

CONCENTRATION (YOGAM) AND MEDITATION (DHYANAM)

The words 'concentration' and 'meditation' are unscrupulously used everywhere without any practical background and without referring to the context. These two words are always inseparable but at the same time these two have got their own meanings. To clarify these two, Bhagavad-Gita and Upanishads quote their meanings and context.

Omityekaksharam Brahma Vyaharan mamanusmaran

- **Bhagavad-Gita 8th chapter**

Here "Vyaharan" means pranayama with prolonged inspiration (pranavam or omkaram) and "mamanusmaran" means meditating on me (paramatman). Do pranayamam (yogam) first and then meditate on God. Similarly

Swadeha maranim krutva Pranavanchottaranim Dhyana nirmadhanabhyasat devam pasyennigudhavat

- **Swetaswaropanishad**

(Aranis: The pieces of wood that are utilized to elicit fire in yagnam by rubbing)

Esha sarveshu bhuteshu gudhatma na prakasate Drusyate tvagriya buddhya sukshmaya sukshma darshibhihi

- **Kathopanishad**

'nirmadhanam' means churning of life force i.e. pranayamam and dhyanameans meditation. Likewise 'sukshmaya' means getting finer and finer (subtle) by churning of life force (pranayam) and 'Agriya buddya' means meditating with Buddhi.

All these scriptures indicate that to realize 'Atman' or 'God' or 'Brahman' one should do first pranayama (yogam) and then do meditation (dhyanam). This can be simulated to an example of churning butter milk. In order to extract butter, you have to churn the butter milk. While churning so, the butter will be formed and float on the surface of the butter milk. Then you stop

churning the butter milk and pool up the butter which is widely spread over the surface of the butter milk. Likewise, when you are churning the life force holding the respiratory movements upwards and downwards, you will see the divine light (like butter) inside your eyebrows (in the brain), you stop doing pranayama and collect the divine light by meditation (dhyanam).

So, it is a dictum to follow that one has to do pranayamam inwardly first and after seeing glimpses of divine light, stop pranayamam and meditate for collecting the divine light, which is nothing but "Saguna Brahman". In scriptures at times these two words Concentration and Meditation may be combined together and indicate with single word either as Yogam or Dhyanam, it literally means that we should do both Pranayamam and Dhyanam.

But unfortunately now-a-days most of the people are sitting in Dhyanam straight away without doing Pranayamam. Without cleaning 72,000 nerves in the body, meditation (Dhyanam) is impossible and it is of no use. Sarvanadisuddhi (cleaning of all nerves) takes place only by yogagni evolved out by yogam.

In fact God is nothing but divine light, which can be seen only by a yogi whereas targeting at a particular shape or object or a deity is only a mental assumption which is far from reality.

**Yogagni dahati kshipram asesham papa panjaram
Prasannam jayate jnanam jnanannirvana mrucchati**

- Kurma puranam

**Sila mruddaru patreshu daiva bhuddhi prakalpitha
Akalpitha swayamjyothiratmano devatana kim**

- Vishnu puranam

A yogi alone burns out all the impurities and remains as divine light. Divine light itself spiritual wisdom. Yogam makes the mind 'nirmalam' (devoid of impurities) and dhyanam makes the mind 'nischalam' (immobile).

Many people want their mind to be nischalam (immobile), but without 'nirmalam' (by yogam) they can't achieve it. So one has to scrupulously do Yogam and then only he can switch on to Dhyanam.

Now we say that we are conscious but we are unable to realise God, with this level of consciousness. To realize God, we have to enter into the Superconscious state by increasing our level of knowledge by Yogam. Otherwise if we simply sit in meditation without doing yogam, we will go to the subconscious state, which is a tamasic state with lack of mental energy. Just like the electric grid system, our senses are working like electricity received into the domestic instruments from a step-down transformer. Now our mind or brain is functioning like a step-down transformer. We should convert this into a step-up transformer, by which you can gain energy to that of generating point i.e. God. So, by pranayamam, you step up from your heart to your bhrumadhyam and convert your brain into a generator, where infinite energy can be achieved. This is the actual means of Gayatri Mantram.