

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 169 – Chapter 13 Verses 8 to 12

From verse 8 to 12, Krishna deals with jñānam which is those virtues that will make the mind fit for self-knowledge. These virtues must be cultivated by everyone. Gaining self-knowledge is relatively easy, but cultivating these virtues take time and effort. These virtues are more important than vedantic studies. We have seen the first three in the last class. The virtues are:

1. Amānitvam: . Amānitvam is freedom from self-admiration or self-conceit or humility.
2. Adhambithvam: Adhambithvam is not requiring admiration at physical level. Not seeking attention; simplicity.
3. Ahimsa: Nonviolence; not hurting other beings.
4. Shanti: There are two aspects of shanti:
 1. The first aspect of Shanthi is titikṣā, which is acceptance without resistance of all choiceless situations of life. There are many situations over which have no control. Those situations are all choiceless situations. Since I do not have control over these situations, I can only change my attitude towards these situations. This acceptance is called titikṣā. I have no control over past, even God can't change the past. So, the past comes under choiceless situation. The present is also choiceless, because it has already arrived. So, we can only prepare our mind to accept the situations of past and present. This acceptance can be healthy or unhealthy. Unhealthy acceptance is with bitterness and self pity and frustration and anger towards world and God. This is not titikṣā, because our mind and other resource are not available for any constructive

activities. Healthy acceptance is where I don't allow the choiceless situation to overwhelm me, I ignore the situation and allow my resources to function in a constructive manner. It appears very difficult, but it is possible to ignore unfavorable situations. An example is Stephen Hawkins.

1. The second aspect of shanti is shama. The future is not choiceless, but the future can be changed with free will and resources. With regard to the future, we do not need acceptance, because the future is not choiceless and can be transformed. But any such transformation or change requires time and patience. We require the capacity to wait. This second aspect of Shanthi is shama which is capacity to wait; everything takes its own time. The future has to unfold in its own time. Develop patience in the present. Shanti is required to develop ahimsa.

5. Aarjavam: Alignment of threefold personality – physical, verbal and mental. If thought, word and deed are in alignment, that person is a integrated, harmonized, healthy personality. When there is no alignment, it results in a split personality and there is a strain taking place in the personality. Without alignment, there is a gradual buildup of stress, resulting in disintegrated personality. The first exercise in aarjavam is punctuality. Truthfulness is a sub division of aarjavam.

6. Acharya upasnam: Reverence towards teacher. When we worship a guru, the worship goes to the sastra as acharya represents the sastras in him. Why should we worship sastras and vedas? Sastras and vedas are like the sixth sense organ; it gives knowledge that the other sense organs cannot give. Other sense organs cannot

verify or contradict the knowledge given by sastras. This accepting capacity is shraddha. This shraddha is difficult to develop and should be done through acharya upasanam. You accept the knowledge from Vedas as fact. Without this shraddha we will never be able to assimilate vedanta.

7. Soucham: Purity; cleanliness at personal level and surrounding levels; cleanliness at verbal and thought levels. Developing all the virtues (amānitvam, ahimsa and shanti) that keep our mind calm and healthy.
8. Sthyriyam; Will power; commitment; perseverance. When we start any pursuit, there will be obstacles and setbacks. Sthyriyam is continuing the pursuit despite obstacles and setbacks.
9. Atma vinigraha: Self-mastery; self-management; Being the master of my own instruments. We have 17 indriyam or organs; Through these instruments alone we accomplish any goals. Before using any of these instruments, we have to make sure the instrument is healthy and under our control. This is atma vinigraha. In this context, atma stands for sthūla, sukshma śarīram. Ashtanga yoga is one way to get atma vinigraha and prepare for vedanta sravanam.