, then

the Prakrti will not be able to provide; in

fact all the higher needs of human beings, Prakrti will not provide. It is very

useful and entertaining in all transactions; but whenever there is a higher

need Purusha alone helps. One lady was telling me; Swamiji I have everything

but I am missing something. I do not have anything to complain, because I have wonderful

husband, wonderful children, beautiful house, no water

problem; and the business is going well; I do not have any complaint at all; but there is something missing. This is called higher spiritual need; when such a need arises, I should be able to withdraw from Prakrti and own up the Purusha tatvam which alone gives peace, purnathvam, security, immortality, stability, etc. And once you are rejuvenated and fresh, you are ready for all the activities. Like getting up after sleep. Therefore, that balanced vision of Purusha and Prakrti; not losing sight of Purusha in and through the transaction, is called atma nishta. They call it sahaja samadhi. Sahaja samadhi means in and through all the transactions, not losing sight of the Purusha tatvam. Up to this we saw in the last class.

Shloka

13:28: Since by seeing eally God who is present alike everywhere he does not injure the Self by the Self, therefore he attains the supreme Goal.

So the previous shloka gave the first phalam as right vision. Then in this shloka, Sri Krishna gives the second benefit of this knowledge, which is amruthathva prapthi; Transcending mortality; or immortality, is the second benefit. This wise person learns to have the sama darshanam, in and through the vishama darshanam, which is required for transaction. Though transaction requires vishama darshanam the moment you lose sight of the sama darshanam,

Prakruti will frighten you. It is like the dream. The moment you lose sight of the fact that you are lying down on the bed comfortably; that is forgotten, the dream is capable of frightening You. The moment you lose sight of the screen in a movie, the characters become more real than they actually are, and the movie can terribly frighten you; not only at that time, afterwards when you go home also. Similarly, the moment Purusha is lost sight of, Prakruti becomes a nightmare; and, therefore, samam pashyan sarvathra; in all the states, all the conditions he see Arupa Ishvaram, free from all attributes. Samam means which is same in everyone.

And sama vasistitham is very present as the adhishtanam, the support of Prakruti. Because Purusha is sathyam, while Prakruti is Mithya, without any support.

The wise person sees all the time, in all the places appreciating through Gyana chakshu the Purusha. And what is the benefit he attains? He attains the highest goal of immortality. He attains immortality. He, thereafter, does not subject himself to mortality. And here Sri Krishna says, presents that this Gyani does not destroy himself thereafter. So according to Sri Krishna, every Agyani samsari is destroying himself. Even though he puts the blame on the world and the people, according to Vedanta, world does not create any problems, rather because of ignorance, we are killing ourselves. We are all self-destructive people. This is based on the

Ishavasya Upanishad, which says everyone is committing a suicide. How is everyone committing a suicide? Shankaracharya explains this in two different ways:

How does a person destroy himself?

Because of the self-ignorance, ignorance of the fact that I am atma, he

identifies with the body, the anatma. So ignorance leads to body identification. And once I

identify with the body I become a karta. As atma,

I am not a karta, but once Dehabhimana comes, I

become a karta. And as a Karta, means Doer of actions, I perform

varieties of actions and earn punya papa

karmas. And therefore

what are my earnings? So we have a very huge deposit of punyapapa karmas. And according

to vedanta, it is

these punya papa karmas that

are responsible for the creation of the body. And therefore, I create a body

for myself by my own karma. If in the next janma, I am going to acquire a body

who is responsible? Not the next janma parents. Not God. Not anything else. If

I acquire a body in the next janma, I am responsible for the arrival of that

body through my own karma. So therefore, according to the Shastra, I create

a body and then after the body hangs around for sometime, when the body

perishes, the end of the body is also caused, by our own karmas.

Therefore, body's arrival and departure

is all caused by my own karmas, and once that body is gone I

then acquire another body. This process of acquiring and departing from bodies continues. Therefore I alone am responsible for the repeated birth and death of myself; through the arrival and departure of the body. Therefore I am creating myself and I am destroying myself from the standpoint of the body. And therefore, I am self-destructive. I kill myself. And how long this will continue? As long as Karmas continue. Punarapi Jananam, punarapi maranam. I am responsible for my death. So therefore I am a atmaha; atmaha means killer of myself, from the standpoint of my body.

And then Shankaracharya gives another meaning as well. From the standpoint of my higher nature, that is my atma svarupam nature also, because of self-ignorance, I am killing, (as though), my own higher nature. I am destroying myself; myself means not the body; my own higher nature. Then Shankaracharya raises the question: how can a self-ignorant person kill his own higher nature, the atma, because, after all, the atma is indestructible? Shankaracharya says ignorant person kills the atma in a figurative sense. What do you mean figuratively killing the atma? When I am not aware of my higher nature, I disown my higher nature. Just as a person who does not know the treasure, which is lying underneath the ground; his own land; is not going to claim it, he is going to disown it because of his ignorance; Similarly, an ignorant person disowns his higher

nature and therefore the benefit that he can derive from his higher nature is denied to him. Since I am not enjoying the benefit of my higher nature, it is as though the higher nature is absent. While the higher nature is present, it is as though absent, because I do not derive the benefit of my higher nature; because of my sheer ignorance; and since the higher nature is as though absent; Shankaracharya says: we have killed or destroyed the higher nature as though. If something is destroyed, you do not derive the benefit of that. Similarly, atma is as though destroyed because I do not derive the benefit of it. And therefore, a self-ignorant person has "destroyed" his own higher nature, because he does not enjoy the benefit of purnatvam, abhayathvam, etc. And therefore from that standpoint also, he is a committing suicide; he is destroying himself. And therefore every aGyani destroys himself from the standpoint of the body as well as from the standpoint of atma as well.

And if every aGyani is self-destroyer, what is the definition of a Gyani? Its opposite. Therefore, Sri Krishna says, a Gyani does not destroy himself; he is not a self-destroyer. Unlike an Agyani, a Gyani does not destroy himself, either by the standpoint of the body or from the standpoint of the atma. And therefore he is not a self-destroyer; he has discovered immortality.

Shloka

13.29: And he who sees actions as being done in various ways by Nature itself, and also the Self as the non-agent, -he sees.

The third benefit of the knowledge is given here. We have seen two: first one is sama darshanam; the second one is amruthathva prapthi. The third benefit is akartvaprapthi.

Discovering the fact that I am akarta. I am not a doer of any action. And

this is a very important thing because kartvamtam alone is the cause of all the

problems. Because as long as I am a karta, I can never avoid karmas and therefore

Karta

will

be eternally associated with karma. And karmas will never remain the same, they will gradually ripen. The

karmas will gradually ripen and get converted into favourable and unfavourable

conditions. Even now our prarabdha karmas are

ripening. When the karmas ripen, the ripened

karma phalam in the form of favourable and unfavourable

situations, they will come back to me alone. When the karma phalas comes

to me and I have to face the music, I become a

bhokta. If I am a

karta, I can never

escape from being a bhokta and that bhokta status is a choiceless, helpless

situation. So therefore, you can never escape

from being a bhokta. To get out of

bhoktvtam, there is only

one way; you should get out of kartvamtam. You will definitely have kartvamtam as long as you

have deha abhimana, because deha means karma will be there, because there are Gyanendriyani, karmendriyani; and therefore, Prakrti abhimana makes me a karta. And the moment you drop the Prakrti abhimana, and claim that aham Purusha, that Purusha-owning up alone will take you out of both kartrtvam and bhoktrtvam. Therefore, Sri Krishna says: All the karmas, good and bad actions, they are all done by Prakrti alone, Prakrti alone can do karmas, because doing karma requires modification. Any karma, change is required. If I have to talk, my mouth has to undergo change. Even if I have to do a thinking action, there should be thought change. So karma means vikaram. Prakrti alone can do karma, because it is subject to modification. Whereas Purusha means he is Nirguna, Nirvikara, Satya, Chetana Tatvam; that Purusha is incapable of doing action and therefore Sri Krishna says all the actions by all means, whether it is kayikam, vachikam, or manasam, whether it is dharmikam, or adharmikam, all of them are performed by Prakrti. Prakrti means the body mind complex. And this wise person is very much aware of that. But he does not identify with the body mind complex rather he identifies with Atmanam. He does not say I am doing. He says in my presence Prakrti does everything. In my presence, Prakrti does everything or body mind complex does everything. Then who am I? I am akarta and therefore I do not have sanchitam; I do not have agami; I do not have prarabdham. Or else how is it possible to experience and finish off the

karmas? It is impossible for you to exhaust all the karmas as even as we are exhausting karmas we are also adding many more. So it is impossible to put an end to the cyclic arrival and departure of karmas. The only way out of is you do not stop the cycle, but you get away from the cycle. Similarly, Prakrti cannot be stopped; I have to transcend Prakrti, like waking up from dream. Prakrti will continue. Let me now identify with that. Of course this verse should be carefully understood. It should not be misunderstood and abused. Suppose a person argues after performing all the akramams and says that the body does everything. Imagine a criminal who is tried in the court and the judge passes a verdict and therefore 7 years RI. He tells, Oh Judge, the body does all the karmas, I the atma did not do any karma at all, and why are you giving me RI. What will judge the say: My dear, I am not imprisoning you. In fact, I cannot imprison you because you are the all-pervading atma, which cannot be accommodated in any prison. In fact, all prisons are existing in you; I am not imprisoning you, because you are akarta and abhokta, you said body only did all the crimes and therefore I am only imprisoning the body. So therefore: Remember Vedanta should never be used for promoting adharma. Whenever we feel like supporting adharma through Vedanta, it means we have not assimilated vedanta properly. If vedanta is

correctly assimilated, it will promote dharma. In fact Vedanta is the best method of promoting dharma. So whether I have assimilated vedanta properly or not, how do I know? If vedanta promotes dharma in my life, it should promote ethical life, if it is supporting adharma, the best thing is keep aside the vedanta for sometime; follow dharma shastra after studying it properly and therefore vedanta is not for abuse. This should not be misinterpreted. Thus the third benefit of atma Gyanam is Akartrtva prapthi. Discovering the fact that I am akarta.

Shloka

13. 30: When one realizes that the state of diversity of living things is rooted in the One, and that their manifestation is also from That, then one becomes identified with Brahman.

So this is a deeper and significant verse wherein several steps of vedantic understanding are hidden. The understanding of atma has to grow through several stages. And to understand those several stages, we will first take the example of akasha or space. Initially, I do not understand space at all, because it is too intangible, invisible. Generally we think space is emptiness and nothingness and therefore we take space for granted. So first I should learn, this hall, for example, or any enclosure for that matter, has got space within. So when I am looking into a hall, there are two things. Not hall alone, but the hall with space inside. When space alone is there, generally we think, we say there is nothing. It is not

nothing, space is
not nothingness but it is a positive substance. Even
scientifically space is
not emptiness or nothingness, it is a positive
substance; a subtle substance.

What I understand first. There is space
inside. Then later I understand that space is not only within
this hall, but
the space is inside all the enclosures; big halls, small
halls, or even a
vessel or our own stomach, in all space is there. That is the
next stage. Space
is not only within one hall, but also in all enclosures, next
stage. The next stage I understand is that even though
halls are many and varied, the space within is not many and
varied; space is
one and the same within every hall. The halls
are different but space is not different. This is the next
stage. Then the next stage I go through is not only there
is one space inside all the halls, but there is space outside
the halls also. Space
is not only within every hall, but the space
is outside, both inside and outside. Thereafter
the next stage is, space is not inside and outside the hall,
that is not the
right expression, there is only one space, in
which all the halls are resting. So space is not in the hall;
but it is the
reverse; halls are within spaces (you should
not say 'spaces'). I will say that there is space within.
Therefore space is
only one. Within one space, all the halls exist. So space is
the stithi karanam of all the halls. And then the final
stage is; Space is not only the stithi karanam, (means the
support for the
existence of all the hall), according to Shastra, Taittiriya

Upanishad, all
the things in the creation are even born out of space alone.
From the so
called empty space alone, everything is born, and in the space
alone, all of
them survive and into that space alone, all of them resolve.
See how many stages we have seen. First we said that
there is the hall and space. Then space is in every hall. Then
space is the
same in every hall; thereafter space is not
only inside the hall but outside also. Then really speaking
space is not
inside; all the halls are in the space; And finally what we
said; Space is the
one which holds all the halls and space is the one from which
all of them are
born and into all of them resolve. If you
understand this in space, you have to extend it to the
consciousness. So space should
be equated to consciousness and hall should be equated to the
body.

Thus, within the body there is consciousness.
Then what is the next stage? Consciousness is not only in my
body but also in
every body. Then what is the next stage. Even though the
bodies are many and
varied, consciousness behind all the bodies is one and the
same. Then what is
the next stage. Consciousness is not only within the body, but
consciousness is
outside the body also. Then what is the next stage? Really
speaking, consciousness is not inside the body; then all the
bodies are resting in one consciousness. And then the final
stage is not only
all the bodies are resting in that consciousness,
they are all born out of that consciousness; rest in that

consciousness,
resolve in that consciousness and that consciousness I am. If
you can tell this, you can say, Aham Brahma asmi. This
is the essence of this verse.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy