



Shri Shankar Shikshayatan
Centre for Vedic Research

VEDIC VIJNANA DISCUSSION SERIES

Gitavijnanabhashya-jnanayoga

Report

As part of the continuing series of discussions on Veda Vijnana, Shri Shankar Shikshayatan organized a discussion on Gitavijnanabhashya-Jnanayoga on February 26, 2022.

The discussion was based on Pandit Motilal Shastri's Gitavijnana bhashya which includes the important topic of rajarshividya. In this vidya are included 50 teachings from seven Upanishads. Among these, seven teachings from the first Upanishad form the basis of Bhagavad Gita's second chapter. Shastriji has based his book on these seven teachings.

Introducing the subject, Prof. Santosh Kumar Shukla, convener, Shri Shankar Shikshayatan, explained that Shastriji had given an elaborate presentation of four vidyas in his book. These are—rajarshividya, sidhividya, rajvidhya and arshavidya. Rajarshividya contains vairagyabudhiyoga, sidhividya has jnanabudhiyoga, rajvidya contains aishwaryabudhiyoga and arshavidya dharmabudhiyoga. A clear reference to rajarshividya is found in Bhagavad Gita's fourth chapter. Here Bhagwan Krishna offers a chronological view by stating that from me the sun got the knowledge of yoga, from the sun to vaivastha, vaivastha to manu and from manu to ikshavaku.

Dr Saroj Kaushal of Jainarayan Vyas University, Jodhpur, the first speaker of the session, presented her views on three teachings given in the first Upanishad. She pointed out that in the first teaching there are three additional teachings—life and death conflict, happiness and sorrow conflict and sadha-sad conflict. In the life and death conflict, it is written

that jeevatma lives in the body throughout life and then occupies another body and hence wise men are not attracted by this conflict. In the happiness-sorrow conflict, Bhagwan Krishna tells Arjun only those are qualified to attain moksha who remains free of happiness and sorrow. In the sadha-sad, asat has no existence and there is no scarcity of sat.

The second speaker, Dr Shobha Mishra of Vikramjit Singh Sanatan College, Kanpur made a forceful presentation of the four teachings given in the seventh teaching of the first Upanishad. Atma remains free of birth-death conflict. Bhagwan tells Arjun, hey Arjun how can anyone who knows that atma is indestructible, is not born and is avyaya, kill anyone. Avyaya atma cannot be destroyed. It cannot be hit by weapons, fire cannot burn it, withered by water and unaffected by wind. The conflict between life and death is eternal. The dissolution of every living being is fixed and so is the birth of every dissolved being. Hence, Krishna tells Arjun that he must not feel sad about the eternal cycle of life and death. Dr Shobha Mishra pointed out Shastriji's contention that avyaya-atma was eternal and detached.

Prof. Girish Chandra Pant of Jamia Millia Islamia, chairing the session, said Shastriji had included shlokas from Katopanishad and Brihadaranya Upanishad to present a scientific and simple view of rajarshividya. Ordinary persons are impressed by punya or good deeds and saddened by papa or bad deeds. Vedic vijnana however presents both as the cause of bondage. Until man is liberated from this conflict, he cannot turn to atma. The reason is desire or kamana. It is written in Katopanishad that man can achieve moksha only if he is free from desires hidden in his heart.

The meeting, attended by over 200 participants from different universities and institutions, was organized and coordinated by two senior scholars from Shri Shankar Shikshayatan, Dr Lakshmi Kant Vimal and Dr Mani Shankar Dwivedi.