

vivekac`y~maõi

KATHAM PRATISHTHASYA (The third question)

Verse 147

For the easy understanding by those who desire liberation, the whole of samsAra from its roots is described as a tree.

bIjam samsrtibhUmijasya to tamo dehAtmadhIrankurah
rAgah pallavam ambu karma tu vapuh skandho'savah shAkhikAh|
agrAnIndriyasamhatishca viSayAh puSpANi duhkham phalam
nAnAkarmasamudbhavam bahuvidham bhoktA'tra jIvah khagah||

Tamas (ajnAna) is the seed of this tree of samsAra. The shoot is the mistaking of the body as the Atman. Desire is the tender sprout; karma is the water. The body is the trunk. The prANas are the branches. The contact of the senses with objects are the tendrils. The sense-objects are the flowers. Suffering is the fruit arising from different karmas. The experiencer is the jiva, the bird who eats the fruit.

samsAra itself is a tree (bhumijah). Its seed, the primal cause is tamas or ajnAna. It shows that ajnAna alone is the cause; nothing else; The idea that the body is the Atman is the shoot (ankura) as it is caused solely by ajnAna. Raga is the tender sprout as the sprout comes after the shoot. This raga takes the form of thinking that desires for sense-objects by reason of their being conducive to the body, are also good to the atman. Ambu, is the water, which is necessary for the growth of the tree. It takes the form of karmas. tu as before is for emphasis and exclusion. It is said: kurvate karma bhogAya, karma kartum ca bhunjate. (Pancadasi) "One works to eat and eats to work." This karma is two fold, punya and its opposite. The trunk of the tree is the body wherefrom the branches come off, i.e., the middle part of the tree is said to be the skandha. The winds shaking the tree (and which are produced by the agitation of its leaves) are the five prANas. The tendrils (agrani) are the combinations of the sense-organs, as the jnAnendriyas like the eye and the karmendriyas like hands. They depend on the prana for their functioning. This is clear from the debate between the indriyas and prANa in the shruti.

The tendrils, it is well known, depend on the branches. The viSayas are sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The flowers are connected with the tendrils. The fruit is grief as it follows the connection between the viSayas and the sense-organs. For, the fruit arises at the tip of the branches after the flowers have come out. Though it would seem that sukha also has to be designated as a fruit, inasmuch as by the word karma used before, puNya and papa karmas were mentioned, and as sukha is only occasionally experienced, sense-object-pleasure is considered by the wise as pain only. For, both in getting pleasure, and when it is destroyed, one experiences pain.

Vide the Gita: ye hi samsarsajA bhogah duhkhayonaya eva te / CA dyantavantah kaunteya na tesu ramate budhah ||

"For those delights which are born of contact are only generators of pain, having a beginning and an end. O son of Kunti! A wise man does not rejoice in them." Hence the Nyaya sastra enumerates twenty-one sources of pain, namely the six indriyas, the six sense-objects, the six buddhis, the body, pleasure and pain. This dukkha arises from various karmas. As the karmas are of various kinds, the fruits thereof are also of various kinds. In this tree, the bird is the jiva which experiences the fruit of suffering and sorrow. Thus this tree of samsAra has its roots in ajnana, and its only fruits are suffering. So, it is to be despised like a poisonous tree. The answer to the question: katham pratisthasya: 'How is it (the bandha) established?' in the verse 51 is given by saying that the bandha of the form of mistaking the body for the Atman arises from desire and hatred caused by the karmas which are dharmic and adharmic by the succession of bodies produced by those karmas and the firm attachment to those bodies, and gets confirmed

vivekac'ṛy~maōi

by their cumulative effects.

Verse 148

Now, before giving the answer to the question: katham vimoksah: How is release obtained, the guru explains the aforesaid bondage along with its cause and its effect.

ajnAnamUlo'yamanAtmabandho
naisargiko'nAdirananta Iritah|
janmApyayavyAdhijarAdiduhkha
pravAhatApam janayatyamuSya||

This bandha of the anAtman has ajnaAna for its source. It is natural to everybody and is said to be without beginning and without end (till it is destroyed by jnAna). It generates to the puruSaha, the succession of sufferings in the shape of birth, death, disease, old age, etc.

This anAtmabandha which is well known, which is mistaking the body etc. for the atman, has its source in ajnana of the real nature of the Atman. It is natural; it is produced by the samskaras of previous abhyasas acting in succession. It is beginningless, for, it is produced by beginningless ajnAna. It cannot be known or said when it began. It is therefore anAdi. It is also ananta i.e., endless. It does not come to an end except by jnAna.

iritah: abhiyuktaih is understood: so described by those who know. The Gita too says: nAnto na cAdih: 'has neither end nor beginning'. This bondage is of such nature. amushya: of this jiva. apyayah : death.

It produces birth, death, disease. old age, suffering and other series of effects.

Adi: etc., in the verse is to include also the Adhibhautika and Adhidaivika in addition to the adhyatmika sufferings. By the succession of these sufferings this bandha generates extreme grief.

Instead of pravahatapa, there is another reading: pravahapata which means a succession of processes of falling down.