

refreshing bath. It is a very powerful way of expressing the idea that where the intellect has come to firm conviction about the hollowness of sense objects, the mind will not gush forth towards them with hopes and expectations of satisfaction therein. This sense of detachment that arises from a full application of one's discriminative faculty is called true 'vairāgya'.



विरज्य विषयव्रातादोषदृष्ट्या मुहुर्मुहुः ।

स्वलक्ष्ये नियतावस्था मनसः शम उच्यते ॥ २२ ॥

*virajya viṣayavrātādoṣadṛṣṭyā muhurmuḥuḥ,  
svalakṣye niyatāvasthā manasaḥ śama ucyate. (22)*

22. *The peaceful state of the mind when it rests constantly upon the contemplation of the goal after having, again and again, detached itself from the chaos of the sense objects through a process of continuous observation of their defects is called 'śama'.*

Śaṅkara now enters into a discussion of the six qualities which are essential in the constitution of a mind and intellect for making a pilgrimage to their fulfilment in jñāna. These are not enumerated to frighten away the unqualified. I have already emphasised that a discussion of the necessary qualifications in Vedānta is more for self-analysis and adjustment than for exercising a tyranny upon the seeker.

The first among the six qualifications is śama – calmness of mind. This calmness descends upon the mind when it comes to rest in its meditations, free from the agitations created by its continuous desire for the sense objects. But when the mind is thus taken away from the sense objects, it cannot be relieved of its sense thoughts, all at once.

It is the nature of the mind to entertain thoughts and if it has nothing better to do, it will dwell on one or the other object of

the world. Therefore, it is enjoined in all the yogas that the mind should be soaked some way or the other, with an idea, greater, nobler and diviner than sense objects. Unless we train the mind to revel in a subtler and diviner field, it cannot redeem itself from the field of ordinary pursuits. In bhakti, the devotee employs his mind constantly in the meditation of his beloved Lord and, therefore, the mind is automatically drawn away from its pursuits of sense objects.

In the path of knowledge, in the early stages, the mind is to be given an alternative field for occupation. Therefore, a mind basking in the contemplation of the all-pervading Consciousness or Awareness, Brahman, alone is the mind that can successfully detach itself from sense objects.

Not only should the mind steep and maintain itself in Brahman by meditating upon the glories of the goal, but it should be whipped away from its mischievous fields of false entertainments by making it constantly aware of the weaknesses and imperfections of the field of objects. The more we gain control over the mind and through that control withdraw it from its revelling in the field of finite objects, the more will it become equanimous, peaceful and serene and this condition of 'calmness in the mind' consciously brought about by a lived discipline is meant by the word, 'śama'.



विषयेभ्यः परावर्त्य स्थापनं स्वस्वगोलके ।  
उभयेषामिन्द्रियाणां स दमः परिकीर्तितः ।  
बाह्यानालम्बनं वृत्तेरेषोपरतिरुत्तमा ॥ २३ ॥

*viṣayebhyaḥ parāvartya sthāpanam svasvagolake,  
ubhayeṣāmindriyāṇāṁ sa damaḥ parikīrtitaḥ,  
bāhyānālambanam vṛttereṣoparatiruttamā. (23)*

23. Steering both kinds of sense organs (of knowledge and action), away from their sense objects and placing them in their respective centres of activity is called 'dama' (self-control). The best 'uparati' (self-withdrawal)