

Baghawat Geeta, Class 100: Chapter 7, Verses 1 and 2

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda started chapter 7 today. He said Gita consists of 18 chapters and they are divided into three groups. Chapters one through six are known as prathama. Chapters seven through twelve are known as madhyama and chapters thirteen through eighteen are known as charama. Since each group consists of six chapters they are known as shatakam. Thus, Shankaracharya's nirvana shatakam verses are famous.

Each of the six chapter segments deals with three specific topics respectively.

Thus prathama shatakam deals with:

1. **Jiva swaropa** or nature of the individual. Individual is neither the boy nor mind. Individual is the chaitanya that is in the body mind container. This satchidananda was brilliantly discussed in the second chapter, from verse 12 to 25; in the third chapter pancha kosha viveka was discussed; in the fourth chapter also, the chaitanya atma was pointed at akarta and abhokta; in the fifth chapter it said (5.13) that consciousness is the essential nature of the individual which does not perform any action. So this Satchidananda atma which is Jiva svarupam was one of the topics which was there throughout the prathama shatakam; the first six chapters.
2. **Karma yoga** as an important sadhana was discussed. It was discussed in chapters 2,3,4 and 6 respectively. Chapter 6 discussed karma yoga at the very beginning. Importance of individual effort and initiative was also

discussed. There is a big confusion that Karma theory is fatalistic. Many people say Hinduism is a fatalistic religion and that it is holding back India. **The law of karma, however, says that the present is the result of the past; if that is true, the future is the result of the present action that you choose to do; You are responsible for your life.** All four destinations of life known as purusharthas are all goals chosen by human beings.

3. **Self Effort:** Sri Krishna says you have to lift yourself; I can help you when you do so. Therefore, individual effort, free will is emphasized in choosing a course of action. **When you choose action you are also responsible for the results. Hence the saying:**

Watch your thoughts, it will become your words and actions;

Watch your words and actions; they become your habits;

Watch your habits, they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Therefore destiny is decided by character; which is decided by habit; which is decided by your words and actions and which are decided by your thoughts; therefore watch your thoughts; and direct your thoughts; and **by directing your thoughts in the present, you are ultimately determining your destiny. All is decided by thought.**

Thus three topics are highlighted by prathama shatakam.

Now in madhyama shatakam three more topics are highlighted. They are:

1. **Ishwara swaroopam** or nature of God. It represents macro aspect while Jiva swaroopam represents micro aspect of God. Therefore throughout the six chapters, Krishna talks about the definition of God, the nature of God,

the function of God; the glory of God, all about God alone. And while discussing Jiva svarupam we saw that the body mind complex is the container; the cabinet, but the content, the essential Jiva, is satchidananda atma. Similarly for Ishvara also we have got aspects of the container or superficial aspect of God, and then the essential inner nature of God; deha and dehi; Shariram and shariri; anatma and atma. Just as Jiva as a mixture of anatma and atma; Ishvara is also a mixture of both; saguna and nirguna svarupam. So Ishvara svarupam is topic No.1.

2. **Upasana:** In prathama while karma yoga is shown as sharira pradhana; physical body is active in karma yoga; whereas upasana is mana pradhana, we are gradually going from the grosser instrument to the subtler instrument. In Karma yoga, you are heavily active serving the society, contributing through pancha maha yagnas; whereas in upasana, you learn to withdraw and focus; So saguna Ishvara dhyanam; upasana; this is the second topic.
3. **Grace of God** is an important factor. Ishwara kripa or anugraha is very important. Individual effort alone does not accomplish everything. So one should not be overconfident or arrogant about it. Over confidence means I can do anything. Then he faces failure. He then lapses into fatalism. Reality is, " I accomplish things through my effort boosted by grace of god." When we start our classes we say the dhyana shloka. It says that my effort boosted by god's grace is needed. Thus three aspects of Ishwara swaroopam, Ishwara Upasana and Ishwara Kripa were discussed.

Now moving on to chapter # 7, the first three shlokas are introductory.

Shloka # 1:

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7.1

With mind set on Me and dependent on Me and performing Yoga, O Arjuna! hear how you will know Me wholly without any doubt whatsoever.

Sri Krishna says, “ if you follow my teachings, you will come to know Me”. You will get Ishwara Gyanam. There are two aspects to discovering God. First, you will know me completely. I have two natures. A lower nature that is evident in the bodies like Rama and Krishna.

The lower nature is the visible physical nature of God; like Rama shariram; Krishna shariram; which people worship as God. In fact majority of devotees when they think of God; they think only of God only in a particular form; particular body; that is why the dhyana shlokams describe the physical form alone. Sri Krishna says that the visible, tangible form, known as saguna svarupam is also my lower nature.

Saguna svarupam is however subject to arrival and departure. It is limited in space and time and is known as apara prakriti. And Arjuna I have got a higher nature as well; which is invisible, intangible, eternal, all pervading nature, which is called the nirguna svarupam; paraprakrithi; and only when you know both; saguna and nirguna svarupam; finite and the infinite nature of God; your Ishvara Gyanam is complete. And therefore through this chapter, I am going to give you both saguna and nirguna gyanam; only then your Ishvara Gyanam is complete.

Sri Krishna asks how am I going to teach? I will teach so that you are left without any doubts. What are the conditions you need to fulfill? You should have a desire to know Me; else you will be bored. You should have a desire to know if God is your destination. “I” or God must be your goal. Should God be my goal or moksha? God and moksha are identical. In the language of spirituality it is called moksha while in religion it is

called Bhagawan.

Every person wants independence; wants security; wants ananda and wants peace. Therefore peace, security; fulfillment; these are the destinations of everyone.

God alone is ever secure. Anything finite is bound by time and space; anything bound by time and space is subject to fluctuations and destruction; even the stars cannot escape destruction; they might have a very long life; but you ask the astronomers; they will say that even the Sun will collapse but in a few billion years!; therefore we are saved. But remember, the stars explode which is known as nova; and supernova; which indicates that anything finite is insecure; seeking security from finite thing is the most unintelligent approach; Even stars die eventually. Anything finite is insecure. So true security is available only in the infinite called bhagawan. So, it has a symbol in the form of Rama and Krishna etc. Infinite is called Bhagawan in Religion. Moksha and Bhagawan are synonymous.

If your mind is fixed on Me as the ultimate destination and you work, it is known as devotion. This condition one.

When you fulfill an earthly goal you get fulfillment but you start on another goal; as such they are only intermediary goals. Poornatvam alone gives you complete fulfillment.

Yoga in shloka means all the required sadhanas depending on my level. Thus all children cannot be admitted into the same class; depending upon the level of the student; he is admitted in the first standard or sixth standard etc. Therefore depending upon my need, I have to take to karma, or upasana, or sravanam; whatever is required and practice those relevant sadhanas **or put individual effort with the grace of God**. A devotee should not challenge God. Take refuge in God. Citing an example of a long train being hauled by two engines one in the front and another in the back. Spirituality is similarly

an uphill climb and while you can be engine that is pulling you still need God's push. This God's push is bhakti.

Thus conditions imposed by Sri Krishna are:

- Keep God as destination.
- Do what you should or exert self-effort.
- Seek grace of God.

With these three you will attain Me. The secret of knowing Me is same as attaining Me.

Shloka # 2:

Exhaustively I shall set forth that knowledge together with its realization; once it is grasped, nothing more will remain to be known. 7.2

Exhaustively I shall set forth that knowledge together with its realization; once it is grasped, nothing more will remain to be known.

Sri Krishna continues with the introduction. In shloka # 1, he said you would get divine knowledge or saguna and nirguna Ishwara Gyanam.

Saguna Ishwara Gyanam is Dvaita Gyanam.

Nirguna Ishwara Gyanam is Vigyanam or advaita.

A secret: When a person is at Saguna Ishwara Gyanam, there is a difference between God and the individual.

At nirguna Ishwara Gyanam level the difference between God and individual is removed.

Citing example of wave and ocean, as long as you look at the wave and ocean; from the name and form standpoint; they are different; names are different; one is called wave; other is called ocean; forms are also different; wave has got a small wavy form; whereas ocean has got an ocean of vast magnitude; So when you observe at the name and form level you see the

difference; but when you go to the essential nature of both; wave is essentially water; ocean is essentially water; or satchidananda; and you find that wave and water are no more distinct. Similarly saguna gyanam means bheda gyanam; nirguna Gyanam means abheda gyanam. Bheda means difference between God and Jiva; and abhedananda means oneness; thus Gyanam is equal to bheda gyanam.

Sri Krishna says I will give you this knowledge thoroughly.

What is the benefit of this knowledge? Having gained this knowledge you have nothing more to know. All your intellectual questions are resolved. Samsara is experienced at three levels:

1. At the gross body level people for whom samsara is only at the physical level; they talk about their diseases; they talk about their old age; they talk about their death; their samsara is at the grossest body level.
2. At the emotional level they are not bothered about the physical condition; but they feel the emotional needs of life more; they say, I am very fine; my health is very good; my children take care of me very well; but they do not spend time with me; they do not even know whether I am alive or not.
3. At the intellectual level, such as quest of a scientist. He is intellectual. They have questions, regarding the creation; when did the creation come; when did the first human being come; how did life start; what is the individual; what is consciousness; etc.

Vedanta solves all three levels of fulfillment. it gives you emotional fulfillment; it gives you even intellectual fulfillment; you find all the fundamental questions regarding Jiva, Jagat and Ishvara get resolved.

Take away:

1. When you choose action you are also responsible for the results.
2. Hence the saying:

Watch your thoughts, it will become your words and actions;

Watch your words and actions; they become your habits;

Watch your habits, they become your character;

Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

3. By directing your thoughts in the present, you are ultimately determining your destiny.

Everything is decided by thought.

4. The law of karma says that the present is the result of the past; if that is true, the future is the result of the present action that you choose to do. You are responsible for your life.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 31

Greetings All,

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, Shloka # 2:

Of that, of the former, this one is verily is the embodied self. Different from this self made up of intellect (vignanamaya) is another self within., formed of bliss (anandamaya). By this, that is filled (by anandamaya the vignanamaya is full). It also has the shape of man. According to the human form of that, is the human form of this. Of it, joy (priya) is the right side, rejoicing (moda) is the left side, and bliss (pramoda) is the trunk. Brahman is the tail support. There is this vaidika verse about it.

Swamiji said we are in the middle of anuvakaha # 5 of Brahmanandavalli. We have gone from vignanamaya to anandamaya. Vignanamaya has now become a kosha. The moment you understand it is a kosha or anatma it means anatma is born out of atma. Vignanamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Vignanamaya is dissolved in anandamaya.

What is the shape of anandamaya? It is in the container called Vignanamaya, which has the shape of manushya. Thus, anandamaya also is in the shape of the manushya. Anandamaya does not have a shape of its own as such it borrows its shape from the container. Thus of all the Koshas only annamaya has its own shape, all others borrow from annamaya.

Now coming to the factors, anandamaya atma's head is priyam. Priyam means happiness. It's right hand side is Moda. Moda means more happiness. Its left hand side is Pramoda. Pramoda means highest happiness.

How to understand these three terms of happiness being used? It is like happy, happier and happiest. Citing an example: You go to a restaurant and see gulabjamun on menu. You like gulabjamun. The pleasure of seeing gulabjamun is priyam, also known as Ishta darshanaja sukham.

Now you order the gulabjamun and it is brought to you. This owning of object of desire is known as Moda or Ishta grahanaja sukham. Then, when you finally taste the gulabjamun you obtain Pramoda or Ishta anubhavajam sukham. This is highest pleasure when the object of desire and one who desires it, become one. Swamiji says, the food and you become one, reflecting advaita. All these three experiential pleasures are anandamaya. The word maya means it is subject to change. Thus all conditional pleasures are anandamaya. Now the Upanishad says, anandamaya is not atma.

In case of anandamaya there are only three factors instead of the normal five. In fact anandamaya is also not the real atma. The real atma is anandaha. The suffix maya is not added to it. Ananda is the non-fluctuating pleasure, the real atma. It is not a changing, experiential pleasure. Once I know ananda is atma then anandamaya also becomes a kosha. Thus all experiential pleasures are anatma. They are subject to arrival and departure. Thus, they have nama and roopa as well. This anandamaya is a mithya. It is also known as kosha ananda.

Then, what is atma-ananda? It is not an object of experience. It has to be understood as myself. Not only is it myself, it has the support of (pucha) in Brahman. Really speaking the Brahman is only an apparent support rather than a real one. Citing an example, Swamiji says, it is like saying outer space is the support of inner space in a pot. Really speaking outer and inner space is one and the same. It is only a superficial difference.

How do we know that Brahman seemingly supports that atmananda? In beginning of this chapter Brahman was defined as Satyam, Gyanam and Anantam. From this Brahman the creation comes into being. Brahman and Atma are identical.

What is the difference between anandamaya kosha and atmananda?

Anandamaya is an object while atmanada is the subject.

Koshanada is subject to change while atmananda is my self with no arrival or departure.

How can I experience atmanada? Whatever I experience is koshanada. "I" am the experiencer, not the experience.

How can I see my own original eye?

I can never see my own original eye. Even in a mirror we see only the reflected eye. Reflected eye is visible, while original eye is not. Reflected eye can come and go with the mirror while original eye does not change. Even the mirrors reflective quality can change the reflection. The original eye has no arrival or departure.

If original eye cannot be seen and I can see only the reflected eye; if so, what is the proof of the original eye?

The very experience of the reflected eye is proof of the original eye. Every experiential experience is proof of atmananda. So, who am I? I am Satyam, Gyanam, Anantam and Anandaha.

Now the Rig mantra comes in.

Ch 2, anuvakaha # 6,shloka #1:

If he knows Brahman as non-existent, he becomes himself non-existent. If he knows Brahman as existent, then (they) the world knows him to be existent. Of the former (anandamaya kosa), the Self is the essence.

The Rig mantra talks about a serious problem faced by Vedantic students. The student understands annamaya, pranamaya, manomaya, vignanamaya, anandamaya and now seeks the experience of atmananda as well. In general we all wish to seek to experience the objects we come in contact with.

While Atmananda is eternal, I am seeking for the arrival of the eternal atmananda. How can I look for experience of

eternal atmananda? Even in Nirvikalpa Samadhi, ananda goes away when you come out of Samadhi and you feel pain. Highest mystic pleasure is really koshananda. Atmananda, you never experience. Students are not able to accept this fact. This is a universal problem. We conceptualize everything. Our study of Vedanta is often an intellectual exercise.

Nastika is one who says Brahmananda is not a subject of experience. Suppose a person negates Brahmananda, it is equivalent to negating himself. Because, Brahmananda is Yourself. Most contradictory statement is, "I am not existent". Therefore, never negate existence of Brahman. Accept Brahmananda is existence even though it can't be experienced. There is only one thing in creation that is without objectification. It is, "I am". He himself is existence.

There is another meaning to this shloka as well. Suppose a man says Brahman is not existent, Shankaracharya says, such a person is adharmic. It is adharmic because he can't have Brahmgyanam as a goal in his life. For such a person all shastras are redundant. The very purpose of dharma shastras is to prepare one for Brahma gyanam.

In a society that values only money and entertainment, god does not exist. Such a society has no dharmic values. Such a society is exclusively focused on artha and kama.

In our culture artha and kama are perfectly acceptable until one reaches his middle age at around 40 or 50 years of age. After that one's goal is pursuit of god.

Materialists thus become asurah's. Asu means organs and raha means protector. One who protects his organs for long life. Asuraha is also called Asata.

On the other hand if one believes in Brahman, then Chitta shuddhi and Gyanam become important. He is a spiritual person. He is called a Suraha. Chapter 16 of the Gita discusses

asura's and sura's.

If a family is only into material pleasures then it can become separated very easily through divorces, remarriages and inter-racial marriages. In India, family was strong although the trend is changing. In all stages of life family is required when the goal is dharma and moksha. So, accept Brahman. One day you will understand that Brahman is " I am".

Now the Yajurveda Upanishad has completed Pancha Kosha. This is pancha kosha viveka.

In the beginning three questions were raised. They were:

- 1) What is Brahman?
- 2) How to know Brahman?
- 3) What do you mean by knowing the greatest?

We have discussed what is Brahman and how to know Brahman. Now we move to discussing the third question.

However, before answering the third question, a student interrupts with a question. Questions related to a topic being taught are known as Anu-Prashna. We will discuss this first

Baghawat Geeta, Class 99: Chapter 6 Summary

Greetings All,

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda summarized chapter six. It deals with one of the most important topics of spirituality, namely meditation. This

chapter is also very important as in the entire body of scriptures it is the only one that has dealt with meditation so extensively. Meditation has two roles to play.

- Meditation to be performed before Vedantic Sravanam. This is an upasana to prepare the mind for Sravanam. It includes a variety of saguna ishvara dhyanam. This upasana will lead to self-knowledge through Guru Upadesha.

Suppose a person has not performed this preparatory upasana? His mind is not considered qualified enough to receive the teaching, when he performs sravanam. In such a person while he will receive the knowledge, it will not assimilate within him. It will be like oil and water, each standing separately. What that person knows and what he is will be different. If it is an unprepared mind gyana-nishta does not occur. For such cases Nidhi dhyasanam or Vedantic meditation is a compulsory requirement.

- Nidhidhyasanam is nirguna ishvara dhyanam. It is also known as atma dhyanam. Let us remember that Upasana is saguna ishvara dhyanam.

In Vedantic meditation; **a person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one;** and thus Vedantic meditation does not produce knowledge but Vedantic meditation helps in the assimilation of knowledge; it is not the cause of Gyanam; but it is cause of Gyana nishta.

Thus we can summarize the process as follows:

Upasana: Is for obtaining gyana योग्याता.

Gyanam: Is to obtain Gyanam.

Nidhidhyasanam : Is to obtain Gyana Nishta.

The word dhyana is used in all three instances, such as upasana dhyanam.

What is the topic of chapter six? Is it upasana or nidhidhyasana dhyanam? Chapter six is focused only on Vedantic meditation or Nidhidhyasana dhyanam. Why does Sri Krishna introduce Vedantic meditation here?

Because, Sri Krishna feels, Arjuna has already done sravanam in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 so this chapter is for assimilation of the teaching.

There are six parts to chapter six. They are:

- Bahiranga sadhanani, general disciplines to be followed daily.
- Antaranga sadhanani: Specific disciplines to be followed just before meditation.
- Dhyana Swaroopam: Actual process of meditation.
- Dhyana Phalam.
- Dhyana Pratibhanda Pariharau; remedies to obstacles to meditation.
- Yoga Bhrashta: Sri Krishna answers a pessimistic question of Arjuna.

Detailing each one of them:

- Bahiranga sadhanani: (Shloka 1-9, 16 and 17).

The general disciplines to be followed daily include: a) Practice karma yoga; it is very important. A karmi cannot practice meditation.

Sri Krishna says a karma yogi is one who is able to accept all the actions that he has to do in life without grumbling. One source of mental disturbance is doing things without loving that job; when I keep on doing things; without having a love for that; there is a split in my personality; mind does not

want to do it; body has to do it; therefore there is a stress and strain.

Karma Yogi accepts and performs all actions without love or hate for the action.

He performs all actions with Ishwararpana budhi. He also accepts all fruits with Prasada Bhavana. Thus he has a stress free mind. It is a mind without conflict. It is a mind of samatvam. In such a mind there is no violent reaction. Therefore Karma yoga is a must for a dhyana yogi. Sri Krishna says such a man is as good as a Sanyasi.

Have self-confidence. Never look down upon yourself. Even if you feel you don't have any qualifications, remember that you are a part of the divine. If you feel diffident, surrender to God. God, Guru and Shastra will help you.

Do not be fatalistic; fatalism is un-vedantic. We think karma theory is fatalism; this is the biggest misconception. Nowhere in the Vedas, fatalism is talked about; it always says, take charge of your life.

1. Practice self-control. When you use an instrument you should have control. Sri Krishna says God has given us this body with all the indriyas. All of them will help, if you control them. Make sure that they do not control you.
2. Practice moderation in everything. Don't indulge too much. Sense pleasures are allowed but don't over do it. Check yourself once in a while by saying "no" to something you like. If there is a protest it means it is getting hold of you.
3. Antaranga sadhanani: (shlokas 10-15). These are specific disciplines to be practiced before a meditation. Eight disciplines are mentioned. They are:
 1. Place of meditation should be clean, secluded and spiritual.

2. Time should be satvik. Early morning or evening hours are acceptable. The time of meditation should not be one, when you are rajasic or tamasic.
3. Proper seat to sit upon. Shastras don't recommend sitting on the floor.
4. Condition of body. It should be straight but not stiff.
5. Condition of sense organs. They should be withdrawn. Eyes partially closed focusing on nose or between eyebrows.
6. Breathing should be smooth and slow. Breath and mind are connected.
7. Condition of mind, one should become a mental Sanyasi for the duration of meditation. Drop all relationships such as husband, wife, child, son etc. Drop all roles. Just be a bhakta or shishya during meditation.
8. Condition of intellect or budhi: I must be convinced of the value of meditation. I must have conviction in meditation. I must be convinced that it will transform my personality.

These are the eight factors to be taken care of before meditation.

Dhyana Swaroopam: Shlokas 18-32. Dhyana swaroopam is the process of meditation. Mind dwelling upon a chosen object is meditation; which means the mind is there in meditation; mind is functioning in meditation; and mind entertains thoughts in meditation; therefore never think meditation is silencing the mind. Vedantic meditation is not silencing the mind; it is not stopping the mind; it is not curbing the mind; it is not restraining the mind; but it is directing the mind; which means thoughts are there; but the thoughts are dealing with the subject matter that I chose. And that subject matter is whatever I have learned from the scriptures. And what have I learned? That the body is not the real I; it is an incidental

instrument which will be there for a few years and will disappear; similarly sense organs, similarly the mind; they are all instruments that I handle, my higher nature is the very chaitanyam; the consciousness principle, which is aware of all of them.

This topic is discussed extensively in Chapter 2, shlokas 12-25 in the Gita. All the knowledge learned from this Sravanam is the recording process. Meditation is the retaining and reliving the teaching. Thus:

Dharana is focus.

Dhyanam is retaining the focus.

Samadhi is becoming absorbed in the subject. Here will is not required.

Sri Krishna gives example of a protected flame to describe the process.

Now seven definitions of Samadhi are provided. They are:

1. Samadhi is that stage, in which chitta uparamanam, mind subsides; mind is absorbed in itself;
2. Atma darshanam; the one's mind is absorbed in the atma darshanam; owning up one's own higher nature;
3. Atyantika sukham, I see my own higher nature.
4. Tatva nishta, is being established in one's higher nature.
5. Atyantika labha, it is a stage in which one has attained highest in life;
6. Atyantika dukkha Nivrittihi; it is stage in which one has withdrawn from and thus one is free from all the sorrows.
7. dukkha samyoga viyogah; a stage in which a person is no more identified with the gains of anatma.

Sri Krishna then discussed Gyana phalam. This meditation

transforms a person. The way I look at the world changes. The world does not change; my way of looking at it changes. One obtains freedom from ragah and dvesha. I do not get attached nor do I hate anything. I may have preferences but no attachments. As I said preferences are different from ragah-dveshah. I would prefer to have a cup of coffee is one thing; I need a cup of coffee is quite different. If you say I prefer; it is available, welcome and good; or else, OK. But when I say I need it means if that is not available; I become non-functional.

One obtains samadarshanam. One obtains equanimity. One obtains jivan mukti.

Shlokas 33-36 discusses obstacles to meditation. The specific obstacle of Vikshepa or restless mind is discussed. Two remedies are suggested for Vikshepa. First is Vairagya and second is abhyasa. Vairagya reduces raga and dvesha. **Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker. We don't have any external enemies at all.** It is raga dvesha that disturbs us. It is our loves and hates that disturb us. I have provided this capacity to disturb me to Raga and dvesha. Vairagyam means reducing the ragah-dveshah slavery.

Abhyasa means practice. So practice of the meditation; here practice makes a man perfect; sheer abhyasa will improve the meditation.

The topic of meditation is now over. Arjuna , now asks a question.

Shlokas 37-45 is a discussion of this question.

“Suppose I fail in my spiritual journey, what will happen to me?” is Arjuna's question to Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna answers who ever come to spirituality will gain knowledge and then moksha. Even if he does not obtain moksha

he will still obtain swarga. After swarga he will obtain a very conducive birth and continue his spiritual journey taking up from where he left off in previous birth. So don't be pessimistic Arjuna; enjoy the spiritual journey.

Shlokas 47 and 48 are the concluding verses of the chapter. They are glorification of Vedantic meditation. Of all meditators the Vedantic meditator is closest to liberation, says Sri Krishna.

This chapter is called dhyana yogah; or atma samyama yoga, because the central theme is directing the mind towards Vedantic teaching.

Take away:

1. Raga dvesha is the single most important internal enemy of a spiritual seeker.
2. Nidhidhyasanam: A person dwells upon the teaching received during sravanam; and this dwelling is done for a length of time; so that the knowledge enters my mind; enters my sub-conscious personality. In short, it irrigates my whole personality so that I and the knowledge have become one

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 98: Chapter 6, Verses 43 to 47

Shloka # 43:

ॐ कर्मणो भवतु धर्मो वाचं धेनुमुपासीत ॥
ॐ कर्मणो भवतु धर्मो वाचं धेनुमुपासीत ॥6.43॥

There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, in spite of Sri Krishna's encouragement Arjuna became pessimistic with respect to his own spiritual journey. He understood that this journey requires knowledge and purification of the mind. He feels he cannot master his own mind. Mind is after all the most difficult thing to master. That is why victory over mind is considered the greatest victory. Sri Krishna says it is a pre-requisite for gyanam. Arjuna feels he will never be able to obtain it, certainly not in this lifetime. Therefore, he has already started thinking of his preparations for the next life. It is like children who take an exam and know they have not done well, thinking of taking the exam again.

Yogabhrashta is spiritual failure. Sri Krishna has started answering Arjuna's question in shlokas 40 through 45. He points out that a person on this path has no fall at all. Shankaracharya says, once spiritual teaching is received, it cannot be destroyed. There, however, maybe a stage of temporary stagnation. It is like the glowing ember covered by ashes, even with a little fanning the fire comes back. So also such a seekers' spiritual vasanas come back to life. He picks up the thread in his next life. Spiritual failure of this janma becomes spiritual genius in next janma.

How does this spiritual inclination express itself? Where ever and whenever spirituality is practiced in any form, he has an automatic interest in it. He is helplessly drawn to it. Parents often discourage a child's inclination in this area. They don't understand that child's attraction is due to his or her vasanas. Sri Aurobindo is a good example.

They say of Aurobindo that his parents did not want him to be in Indian culture at all; they liked the western culture; therefore he was given western education and sent to England; and to a materialistic atmosphere. There he comes in contact with people who are working for the freedom of India and he gets associated with those people, and he begins to feel and if I am working for the freedom of my motherland, should I not know about India, what is its culture, what is its history; philosophy and he gradually gets sucked into it and he comes to freedom struggle and goes to Pondicherry and becomes a yogi.

Therefore, if the spiritual fire is there; nobody can stop; and if the spiritual fire is not there; whatever you do it will not work.

People who don't have the spiritual fire within them, should be allowed to follow their materialistic tendencies. Encourage them to worship god. **Spiritual maturity is an evolution, not a revolution.**

Due to his vasanas, a yogabhrashta, starts his interest in spirituality as a casual (hobby) student. But his fire catches on later. Spiritual fires are of three types: karpura buddhi (camphor), Kari buddhi (coal) and vazhathandu buddhi (banana trunk).

He becomes a camphor student. He transcends shabda brahma or karma kanda. Karma kanda is finite result. He transcends anitya phalam and obtains nithya phalam or moksha.

Shloka # 45:

योगिनोऽस्युपैतन्मोक्षं कुरुते
योगिनोऽस्युपैतन्मोक्षं कुरुते 6.45

The Yogin who strives hard and who has been perfected in the course of many lives attains the supreme goal, all his sins having been washed away.

What happens to Yogabhrashta in the present life (as a spiritual genius)? How does he feel the advantage of his vasanas? Sri Krishna says, he is free from impurities; he has a shudha antahakarana or mental purity.

How does mental purity express itself?

In chapter # 5, in the beginning, this topic is discussed. **His natural inclination towards spirituality shows his mental purity.**

How did he get it? Is God partial to him? This advantage he enjoys because he has obtained it from his many, many past lives. He has clarity about life's purpose. He is not hoodwinked by materialistic goals.

Therefore, being an evolved person, he requires very limited effort in this life. His spiritual journey is a most enjoyable one. He effortlessly reaches his destination of moksha. He enjoys following Shruti-viddhi.

Shloka #46:

योगिनोऽस्युपैतन्मोक्षं कुरुते
योगिनोऽस्युपैतन्मोक्षं कुरुते 6.46

The Yogin is superior to the performance of austerities; he is deemed superior even to the knower of the Vedas; he excels those who do works. Therefore, O Arjuna! be a Yogin.

With the previous shloka Sri Krishna's answers to Arjunas's question is complete. Arjuna need not be pessimistic. Just listening to Gita gets him swarga. The question is raised, if

Almost same idea as in shloka # 46 is communicated. The one who meditates upon Me, Atma or God as Atma, with shraddha, he will become a jivan mukta. His mind remains absorbed in Me in total concentration.

He is the greatest sadhaka among Yogi's. This is my teaching. This concludes Ch # 6 on Dhyanam. The chapter is also known as Atma Samyama chapter or one on control of mind.

Take away:

1. Spiritual maturity is an evolution, not a revolution.
2. A natural inclination towards spirituality shows one's mental purity.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 30

Greetings All,

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 2:

Different from that made up of mind (manas) is another inner soul made up of intelligence (Vignana) and by that this (manomaya-self) is filled. It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of the previous, is the human shape of this one. Faith (sraddha) is its head, righteousness

(Rtam) its right side, Truth (satyam) its left side, Yoga is the trunk and total intellect (mahah) is the tail and support. There is this following Vaidika verse about it.

We are now in anuvakaha # 4 of Brahmanadavalli. The Upanishad has entered Vignanamaya kosha. Initially it (manomaya) is still looked as atma, later as anatma. Once we accept vignanamaya as atma manomaya then becomes its container or deha while Vignanamaya is the dehi.

Knowledge (vignanamaya) does not have a shape. It assumes shape of manomaya or assumes manushya akara.

Once we accept manushya akara then the five factors come into play and they are the head, the right side, the left side, the central part and the support.

The knower principle Vignanamaya is the cause of deliberate action. A man first knows something's, then he chooses one of them and he works towards accomplishing it. One cannot take an unknown thing as a goal. This is a process we perform lifelong. Pramatha, the knower becomes Karta. Shradha, faith in Vedas, guides him to spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge requires shastra pramanam. If you spend a lot of time and effort on the spiritual it requires knowledge of religion. This religion or spirituality requires shastra pramanam. This comes only from shradha in religion/spirituality.

Heaven or hell has no scientific proof. There is no proof of Pitru puja reaching ancestors. Concepts of punyam, papam, and moksha are all only coming from shastra pramanam.

Mind, different from brain, is not accepted by science. End of brain is not end of mind. Mind is sukshmam, while brain is sthulam, per shastras. However, there is no proof of this.

Therefore, one who does not have an appropriate attitude towards religion cannot accept all these facts. Thus spiritual

life requires gyanam and faith in validity of scriptures.

Science too believes in blind faith. They feel sense organs are the only valid way to know sense objects. We, however, believe in non-worldly knowledge of shastras.

Science believes in sense organs because it works. For supra worldly wisdom, belief in shastra works.

We are not insisting you have shradha. Without faith in the eye, you cannot walk even a single step. This faith helps me.

Shradha is head. Ritum is right hand. Sensory perceptions must be understood correctly. As an example: Senses report earth is stationary while the reality is that earth is rotating at a high speed. It is not terra firma. The eyes show stars as small while the reality is that they are several times larger than earth. So, illusion is possible. So, interpretation is required. Scriptural illusion too must be corrected. Mananam after sravanam is performed to correct this illusion. Ritu is right side.

Satyam is utara paksha. Knowledge is not enough. As per Karma kanda knowledge is useful only when implemented.

Therefore, knowledge is incomplete without practice. **Practice of Vedic teaching is Satyam.**

Atma is the central part is known as Yogaha. Yoga means leading a focused life style. The focus should be on life's end goal or moksha. First get gyana yogyata then get gyanam.

Don't lose track of goal. Once in a while perform a check on your course to see if it needs correction. Most people get lost in the complexity of samsara. That is why 41 samskaras are prescribed to be performed by the Vedas. From birth, marriage, deaths etc. are all rituals that remind you of your goal. This constant awareness is Yogaha.

Support is mahaha or samashti Vignanamaya or Hiranyagarbha.

Every action has to be supported by God. Sri Krishna says, every organ functions only when supported by the Devata of the organ. Hiranyagarbha is the overarching Devata.

Five factors are now mentioned for Vignanamaya. There is now the Rig mantra glorifying Vignanamaya.

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, shloka # 1 and part of Shloka # 2:

Knowledge performs the sacrifices and it is the real agent of all the physical activities. All the "gods" worship Knowledge as Brahman, the eldest. If a man knows Brahman as knowledge and if he does not swerve from it, he attains all desires and comes to abandon all the sins of the body.

We are entering anuvakaha # 5 with the Rig mantra.

This Vignanamaya atma is the karta. This knowing, judging, fixing capacity called "I" becomes aware of a program. Then Viveka chooses and directs me to the program. Hence Vignanamaya is important. Animals don't have this capacity. It makes humans different from all beings. Vignanamaya atma, the karta atma, alone performs all vaidic upsanas (karmas). Once scriptures go out adrishya pradhana karmas go religion also goes. This happens in inter-caste marriages, when religion and tradition are thrown out of the door. No gothra is required for such a marriage. When marriage is dharma moksha pradhana, couple has a different approach to marriage.

Vignanamaya karma also performs all non-scriptural activities like working for earning etc. Therefore, Vignanamaya is laukika Vaidika (common religion). So, meditate upon this vignanamaya atma. Even Gods meditate on this atma. This knowledgeable one performs the actions. How do they meditate? They meditate on Samashti Hiranyagarbha, the first-born Vignanamaya.

Hiranyagarbha is responsible for rest of creation. Hiranyagarbha is Brahman and he comes out of the navel of

Ishwara. Vyashti-Samashti Upsana is to be performed.

The benefits of this upasana are:

- Sakama: Suppose a person performs meditation on Vignanamaya Samashti aikyam through out his life then he will drop all papams born out of individuality, even as he drops his body. Gita, in chapter # 8, says **whatever you constantly think of at time of death, you reach that after death.** This upasana drops all papa karmas. He gets only punyam. He gets Brahma Loka. He. However, cannot get moksha, as he still needs gyanam for that.
- Nishkama karma: Chitta shudhi, expansion of mind and focus of mind all improve. Individuality is dropped in meditation. It dilutes the ego by visualizing totality. If I prepare long enough I will be prepared for anandamaya atma, the next step.

What is advantage of Brahma Loka? This loka has all possible material pleasures one can think of. The environment, objects and instruments are all ideal. The Rig mantra is complete with this.

The Yajur mantra takes over now.

Here person values knowledge. People who were involved in India's freedom struggles, their Vignanamaya atma was strong. This is Vignanamaya abhimana topic. Now we are entering next sheath of ananda maya or Karana shariram.

Ch 2, Anuvakhaha 5, Shloka # 2:

Of that, of the former, this one is verily is the embodied self. Different from this self made up of intellect (vignanamaya) is another self within., formed of bliss (anandamaya). By this, that is filled (by anandamaya the vignanamaya is full). It also has the shape of man. According to the human form of that, is the human form of this. Of it,

joy (priya) is the right side, rejoicing (moda) is the left side, and bliss (pramoda) is the trunk. Brahman is the tail support. There is this vaidika verse about it.

We are entering the subtler layer. Really speaking Vignanamaya is not the atma. Atma is different. Atma is now anandamaya. It is the real atma. Where is it located?

It is within vignanamaya. With this vignanamaya becomes anatma or a kosha. Every thing including anatma is born out of atma. Vignanamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Vignanamaya is dissolved in anandamaya. Microcosm is dissolved in macro cosm. Macrocosm also gets resolved.

Take away

1. Gita, in chapter # 8, says whatever you constantly think of at time of death, you reach that after death.
2. Practice of Vedic teaching is Satyam.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 97:

Chapter 6, Verses 37 to 43

Greetings All,

Shloka # 37:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
यदा कुरुते ध्याता यदा कुरुते योगिनः
यदा कुरुते ध्याता यदा कुरुते योगिनः ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय 6.37

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?

Continuing his teaching of the Gita, Swami Paramarthananda said, Sri Krishna has comprehensively discussed all aspects of Vedantic meditation, which has to be practiced after a thorough study of Vedantic scriptures. Nowhere else is meditation discussed in such great detail. For this reason alone Chapter 6 is an important chapter. He has also talked about obstacles to meditation including mental distraction and its remedy. To succeed in meditation one has to develop Vairagyam or detachment. Without Vairagyam meditation is not possible. Without meditation an assimilation of teaching does not take place. Without assimilation of teaching one cannot obtain mukti. Hence Vairagyam is very important, per scriptures. Now Arjuna seeing himself wonders if he can ever get Vairagyam. He becomes pessimistic about obtaining moksha in this life. Swamiji says this is a universal problem. Every seeker becomes pessimistic, at some point or other, wondering, "Can I ever obtain moksha in this life?" **Pessimism is a common obstacle for every seeker.**

Arjuna has identified with majority of people and thus presents his problem. Shlokas 37, 38 and 39 respectively deal with Arjuna's pessimism. After shloka # 37, Arjuna asks what

destroy this doubt of mine, because if I am going to be a trishanku, at least I can try to do some pooja, even though moksha may not come, at least some punyam may come.

Why am I asking you? There can be no other person who can destroy this doubt. Why so? Whether a man gets moksha or not can be determined only after a new birth. What will happen to us in the next janma; we do not know; why, even in this janma we do not know what will happen next year; or tomorrow itself. So bhagavan alone is karma phala dhata; therefore he alone is fit

enough to answer this question and therefore what type of janma, such a person will get later. And therefore you should answer. So, thus, in these three verses

Arjuna's pessimistic question has been given. Now Sri Krishna is going to give an optimistic answer; we will read happily.

Shloka # 40:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय
अर्जुन उवाच ॥ ननु भगवन्मया कृतं
कर्म त्वत्पुत्रस्यैव हि ॥ ६.४० ॥

Sri Krishma said:

Arjuna! neither in this world nor in the world to be does he come to ruin; for no evil betides the doer of good, My son!

First of all, consoling Arjuna, Sri Krishna says, "don't worry". Then he elaborates. Suppose a man comes to gyana yoga, the Vedanta sravanam alone gives him two benefits:

- Mukhya phalam, primary benefit and
- Avantara phalam, secondary benefit or by-product

Explaining the two phalams, when you plant a mango tree; the primary benefit you expect is mango fruit; but there are so many by-products, you get the shade of the tree; and the

temperature will be lesser; the roots of the tree retain some water; and therefore in the surrounding area, there is more coolness.

Mukhya phalam: If a person has all required qualifications, he will get gyanam and punyam. If he does not have sufficient qualifications, he will just get the secondary phalam of punyam alone. **In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita , without understanding it, it produces punyam.** It is similar to sahasra nama japa. Punyam here means one gets swargam.

Oh Partha: for a Gyana margi, a person who has come to shastra sravanam, there is no downfall at all either in this janma or after death; there is no question of spiritual fall. What is the reason? Because such a person happens to be mangala-karta, he is doing a noble action, even listening to Gita is a mangala karma, which

Sri Krishna called in the fourth chapter, as Gyana yagna.

Even though no homa kunda is involved; even though no oblations are involved; this Gyana yagna will give as much punyam as any other vaidika karma; and that punyam is the minimum result that one will get. But if he has got qualification, he would not require this punyam; because Gyanam itself is going to give him moksha; therefore kalyana krit is equal to mangala karta.

Such a person will never have a downfall.

Shloka # 41:

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ॥
ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ॥ ६.४१ ॥

Reaching the spheres of the meritorious, and after sojourning there long lasting years, the one who has slipped from Yoga is born in a home of pure and prosperous householders.

This shloka discusses what happens to such a seeker, a Yoga Bhrashta, after death. Such a person, who has accrued punyam by listening to scriptures, obtains as secondary benefit, swarga.

Madhusudhana Saraswathy Swami quotes a verse and he says that one minute of Vedanta sravanam is equal to 100 of yagas and it is equal to giving the danam of the entire earth; not one acre or two acre; the entire earth is gifted; all those punyams will come by Vedanta sravanam ; the idea is that this itself is a very sacred karma.

He will remain in swarga for many years. He will enjoy pleasures as well. Then God gives him an appropriate birth to continue his spiritual journey.

He will be born in a prosperous and cultured family. **Only in such a family can one pursue spirituality. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.**

Suppose one is born in a family with prosperity but without culture? Sri Krishna says, this will not help him. Money without culture is dangerous; because all the money will be used on purely materialistic pursuits such as clubs, alcohol etc. Such a person performs no pooja, has no religion, has nothing; that is in fact worse than being born poor.

In the new life he will use all his prosperity for spiritual growth. He will perform more of nishkama karma; he can do more of service because dharma is there in the mind; money is there; when dharma and artha come together, he will use all the money for noble activities; nishkama karma will be more and all those karmas will give him more purity and sadhana chatushtaya sampathi. In the purva janma he failed because of his incomplete qualifications; now all those qualifications will be completed in the next janma and he will be ready for Gyanam.

Now, Sri Krishna gives a second possibility although it is a

rare one.

Shloka # 42:

योगीनामो गणेशो ज्ञानिनामो गणेशो
गणेशो ज्ञानिनामो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो 6.42

Or , he is born in a family of wise yogins. This sort of birth , however, is far rarer in the world.

He is born to a Gyani, although they may not be in prosperity. Not born in prosperity here means they lead a very simple life. **When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse.**

It will be considered as an ideal thing for following tapas. You do not have to specially practice sanyasa; because you have to have something to renounce; therefore I need not work for sanyasa. Being born to Yogi's he need not go in search of a guru as well.

Fewer possessions mean less to worry about.

Thus, such a birth, as child of a gyani, is a rare one. It is rare because Gyanis themselves are rare and a grihasta gyani is rarer still.

The next question was: Will I start my spiritual sadhanas from scratch again or is it a continuation of my knowledge into the next birth?

Sri Krishna says, "You will be born with spiritual knowledge of the previous birth." He is thus a spiritual genius. So, a spiritual genius was probably a Yoga Brashta in his previous birth.

Shloka # 43:

गणेशो ज्ञानिनामो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो
गणेशो ज्ञानिनामो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो गणेशो 6.43

There he acquires memory of the ideas relating to his previous

body, and he labors harder, O Bharata prince! to achieve perfection.

In the new birth, in a prosperous family or Gyani's family, this jiva gets associated with spiritual gains of his previous birth.

Why is it so?

As per shastras, between the two janmas, body is different but not the mind. While body dies, the mind does not. Sukshma shariram does not die.

A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every child comes into this world with his or her own Vasanas. In the early years the vasanas remain dormant but manifest themselves in later years.

How do you know a child is a spiritual genius? From it's inclinations. In Vedanta class's people who attend are of various age groups, young and old. Age is of the body, not the mind. Gyana Vrudha (old) is a mature person. Body is 15 but Gyanam maybe 95 years old.

Take away:

1. Pessimism is a common obstacle for every seeker. Will I ever get moksha in this life?
2. In chapter # 18, Sri Krishna says even if a person listens to Gita without understanding it, it produces punyam.
3. If one is born in poverty, one does not have time for spirituality.
4. When there is Gyanam, poverty is not a curse. Poverty here means leading a simple life.
5. A mother gives birth to a body but not the mind. Every child comes into this world with his or her own vasanas.

With Best Wishes

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 29

Greetings All,

Chapter 2, Anuvaka 3, shloka 2:

Of that former annamaya, this pranamaya is the atman. Different from this pranamaya-self made up of pranas, there is another self constituted of the mind. With that self, made of mind, the pranamaya is full. This is also of the form of man. Its human form is according to that of the former. Of it, Yajus is the head, Rk is right side, Saman is the left side, the scriptural injunction (adesa) is the trunk and the group of hymns of Atharva –Vada is the tail and support. There is the following Vaidika verse about it.

We are in anuvakaha # 3 of Brahmanadavalli. The Upanishad has entered Pancha Kosha Viveka. This viveka is supposed to sensitize the mind. Mind has to become very sensitive. Citing an example: An axe is used to cut a tree; a blade is used to shave your face; the blade is subtler than the axe. A laser is used in eye surgery; it is an even more sensitive instrument. Thus sensitivity of instrument depends on subtlety of operation. Here, for understanding the atma, something inconceivable, the mind has to be very subtle. The subtlety of mind has to develop gradually. Thus, we started from annamaya and went to pranamaya; or from anatomy to physiology.

Physiology is not tangible. Thus, functioning of eye can only be detected by testing it and not by a direct check. Pranamaya is thus subtler than annamaya.

Upanishad has made Pranamaya the Atma now. So we have to dwell on Prana. A Rig mantra was used to tell us this. Every physical body is a bead and through every body the life principle passes through. It is that which makes us alive and is called Sutra upasanam. If one practices this upsana two benefit accrue.

Sakama Upsana: One gets a long life.

Nishkama Upasana: One gets Chitta shudhi, Chitta Ekagrata, Chitta Vishalata. The mind becomes sensitive enough to go to next layer called manomaya.

In shloka # 2 we are also now entering manomaya. Really speaking Pranamaya is not atma. The atma is actually monomaya. Where is manomaya located? It is within pranamaya. With this pranamaya becomes anatma or a kosha. Every thing including anatma is born out of atma. Pranamaya is Karyam or it has nama and roopa. Thus, it is not a substantial entity. It only has a borrowed existence. It is Mithya. As such, it is as good as non-existent. This understanding in us is known as Pravilapanam or dissolution. Mithya is dissolved in satyam. Pranamaya is dissolved in manomaya.

Another important point to note in this meditation is that we are practicing annamaya and samashti annam aikyam. Then we practice pranamaya and samashti prana aikyam. It shows Vyashti and Samashti aikyam at every level. The resolution of microcosmic also results in resolution of the macrocosmic.

Now, we are at manomaya. This manomaya (the content) fills pranamaya kosha (the container). What is shape of manomaya? Manas does not have a shape of its own. It is like water. It assumes the shape of container. It takes shape of pranamaya. Now, pranamaya also has no shape of its own. So annamaya lends

shape to pranamaya. Pranamaya in turn lends shape to manomaya. Thus, manomaya atma has manushya akara. It is a borrowed akara.

Once this is accepted, Manomaya has five factors. Atma is the head as Yajur Veda mantra. Rig Veda mantra is right hand side or south side. Sama Mantra is left hand side. Scriptural injunctions also known as adesha or Vidhi vakya, is the trunk. Atharvana Veda mantra is the tail and thus the support.

Shankaracharya says, Atharvana Veda is meant for health wealth etc. They provide Iha Loka Phalam. Whatever your goal is in life, one has to take care of health. Money, health, mental health's are all important. Before going for adrishta phalam one has to obtain drishta phalam.

Shankaracharya now discusses a specific problem in this shloka. In annamaya its five factors are an intrinsic part of annamaya. In Pranamaya the five factors are also part of pranamaya. However in Manomaya the five factors are Vedas that are external to manomaya. How have outside factors become part of manomaya atma?

Answering his own question, shankaracharya says, Vedas are wisdom in form of thought or manovrithi. Rig mantra is Rig manovrithi. In Vedas, thought is converted to sound and then re-communicated as a thought. Every mantra is Vrithi; it is converted to sound and then thought. Thus Yajur, Rig, Sama are all Vrithi's (thoughts). Therefore Rig mantra is on right side and Sama on left etc. Vrithis are a part of manomaya atma.

Last line of this shloka says with respect to manomaya atma there is a Rig mantra.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 1: Rig mantra.

Whence all speech turns back with the mind without reaching It (The eternal truth or Brahman). He who knows the bliss of eternal truth, the Brahman, fears not at any time. This mind

is the embodied soul of the pranamaya. Of this pranamaya the manomaya is the Self.

Now we are entering anuvakaha # 4, shloka # 1, a Rig mantra. The mantra starts at Yato and ends at Kadachaneti.

Here the upasana is a Vyashti samashti Upsana. The goal is Vyashti samashti aikyam.

Hiranyagarbha (brahman) is total manomaya. This is glorification of Hiranyagarbha. He being Samashti or the total, individual mind cannot conceive of it. Hiranyagarbha is inconceivable to the mind. Vyashti cannot measure Samashti. Hiranyagarbha is embodiment of highest ananda (brahmanada). This ananda is meditated upon. Samashti hiranyagarbha in Vyashti Manomaya is meditated upon.

The benefits of Manomaya meditation are:

1. Sakama: The person will not have any fear at all. Hiranyagarbha gives him highest security in relative terms as possible.
2. Nishkama karma: Gives Chitta shuddhi, Chitta Ekagrata and Chitta Vishalata. Mind becomes sensitive enough to go to the next step.

This manomaya atma is called sharira atma. Annamaya and pranamaya are respectively shariram or the Deha while manomaya is the Dehi.

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 4, Shloka # 2:

Different from that made up of mind (manas) is another inner soul made up of intelligence (Vignana) and by that this (manomaya-self) is filled. It also has the shape of man. According to the human shape of the previous, is the human shape of this one. Faith (sraddha) is its head, righteousness (Rtam) its right side, Truth (satyam) its left side, Yoga is the trunk and total intellect (mahah) is the tail and support.

There is this following Vaidika verse about it.

Here Upanishad is taking us to the next step or layer. Manomaya is not really the atma. The Atma is Vignanamaya atma. Where is this atma located? It is located within manomaya. Thus, now, manomaya has become an anatma.

Manomaya becomes a Karyam. Anatma is always a product. Whatever is a product is only a nama and roopa. Thus, Karyam is only a nama and roopa. Therefore, anatma is called mithya as it depends on something else. **Anatma has only a borrowed existence;** it does not have its own existence. As such it is as good as non-existence. Therefore, manomaya does not exist. This is known as Pravailapanam or the intellectual denial of the existence of manomaya. Manomaya atma is swallowed. Vyashti and Samashti are both resolved in the process.

Vignanamaya also has Manushya akara. It is a borrowed akara from manomaya. Thus Vignanamaya is in a manushya container.

The five factors of Vignanamaya or knowledge are now defined. Knowledge is required for karma. Manas stands for doubts. Thus, the more subtle knowledge destroys doubts.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Baghawat Geeta, Class 96:

Chapter 6, Verses 35 to 37

Greetings All,

Shloka # 34:

मनो हि क्लृप्तं कुरुष्वन्मनोविक्रमं ब्रह्मविदो
मनोविक्रमं कुरुष्वन्मनोविक्रमं कुरुष्वन्मनोविक्रमं॥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

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 योगोऽस्ति कथञ्चन
संयतचित्तश्चैव यो योगोऽस्ति कथञ्चन 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.

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 nissaṅgatvaṁ;

nissaṅgatvē 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

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 28

Greetings All,

Chapter 2, Anuvakaha # 2, Shloka # 2.

Other than that (soul) made up of the essence of food there is an inner soul (sheath) made up of Prana. With it this is filled. This (pranamaya) is of the same form as the previous. Its human form is exactly as human form of the former. Of that, Prana is the head, vyana is the right side, apana is the left side , akasa is the trunk, earth is the tail or the support. About this also there is the following Vaidika verse.

We are in the middle of anuvakaha #2 of chapter # 2 in which panchakosha viveka topic has been started. Annamaya was introduced as the Atma and the body is taken as our Atma. Upon this annamaya (one's body) one has to perform Virat meditation. Through this meditation we recognize that annamaya does not exist separate from annam. **It is very similar to the concept that a wave is not separate from the ocean. We create the separation by attributing reality to the wave.** Once we create this separation in attribute then the birth and growth of the wave makes us happy while its death makes us sad. The wave itself does not have any powers. The power to disturb me (with joy and sorrow) is given by me to the wave. I gave the wave more power than it deserved. **The ocean alone is the reality; it alone is, was and will be.** There is no wave. The more I shift my attention to the ocean the lessor will be my wave abhimana or identification with wave and it cannot upset me. **Once I get the vishwaroopa darshanam of the ocean, then I see only the ocean.** Samashti (macro) upasana reduces Vyashti (Micro) abhimana. Anna upasana reduces annamaya abhimana. After practicing this meditation for a length of time then one moves to the next step.

This process of meditation is like plucking a ripe fruit.

Before ripening it is difficult to pluck a raw fruit; the plucking leaves tears on the tree and the fruit. Wait for it to ripen. So, practice anna-aikya upasana for some time to reduce the abhimana. Effectively you should be ripe enough through meditation to go to the next step. Now we move to the next Kosha known as Pranamaya.

Now, pranamaya becomes the Atma while annamaya becomes a kosha or anatma. Annamaya becomes a Karyam. Anatma is always a product. Whatever is a product is only a nama and roopa. A substance cannot be produced. Law of conservation of energy means energy cannot be produced or destroyed. Thus, Karyam is only a nama and roopa. Therefore, anatma is called mithya as it depends on something else. Non-substantial pot is nama and roopa and it depends upon clay. So also annamaya depends upon annam. **Anatma has only a borrowed existence;** it does not have its own existence. As such it is as good as non-existence. Therefore, pot does not exist. There is only clay and nothing called pot. This is known as Pravailapanam or the intellectual denial of the existence of pot.

Where is pranamaya obtained? It obtains in annamaya kosha. Annamaya is the container while pranamaya is the content. Annamaya is the Deha while pranamaya is the Dehi.

Annamaya container is filled with pranamaya atma. Pranamaya becomes anatma only after one moves to manomaya.

Annamaya is the solid body or manushya akara. Pranamaya is the energy body. Pranamaya does not have an intrinsic shape of its own. It is like water. Water does not have its own shape. Shapeless water assumes shape of the vessel. The container shapes the content. Therefore, pranamaya is also manushya adhara. How long will it retain this shape? As long as the body exists it retains that shape. Upon death Prana will not have purusha akara. Its next shape will depend upon the next body it enters.

How did it get the manushya shape? In keeping with human shape of the annmaya, the container, the content is also shaped.

What are the five factors of pranamaya? The head, the right side, the left side, the trunk and the tail.

Corresponding to the five factors Pranamaya has five features. They are: Prana, apana, vyana, samana and udana. Of these five Prana, the life breath is the most important one as such it corresponds to the head. Vyana is the right side and deals with circulatory system that transports nutrients to the body. Apana is the left side dealing with waste clearing system. Akasha or Samana is the middle or trunk. Samana is the digestive system of the body. Udana is not discussed as it activates only at death and is known as the reversing system. The tail, the lower part of body is Prithvi devata that retains the Prana Vayu in the body. Prithvi is connected to our Prarabhdham. Once our prarabhdhams are complete Prana leaves the body. In Pranamaya also there is a Samashti Prana Upasana. The following Rig mantra deals with this upsana.

Chapter 2, Anuvaka 3, Shloka # 1:

Through Prana, the gods (indriyas) live and so also do men and animal kingdom. Prana is verily the life of beings. Therefore, it is called universal life or life of all. Those who meditate on Brahman as Prana come to live the full span of their life. Prana verily is the life of beings. Therefore, it is called universal life or the life of all.

(Note: As per Swamiji, this shloka # 1 in our book extends to the first line of shloka # 2 in anuvaka # 3, as well. Looks like Swamiji's book are different from ours.)

With this Rig mantra we are entering anuvaka 3. The Rig mantra ends at Tasyaisha Eva Sharira....Purvasya.

Vedas originally did not have punctuations, as they were not a written text. However, with them now in writing, punctuations

have appeared.

Pranamaya is a product of Samashti Prana or Hiranyagarbha or Sutra-Atma. Prana pervades whole universe. When an animal is killed annamaya is merged in samashti annam and pranamaya is merged in Samashti Prana. Samashti Prana is Sthithi Laya Karanam. All animals survive because of Samashti Prana. At death Prana goes out and Vayu does not come in.

Glorification of Prana:

All animals survive only due to blessing of Samashti Prana. Disturbance in Pranic energy can cause disease. Surya Devata is abode of Samashti Prana. Sun's rays are considered Pranic energy. Therefore life of a being is a blessing of Hiranyagarbha. Worship of sun during sandhyavandanam changes our pranic energy. Samashti Prana is called Sarvayushma , the life span of every being.

Now the Upasana is discussed. There is no Vyashti Pranamaya separate from Samashti Pranamaya. It is similar to concept of a wave that is not separate from the ocean. It is only a Nama and Roopa that disappears. Therefore, death is not a tragedy.

There is a Marana Mantra or death mantra usually chanted at time of death. The mantra says, let Virat Prana merge into Samashti Prana and so on. It is like a river merging into the ocean. Death is a scared event of going back home. Abhimana of Vyashti Pranamaya comes down through this meditation. The meditation is called Pranamaya, prana aikya upasana. Samshti Prana is called Prana Brahma. It is an upsana on Vyashti pranamaya.

What are the benefits of this meditation or Phallam?

Benefits of Sakama Upasana are: Whosoever practices this upsana (sandhyavandanam includes it), they get a full life or long life as Prana is favorable to them.

Benefits of Nishkama Upasana are: Chitta shuddhi and Chitta Vishalata. In such a person, respect for life increases. Ahimsa becomes natural to him. Vegetarianism comes naturally to him. Pranamaya abhimana comes down. Abhimana tyaga is a benefit.

Only when you dis-identify from Pranamaya can you go to the next step of manomaya.

Chapter 2, Anuvaka 3, shloka 2:

Of that former annamaya, this pranamaya is the atman. Different from this pranamaya-self made up of pranas, there is another self constituted of the mind. With that self made of mind, the pranamaya is full. This is also of the form of man. Its human form is according to that of the former. Of it, Yajus is the head, Rk is right side, Saman is the left side, the scriptural injunction (adesa) is the trunk and the group of hymns of Atharva –Vada is the tail and support. There is the following Vaidika verse about it.

Until now Pranamaya was atma. Really speaking Pranamaya is also not atma. Atma is something other than Pranamaya. This atma is within Pranamaya and is called Manomaya. With this, now, Pranamaya has become a Kosha or an anatma.

Take Away

1. A wave is not separate from the ocean. We create the separation by attributing reality to the wave.
2. The ocean alone is the reality; it alone is, was and will be.
3. Once I get the vishwaroopa darshanam of the ocean, then I see only the ocean.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Why do some people have this problem and others don't? Shastra says qualifications for studying Vedanta known as Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi have been prescribed. For people who are qualified, mano-nigraha is not prescribed. For those who are not qualified but still study Vedanta, they need to perform Mano-nigraha. Sri Krishna knows Arjuna has this problem hence he prescribes it. Arjuna confesses he has this problem as well.

In Mandukya karika, in the name of mano-nigraha, Vedantic meditation is prescribed, and the karika mentions four obstacles. Sri Krishna does not deal with all the four obstacles here. However, I thought, I will just briefly mention them. They are: layah, vikshepa, kashaya and rasasvada. These are the four obstacles, which stand between my meditation and me.

Explanation of the four types of obstacles is:

1. Layah: Layah means the dullness of the mind or sleepiness of the mind. This is a universal complaint when we sit for meditation. So sleep is a common problem and it is tamas dominant.
2. Vikshepa: Indicates an overactive mind. It makes the mind wander.
3. Kashaya: Mind is non-functional. It is between dull and active. Shock, trauma, separation etc., can stun the mind into this state. Extreme happiness can also cause this state.
4. Rasasvada: Pleasant feeling felt during meditation. It is not atmananda or Brahmananda. It is a condition of joy at quietude. The difference is brahmannanda is enjoyed at all times while rasasvada is only present during meditation. Don't be enamored by this state. It can be addictive. It is an obstacle to meditation. In this state if somebody disturbs your meditation, you get upset.

Gyani's pleasure is in pashyan srinvan, sparshan, jignan; therefore rasasvadah, enjoying meditation pleasure is an obstacle.

What can one do about rasasvadaha? Instead of enjoying the pleasure, you have to dwell upon the teaching; which says you are ananda; not only during meditation, but also during an active life.

So these are four obstacles and what are the remedies?

Gaudapada himself says: the sleep should be countered by two methods; one is removing the cause of sleep and also by practice.

1. Following are causes of Laya.

- Over eating and then meditating; or Bahu Ashnan.
- Upset stomach or Ajirna.
- Sleep deficit or Nidra Sheshaha.
- Mind not habituated to meditation or abhyasaha.

Pavlovian association of mind; Mind should not go to sleep during meditation. The mind associates closing the eyes and withdrawal from the activities with the sleep alone. Therefore in meditation when you do all these things; mind thinks, Oh he is going to sleep sitting; the mind has to be trained; and the mind should know that this is the time of meditation; So by abhyasah the mind learns. This is the method of remedying the problem of sleep.

3. Vikshepa: Here too practice of Vairagyam is recommended as remedy. Sri Krishna discusses Vairagyam at a later stage when we will also get into it.
4. Kashayaha: Anger, jealousy, suppressed emotions. One is not aware of these emotions. In loneliness they surface such as while at an Ashram. Guadapada says let the steam out and release the emotions.
5. Rasasvada: By proper discrimination or understanding

that this pleasure is conditional. I should remember that I am poornaha all the time.

Shloka # 34:

मनोमयं हि मनं क्रियाणामुत्तमम् ।
इन्द्रियसङ्घर्षजं तन्मनोव्रतम् ॥6.34॥

The mind is indeed fickle, 0 Krishna! a tormentor, powerful and hard. I deem its control as extremely difficult as that of the wind.

The hyperactive mind is intense in my case, 0 Sri Krishna, says Arjuna. It makes other organs turbulent as well.

The mind is like a churning rod. When mind is active mouth becomes active, talking and eating; eyes become active without concentration and wanders; legs walk up and down.

When mind is disturbed it disturbs all indriyanis. Mind is very powerful. Mind does not obey nor follow the intellect. Normally intellect drives the mind.

Citing an example: initially the coffee drinking is intellectual. Later body demands it and even later this can cause withdrawal symptoms, when you stop coffee. While you wish to withdraw from coffee, your mind does not. This is the split personality every Vedantin goes through. This re-orienting the mind or vasana is a painful affair. It is like stopping drinking of alcohol. Remaining sober is painful. Vedanta considers us drunk from our many habits. It requires time and effort to withdraw from our ingrained habits.

Arjuna says I find it difficult, like controlling the wind. 0 Sri Krishna, You have to help me.

Take away:

1.Through shravanam and mananam, one gets Gyanam; through nidhidhyasanam, one converts gyanam into gyana nishta.

2.Nidhidhyasanam is also called jivanmukti. I am no more under the tyranny of the world and its people. I achieve inner psychological freedom.

With Best Wishes

Ram Ramaswamy