

Session 78 Restraint of Vrutis Part 1

Namaste. Welcome to this new session. We just completed the Panchataya Chitta Vrutis. The last one was smṛti. Actually, much needs to be said about this smṛti. Particularly for the students of yoga, students of adhyatma, followers and seekers of adhyatma and Paramartha, smṛti is of great importance.

That is one of the reasons why the smṛti is not just memory but much more than that. Because if you recall I said, the means of liberation, means of kaivalya, nirvana, moksha, is in smṛti. And as a matter of fact, it has a great importance even in lokika, the mundanity, worldly life, to spiritual life, to spiritual summum bonum. And a lot of resources are available for smṛti.

And now you will know by certain examples, that the reference is not to memory in this sutra. That is why it is a technical term and I have been insisting that it must be maintained as smṛti and smṛti only because smṛti is not just memory, but it is vast and ocean like concept. Even for our worldly life, the smṛti, the smaraṇam, is so important. So, point is to understand this smṛti; particularly the akliṣṭa smṛti, we must take it as smaraṇam, which comes in adhyatma, which comes in bhakti. There is Nava vidha bhakti. And one of the nine types of bhakti is smaraṇam. Smaraṇam keertanam etc., are the Nava vidha bhakti which we will be seeing when we come to the ishvara pranidhana topic where we will be considering bhakti.

Smaraṇam is a kind of bhakti. Vandanam, Smaraṇam, Dasyam. So, some of you may be acquainted with the Nava vidha bhakti which comes in Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 7.5.23-2424. And then in all the adhyatmik granthas there is a lot of importance to smaraṇam. I recall that part of Sri Vishnu Sahasranama — yasyasya smaraṇam maatrena, this is in the prologue to Vishnu Sahasranama. Yasyasya smaraṇam maatrena janma samsara bandhanaat. Vibhuchyate namastasmāi vishnav prabhu vishnuvai. Yasyasya smaraṇam maatrena janma samsara bandhanaat.

The janma samsara bandhanaat, the bondage is overcome by merely nama smaraṇam, by just smaraṇam. Now, this is not memory. When the nama smaraṇam is done, it is not just memory that is included here, with the definition of the sutra you might say that this is not circumscribed, Anubūta viśayā. Smṛti is always anubūta viśayā. The fact of the matter is this nama smaraṇam, namam is also anubūta viśayā. If not in this life, in our previous lives.

Because this nama smaraṇam has been there from time without beginning. The Paramartha, the means for param puruṣārtha has been there and we have been in this journey, and we have gone

through all those various eons, countless eons, and somewhere this has been an anubūta viśayā. Like in our previous lives, the nama has certainly come to our rescue, but we don't remember our past lives. In every life the God's name is savior. And that has been experienced, so it is anubūta viśayā.

And this is an age-old kind of advice that has come to us. The nama smaraṇam, the bhakti, etc. Anyway, the point is that when we remember Divinity or we just take the name of Divinity, that itself is smaraṇam. And it is said that this is a savior, nama smaraṇam is savior. Janma samsara bandhanam. The birth, the birth and life and death and mundane gravities. These are our bondages. They bind us.

And then we are freed from this bondage. Although if we are not liberated from this bondage, then we would not have appeared here. But yet we have been saved from the grips, from the jaws of this karma bandhana. And in every life or in many of our lives we have been saved by name of the Lord and Divinity. So, there is primarily reference to smaraṇam. And you understand the smaraṇam is inflection of the word smṛti. Now this smaraṇam, particularly with reference to yoga, yogic practices, where you know that yogic practices are of the nature of dharana, dhyāna, samadhi, meditation.

So, it is all smaraṇam. Meditation is always on something that our wisdom has experienced, our knowledge has experienced, we ourselves have experienced, and then that is the noble aspect, noble content on which we embark upon meditativity and meditation. We do not embark upon meditating on ignoble objects, ignoble thoughts, worldly thoughts, mean thoughts, low thoughts. We always meditate on higher thoughts, always meditate on sublime thoughts, noble thoughts, transcendent thoughts, trans-worldly thoughts, transpersonal thoughts.

And we get this memory baggage from Sat sangha, Sadhana sangha, Shastra sangha. So, understand the resources which are available for this smaraṇa and smaraṇa sadhana. The Sat sangha which divulges us realities, ultimate realities, divulges metaphysical realities, Atma, Self, Paramatma, Ishvara, Bhagawan. So, all those thoughts are given a lot of encouragement in Sat sangha, Sadhana sangha, Shastra sangha.

We are able to have enormous samskāras and Sulbha samskaras and even the vruttis. So, in yoga, in adhyatma, —we need to take a lot of recourse to smaraṇam. Even that Upanishadic quote, quotation which says — atmavah hare drshtavyaha shrotravyaha mattavyaha nidhidhyasa kavyaha.

Mattavyam. mattavyam is a reflective act of the mind. We reflect upon what? Reflect upon something that is known to us and that knowledge is sublime, that knowledge is worth reflections

and reflective processes. That is Mananam. So, it is all memory, in the sense, smaraṇam. So, name of Divinity, when it is uttered, is called nama smaraṇam. It is not called taking the name of God. In adhyatma, it is not considered as taking the name of the God. It is called smaraṇam of the God. You might say, where have we experienced God? Not having experienced God, how can you say that it is smaraṇam about the God? See, the Divinity is an omnipresent principle. It is omnipresent in the sense that it is everywhere and it is all the time.

No time has been bereft of permeation of Divinity. Divinity has been permeating this creation completely in all the times, in all the eras, in all retrospective times, you can go to, right up to Anadhi Kala. So, we have been acquainted with Divinity by being in this universe. It is ignorance to say that I am in the universe, but I am not surrounded by Divinity. Because the whole creation is permeated, subsumed by Divinity.

The Divinity in the form that you consider as God, maybe you have not experienced it, but you can't say you not have experienced God. The God is omnipresent. Absolutely, essentially, omnipresent. And therefore, we all have been, all the time, submerged in Divine vibrations, Divinity, and Divine atmosphere. And in our lives, we must have experienced something Godly. Divine sparks. Maybe not in this life so far, some of you might claim which again is not true. We don't recognize God, so with reference to Divinity, there is something called as, pratyabhigña. We are not recognizing Divinity. |Divinity comes in all forms!

So, we have encountered Divine sparkle but it has gone unnoticed. That is why in adhyatma, there is something called as pratyabhigña about ourselves, about ourselves, we have not recognized it. It is not true that we have not known it, we have not recognized it. We have to start recognizing, and once you start recognizing, then our knowing about the self will become more and more profound. We cannot say we do not know it; at the same time, we can't say that we know it. Yasyamatam tasyamatam matam yasya na veda saha; avijnyatam vijanatam vigyatam avijanatam, is quotation from Upanishad. (Kenopanishad 2:3). 'If you say you do not know, you perhaps know. If you say you know, you certainly do not know'. So here it is a condition that we all cannot say that we know the self. At the same time, it is not true that we can't say that we do not know the self. We do not know the self in the form that we should be knowing. No one says that I do not know myself. Then why still it is said — know thyself? That means we know ourselves but we faultily know ourselves or we scantily know ourselves, even if you know ourselves properly, it is not sufficient. We insufficiency know ourselves; no one can say that I do not know myself. At the same time, you can't claim that I know myself. Because Upanishads say, if you say, 'I' know, 'I' know the self, that means you do not know. But if you say, 'I' do not know the self, perhaps you know.

That's a wonderful quotation which comes in Upanishads. So, the point is, we need to recognize Him. So, when we have acquaintance with a person, we know a person, have a acquaintance with

the person, then we recognize the person. Now this recognizing the person, can become more and more profound the more we stay with the person, the more we move with the person. So, many times we recognize even life partners after so many decades, although we have stayed, we have not sufficiently recognized. So, to recognize is something like the crescent of the moon. So, we need to improve the volume of recognition then we can claim that we have recognized our self.

And we have not reached that level, therefore we say, I have not recognized my Self, philosophically. And that's why we are told — know thyself. You should know your Self. Because we do not know sufficiently. Not that we do not know at all, or we know faultily, but we know. So, the problem with us that we know ourself faultily, because of avidya.

We are considering ourselves, what is anitya, we are considering that it is me. What is anatman, we are considering that as me. So, there is a misapprehension. There is Maya, there is illusion, there is delusion, there is viparyaya. Not that we do not know, but we do not know properly. If we know properly, we do not know sufficiently. So, in atma jñāna, one should recognize oneself. There is a beautiful story which goes as; a cub of a lion, somewhere lost its way and got into herd of deer. And then, it started identifying itself like that. So, it lost its memory, that it is a cub of a lion. And then at some point in time, the parental lion comes and sees that this cub has got stuck in this herd and therefore pulls it out and says: 'recognize yourself, you're not this'. It takes it to a well and says, look into the well, the reflection, and there the cub sees that it is a lion's face; it is lion. And then it Roars! So that's a kind of an interesting story which is told in Upanishads.

We have not recognized ourself as eternal beings, immortal beings, birth-less beings, deathless beings. We have wrongly identified ourselves. So, we need to recognize. Now recognition is a part of memory. If you recall in earlier sessions, I told you, smṛti and pratyabhigñā. Memory and recognition. How do you recognize? Without memory do you recognize? So, the point is, adhyatma we need to recognize ourself. We need to recognize Divinity. Not that we have not seen Divinity; it is not possible that we have not seen Divinity.

Because Divinity is very effulgent principle. You can't say you have not seen. And therefore, symbolically we are told, the sun is Surya Narayana. It is such an effulgent thing. Nobody can say that, not being blind, I have not seen the sun. Not being blind, no one can say that, I have not seen the sun. No one can mis-sight that luminous body in the sky. Nobody can mis-see the sun. Similarly, nobody can mis-seeing Divinity. So, all these things come in the gospels of the Saints. They tell us about all this. And we all think that, I have not seen God, I do not know God. Many of them say, I have not seen. I do not know. I don't believe.

But how can you refute a principle which is omnipresent, which is everywhere, which is all the time there. You can't be missing! Only the thing is that we have not recognized that as Divinity. Divinity comes in maybe sparkles, but we have not seen it. And we think we have not seen it. Actually, that's not true. There is all, with regard to Divinity — It is all smṛti. It is all smṛti. Because no one can ever say, I have not experienced God. Although we do not have the God experience, or Godly experience as it comes in mysticism. But it is not true that one has not seen God. Anyway, that's why nama smaraṇam. It is smaraṇam. So that nama smaraṇam, goes a long way, and as a matter of fact for samadhi, for dhyāna, for dharana, dhyāna, samadhi; it is all based on smṛti. Because object of meditation is always drawn from memory. You do not meditate on something that you do not know at all. You always meditate on something that you know and that you think you know very well, and you know sufficiently, therefore there can be pensive, reflective, meditative process on it.

So, it is of the very profound thought on which we meditate. There is no meditation on un-profound thought. Meditation always needs profound thought. Now, what is profound thought? Which has been thought over very, very, very, often. Which has been encountered very, very, very, very, often. Which has been experienced very, very, very, very, very, often. So the meditations are always on profound thoughts. Profound thoughts mean, they have been thought over, very, very, very, very often and very, very, very, very deep. Very, very, deeply.

And that is all memory. So, the whole quintessential aspect of yoga is based on memory. It is all smaraṇam. It is all smṛti. And then smṛti pariśuddhi. Which is the concept which comes in samāpatti topic of Patanjali, which is psychology of samadhi. Anyway. This paranam has enormous resources of akliṣṭa vruttis. All that is metaphysical, all that is sublime, all that is cosmic mystery, divine mystery, or mystery in the realm of the Self, Atma. It is the matter for meditation, Dhyāna.

And that, it is all smṛti. Āgama pramāṇa. What is Āgama pramāṇa? Understand how much Āgama pramāṇa is depending on smṛti and smaraṇam. It is all a matter for you to remember. Āgama is all matter for you to remember. The precepts of Bhagavad Gita, the precepts of Upanishads, the precepts of vedantic grunthas, the precepts of Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta, Gnanya, these are all subject matters which must get deep into memory. And they are matters to be remembered.

So Āgama pramāṇa is a great resource for smṛti. Smṛti is great resource for akliṣṭa vrutti, because all those Āgamas have enormous resources, which are of the nature of akliṣṭa. Like Bhagavad Gita precepts are akliṣṭa. Upanishadic precepts are akliṣṭa. Darshana Shastra precepts are akliṣṭa, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, akliṣṭa. Jñāna yoga, Samkhya yoga, karma yoga, bhakti yoga; all akliṣṭa. There is no kliṣṭata.

So, there will be abundance of akliṣṭa vrutti in Āgamas, Shastras, gospels of Sages and Saints. The Vachanamrita of Saints and Sages. So, there is a lot of akliṣṭa vruttis there. Almost of the dimensions of oceans. And it is all matter for smṛti. That is how the smṛti pariśuddhi takes place. By constant ponderance over the essence of Sat sangha, essence of Sadhana sangha, essence of Shastra Sanga. All these essences are resources of smṛti. So, understand the smṛti with reference to yogic process.

The Sulbha samskāras are smṛtis. Sulbha vasanas are smṛtis. Punya vasana, smṛti. Dharma vasana, dharma samskara, they're all smṛtis. So, we are enormous structure of smṛti. Because we have been transmigrating for all these times; in all our incarnations; countless incarnations; absolutely infinite incarnations; in this eternal time.

Understand, look at this dimension of smṛti vrutti. How deep it can take you! How far it can take you! It can take you to endless time. We have been, from time without beginning existing, we have been human being's countless times. We have gone through various incarnations, and we have all those smṛtis. Because we are all structure of karma. So, see the enormity of smṛti.

This dimension of smṛti vrutti should be understood. Now, the kliṣṭa of smṛti, is something that has to be taken to oblivion. Akliṣṭa smṛti must be nurtured, nourished, harvested, and embraced. So that is how our yogic journey will commence.

We have enormous smṛti material, the slokas, the suktas, the prayers, the prarthanas, the prayers. Then Bhagwan Lila amrita, Deva rahasya, Devata rahasya. Each deity has rahasya. And this is all matter for our memory. So, there is enormous scope for students of adhyatma, seekers in adhyatma, to go after this smṛti resources, and build up the smṛti structure within us.

So that is the importance of smṛti vrutti. Anyway, why did we come to these vruttis? So, you should recall, yoga was defined — atha yoga anushasanam. What is yoga? Yoga chitta vrutti nirodhah. Yoga is to restrain the chitta vruttis. If you restrain the chitta vruttis, you can head towards yoga of the nature of samprajnata and asamprajnata samadhi. Now for us, what is our yoga? Our yoga is to restrain the kliṣṭa vruttis; tormented vruttis. So, we need to do something to restrain that. So, in our yoga, we are trying to restrain the śadripus and the klesha vruttis: Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya. Our yoga is in the form of restraining these, managing these, mitigating these, enfeebling these. So, this is how we commence.

Although we don't straight away go to chitta vrutti nirodha of the caliber of samprajnata yoga or asamprajnata yoga. But yoga in some form will come to us, and we are in it, we are trying to restrain at least the tormenting vruttis. Nobody wants to harvest tormenting vruttis, nurture and nourish tormenting vruttis. We want to slowly get rid of those in a gradual manner. So that means

we are trying to exercise restraint, with regard to those vrittis. So, what were the vrittis then, if the chitta vrutti nirodha is yoga? And what are the chitta vrittis? and therefore we came to Panchataya vrittis which are kliṣṭa /akliṣṭa and that's why we had the delineation on Panchataya vrittis. The vrittis fivefold which are either of the class of kliṣṭa or akliṣṭa. Now, how to restrain these vrittis? is the mote question.

Restraining chitta vrittis is not something like switching off the lights at night. And then switching on the lights in the morning when you get up. Provided you get up early in the morning, because if you get up after the sunrise, well after sunrise, then you don't need to put on the lights; but otherwise, we get up early in the morning, before the sunrise, you put on the lights. So chitta vrutti is not just switching on process. Nowhere yoga suggests you must switch off your chitta vrittis, and that is restraint. There is no such switch given that you can switch it off. And then automatically it gets switched on. And again, you have to switch it off. We talked about switching it on and switch off. No, that's not the process.

When do we have turmoil of chitta vrittis? Crowd of chitta vrittis? Bustle of chitta vrittis? As long as we are in the mundane, materialistic thought, we will have bustle of chitta vrittis. So, we have to taper our mundanity, our worldliness, our business activity of life.

For us to even have a rest at night, we want to be tapering our worldly activity. You can't be saying that I'll remain in worldly activity and I will be taking sleep. That might be just a nap for a short while. Many people do that while they're at work. That's a nap. That's not really sleep. For sleep you have to taper your business activity of life. So, our restraint starts from, as I said, from rarifying mundanity, business activity of life, practicality of life.

Now when Patanjali speaks about chitta vrutti nirodha, he doesn't at all imply switching off the chitta. What is quite explicit and implicit is that we must collect noble vrittis. When the noble vrittis surface in the mind, the turbulent vrittis are shown a way out.

And they slowly go into rarefication. So chitta vrutti nirodha means we have to have sublime vrittis. Sublime vrittis will restrain the mean vrittis, turbulent vrittis, salified vrittis, tainted vrittis, spoiled vrittis, contaminated vrittis. So first of all, we'll have to restrain the contaminated vrittis. The contaminated vrittis are restrained by giving room to sublime vrittis.

So the mind must be sublime. Quietening the mind is in a way restraining the mind. Ponder over this. What is quietening the mind? That means there is abatement to turbulence of the mind. That itself is nirodha.

So, if the chitta vruttis are to be restrained, understand here, sublimity must be in profusion. All those good qualities of mind must be on profusion, simplicity, modesty, temperance, humbleness, humility, simplicity. Unless we embrace these norms, we will not be making headway into yoga. So that will restrain the turbulent vruttis, the materialistic vruttis, the worldly vruttis, the mean vruttis, the contaminated vruttis, the tainted vruttis, the dented vruttis. So, mind should be quiet.

See, imagine if the mind is quietened, what is kept at bay? The turbulence is kept at bay. The turmoil is kept at bay. When the mind is steadied, what is kept at bay? When do you say that the mind is steadied is there no restraint, don't you see restraint when the mind is steadied? Don't you see restraint when the mind is quiet, when the mind is tranquilized? Don't you see the restraint when the mind is sublime, when the mind is sublimated? When the mind is ennobled? So, the way to go for restraint is to go for quietening the mind, tranquillizing the mind, going for tranquility of the mind. Going for neutrality of the mind. Going for virginity of the mind, going for purity of the mind, going for piety of the mind, going for sublimity of the mind, going for serenity of the mind.

So, you can see lot of yoga in the form of restraint when we embrace these qualitative aspects, tranquility, neutrality, virginity, sublimity, purity, piety, sanctity, nobility, equanimity, equilibrium. So that is a step towards restraint, chitta vrutti nirodha. That's the step that we can be taking, we should be taking, we must be taking, we have to be taking.

So, our yoga will come in that form. And initial yoga comes in that form. The more and more the mind becomes nobler and nobler and nobler, sublime and more and more sublime, and more and more sublime, the mind will be heading towards greater zone of restraint, enter the greater zone of restraint.

And now therefore, Patanjali embarks upon mentioning the means of restraint. The means of restraint. And then he mentions the means as abhyāsa vairāgyaṅ tan nirodhaḥ, (Y.S.1.12). What is abhyāsa? What is vairāgya? The factors which we have just now mentioned, such as tranquility, neutrality, virginity, sublimity, purity, piety, sanctity, sanity, equity, equanimity, temperance, moderation, simplicity, humility, humbleness, dispassionate-ness. These are the means of chitta vrutti nirodha.

So, there's not switching off process in chitta vrutti nirodha, you don't have to switch off, you can't switch off. There is no switch. You have to take the mind into the zone. And taking the mind into zone, which facilitates the nirodha, are called the means. Those are the means of yoga. And those two means are classified as abhyāsa and vairāgya. So don't understand the words in literal sense. All efforts to be-steady the mind, be-steady the chitta precisely; it will start with be-steadying the mind, be-calming the mind. So that's how we start; we start on the plane of mind,

we quieten the mind. Because chitta is an ocean. And mind is something, the peripheral surface aspect of our consciousness.

[00:41:41] So for us to make the mind steady, to make the mind quiet, to make the mind serene, to make the mind sublime, to make the mind noble, to make the mind moderate, temperate, simple, humble. So that will steady the mind. In absence of humbleness, your mind is unsteady. In absence of all these qualities and opposite of these qualities, is if the mind is engaged in opposite of all these qualities, then the mind has turbulence; mind is unsteady. Disquiet mind is unsteady mind. Quiet mind is steady mind, is simple logic there. Ignoble mind is unsteady mind. Noble mind is steady mind. Passionate mind is unsteady mind. Dispassionate mind is steady mind. So, all that which works for be-calming the mind, be-steadying the mind, the tranquility, neutrality, virginity, sublimity, etc., which I have been repeating.

So, anything that quietens the mind, slows down the mind, withdraws the mind from worldliness, disembarkment of the mind from worldliness, worldly gravities, is called abhyāsa. Abhyāsa is not practice as it literally means. That's why I have been telling you don't go by literal meanings. Because abhyāsa is rendered as practice. Practice of what? There is practice of everything even pick-pocketing, there's a practice. Stealing, there is a practice. Burglary; there is a practice. There is practice everywhere.

So, it's a technical term which Patanjali defines. What is abhyāsa? He doesn't say, practice. But people have rendered abhyāsa as practice. He has defined abhyāsa. And the mind must be thirstless. The mind must be dispassionate. Passionate mind will never be restful. Dispassionate mind will be restful. A thirsty mind will never be restful. Thirstless mind will be restful.

So, we are now embarking upon the means of yoga, that is means of restraint of chitta vruttis. So, let's begin with the upaya, the means of chitta vrutti nirodha. The means of chitta vrutti nirodha, or means of yoga, are abhyāsa vairāgya — Abhyāsa vairāgyan tan nirodhaḥ — Y.S. 1:12.

Now let's try to open out this. But that is in next session. Namaskar all of you.