

Equanimity and Meditation (Samayika and Dhyana)

Prof. Sagarmal Jain

Samayika is the principal concept of Jainism. It is the first and foremost duty among six essential duties of a monk as well as of a house-holder. Prakrta term Samaiya is translated into English in various ways such as observance of equanimity, viewing all the living beings as one's own self, conception of equality, harmonious state of one's behavior, integration of personality as well as righteousness of the activities of mind, body and speech.

Acarya Kunda kunda also used the term samahi (Prakrta) its Sanskrita samadhi, in the sense of samayika, where it means a tensionless state of consciousness or a state of self absorption (1).

In its general sense the word samayika means a particular religious practice through which one can attain equanimity of mind. It is end as well as means in itself. As a means it is a practice for attaining equanimity while as an end it is the state in which self is completely free from the flickering of alternative desires and wishes as well as excitements and emotional disorders. It is the state of self absorption or resting in one's own self. In Avasyaka-niryuti it is mentioned that the samayika is nothing but one's own self in its pure form (2).

Thus from transcendental point of view Samayika means realization of our own self in its real nature. It is the state in which one is completely free from attachment and aversion. In the same work Arya Bhadra also mentions various synonyms of samayika. According to him equanimity, equality, righteousness, state of self-absorption, purity, peace, welfare, happiness are the different names of samayika (3).

In Anuyogadvara-sutra (4), Avasyaka Niryukti (5), and Kundakunda's Niyamasara (6), Samayika is explained in various ways. It is said that one who by giving up the movement of uttering words, realizes himself with non-attachment is said to have supreme equanimity (7). He, who detached from all injurious or unpius actions, observes threefold control of body, mind and speech and restrains his senses, is said to have attained equanimity (8). One who behaves equally as one's own self towards all living beings mobile and immobile, is said to have equanimity (9). Further, it is said that one who observes self-control, vows and austerities, one in whom attachment and aversion do not cause any disturbance or tension and one who always refrains indulgence, sorrow and ennui, is said to have attained equanimity or Samayika (10).

This practice of equanimity is equated with religion it self. In Acaranga Sutra, it is said that all the worthy people preach religion as equanimity (11). Thus, for Jainas, the observance of religious life, is nothing, but the practice for the attainment of equanimity. According to them, it is the essence of all types of religious activities and they all, are prescribed only to attain it. Not only in Jainism but in Hinduism also, we find various references in support of equanimity. Gita defines yoga as equanimity (12). Similarly in Bhagvat it is said that the observance of equanimity is the worship of Lord (13).

The whole frame-work of Jain religious practise (sadhana) has been built on the foundation of samayika i.e. the practice for equanimity. All the religious tenets are made for it. Acarya Haribhadra maintains that one who observes the equanimity (samabhava) will surely attain the emancipation, whether he belongs to Svetambara sect or Digambara sect, whether he is Bauddha or the follower of any other religion. It is said in Jaina religious texts that one who observes hard penances and austerities such as eating once in a month or two as well as one who make the donations of crores of golden coins every day, can not attain emancipation

unless he attains equanimity. It is only through the attainment of equanimity of mind that one can get emancipation or liberation. Acarya Kunda-Kund says what is the use of residing in forest, mortification of body, observance of various fasts, study of scriptures and keeping silence etc. to a saint, who is devoid of equanimity (Niyamasara 124).

Now we come to the next question that how one can attain this equanimity of mind. Mere verbal saying that I shall observe the equanimity of mind and refrain from all types of injurious activities does not have any meaning unless we seriously practices it in our own life.

For this, first of all one should know that what are the causes which disturb our equanimity of mind and then one should try to eradicate them.

Though it is very easy to say that one should observe the equanimity of mind, but in practice it is very difficult to attain it. For our mental faculty is always in grip of attachment and aversion. What so ever we think or do, is always motivated by either attachment or aversion. The vectors of attachment and aversion are solely responsible for the disturbance of mental equanimity and so the practice to attain equanimity depends on the eradication of attachment and aversion. So long as we do not eradicate the attachment and aversion, we are unable to attain equanimity.

Now our attention turns to the eradication of attachment and aversion. How we can get rid of these two enemies of equanimity. Attachment is an another name of mineness and this mineness can only be vanished through the contemplation of ektva bhavana and Anyatva bhavana i.e. nothing is mine except my own self. In Aurapaccakhana it is clearly mentioned that.

If we want to conquer the mineness we must have to contemplate on the transitory nature of worldly things as well as of our own body. One, who perceives that the death is coming nearer and nearer every moment, only can see the things in their right perspective. Samyak-darsana is nothing but to have a proper understanding of the worldly thing. One who perceives one's own death and transitory nature of things can never be attached to them. When mineness disappears otherness also disappears. For these two are the relative terms and without one other also loses its meaning and when the idea of mineness as well as otherness dissolves attachment and aversion disappears and equanimity dawns.

There is only one way to attain the equanimity of mind and that is through the contemplation of real nature of one's own self as well as of worldly things, one can eradicate the vectors of attachment and aversion and thus attain equanimity and it is through self-awareness that one can be steady and firm in the state of equanimity or self-absorption. Equanimity needs proper understanding of real nature of one's own self as well as of others.

In Niyamasara, it is said that one who meditates in one's own real nature with non-attached thought, activity and realizes his self through righteous and pure concentration can attain the supreme equanimity. One, who always practices the dharma dhyana (righteous meditation) and Sukla dhyana (meditation of Pure-form or real nature) can attain the equanimity. Thus, samayika is closely related to meditation, without meditation and self-awareness no one can attain the equanimity of mind. Kund kunda further maintains that one who is absorbed in righteous and pure meditation is the Antaratma or sadhaka and one who is devoid of such contemplation or meditation is called Bahiratma. The realization of self is only possible through equanimity and equanimity is only possible through the meditation of one's own real nature (Niyamasara 15, 147).

At last I would like to conclude my paper by quoting a beautiful verse of religious tolerance of Acarya Amitagati -

Sattvesu maitrim gunisa pramodam klistesu Jivesa Krapapartvam Madhyasthyabhavam Viparita Vrattan Sada

mamatma Vidhadhatudeva.

"Oh Lord. I should be friendly to all the creatures of world and feel delight in meeting the virtuous people. I should always be helpful to those who are in miserable conditions and tolerant to my opponents."

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