

Sādhana Pañchakam – Class 3

Shankaracharya is dealing with the second stage of life; the first stage of life is learning about the way of life I should be leading. Having learnt that in the first stage, one has to go to the next stage of gragasthasrama, one should implement the dharma learnt. In the case of brahma Jñānam, Jñānam itself gives moksha. In this case knowledge itself is an end itself. In the case of dharma gyanam, knowledge itself is not an end itself, but it must be followed by implemented. The key in gragasthasrama is svadharma asthanam. Svadharma in modern times is panca mahā yagya. Vedas do not clearly tell what the benefit of svadharma is. Svadharma is presented for material benefits by the Vedas; however, Veda's intended benefit is we should develop spirituality and our crave for materialism should subside. Vedanta is not against using material benefits, but does not want us to lean on material benefits. Turning away from anithyam and turning towards nithyam is the aim of vedas. Turning away from anatma and turning towards atma is the aim of the vedas. A person is not mature enough to know the value of moksha and therefore vedas presented svadharma as a way to prosper. Even though the explicit benefit is material prosperity, the intended benefit is spiritual inclination. The svadharma will make the mind see the limitation of material accomplishment; we do not hate material benefits, but we refuse to lean up on them. There is only one secure thing in the world; all others are insecure and not worth leaning on.

Viveka, vairāgyam and mumukṣutvaṁ are all implied in the first verse. Once these three qualifications are acquired, one has successfully gone through the second stage of gragasthasrama. After this, one should get out gragasthasrama and get to vanaprastha ashram. This means, karma should be reduced and replaced by more time devoted to upasana or meditation. In gragasthasrama because of too many duties, mind has become

highly extroverted. In gragasthasrama, karma is more and upasana is less. In vanaprastha ashrama, upasana is more and karma is less. For current times, one can stay in home but increase the time spent on upasana and reduce time spent on worldly activities.

Verse 2

In vanaprastha ashrama, one must be obsessed with spiritual pursuit; one must have sat sangha or association with spiritual seekers or wisemen as much as possible. Materialistic arguments are so powerful, one can easily fall prey to them. Until you are firmly established, be selective with your friends, books etc. The primary function in vanaprastha is bhakti or upasana or meditation of the lord or the Virat swaroopam. Upasana and yoga shastra go together. Patanjali's ashtanga yoga is good for integrating personality in life:

- Yama and niyama; these two will help in integration our way life.
- Asana will integrate my annamya kosa and discipline my physical body.
- Pranayama will integrate with pranayama kosa or breathing discipline.
- Prathyagra integration of sense organs.
- Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi: these three will help integration of mind.

In the vedanta sasthanam, instead of focusing on various chakras of body, we focus on brahman. By the practice of upasana and yoga one should develop one more faculty that is samadhi shadka sampatti or six-fold inner wealth:

1. Samaha or thought discipline; reducing thoughts occurring without my knowledge; not stopping the thought but the capacity to channelize the thought in the

direction we want. All the alues will come under this concept. Daivi sampat and asuri sampat will come under this.

2. Dhamaha or sense discipline; Sense organs functioning as I want and not as it wants. Real mastery is not over other people, but mastery over sense organs.
3. Uparamaḥ or withdrawn mind; mind withdrawn from unwanted field should not run again towards to the unwanted field. Withdrawing mind is samaha and restraining the mind is uparamaḥ.
4. Titikṣā or inner strength to face difficult times; forbearance; there are certain inevitable opposite like heat and cold, arrival and departure; jenma and marana; sukam and duḥkam; capacity to withstand these is titikṣā.
5. Shradha or faith in the scriptures and the teacher. It is not blind faith; if there is doubt, then I inquire until I am satisfied.
6. Samādhānam or concentration; non wavering mind; in yoga sashtra it is called samadhi.

May all karma and upasana be totally given up because they have served their purpose. Karma and upasanas are like womb; they are relevant only until Sadhana Catuṣṭaya Saṃpatti ripening. Once Sadhana Catuṣṭaya Saṃpatti is completely assimilated karmas and upasanas should be renounced. This is also the formal process of entering into sanyasa ashrama. If the person does not have inner attachment, even the house can be sanyasa ashrama. The sign of detachment is that I am prepared to lose anything around me. If karma and upasanas can't be performed then take to Jñāna yoga, corresponding to Jñāna kanda. Take up Sravanam, Mananam and nidhithyasanam.