



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

एकादशोऽध्यायः - विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः

Chapter 11

Volume 1

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसं जितम् ।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ 11 - 1

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ 11 - 2

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वं, आत्मानं परमेश्वर ।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपं, ऐश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ 11 - 3

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं, मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ 11 - 4

श्री भगवानुवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि, शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥ 11 - 5

पश्यादित्यान् वसून् रुद्रान्, अश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।
बहूनि अदृष्टपूर्वाणि, पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ 11 - 6

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं, पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश, यच्चान्यत् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ 11 - 7

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुं अनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः, पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ 11 - 8

As we may recall, expounding ध्यानयोग in Chapter 6, Sri Krishna said:

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र, सर्वम् च मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि, स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ 6-30



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

“The one who recognizes ME – The परमेश्वर in everything that exists in this creation, and at the same time, recognizes everything in this creation in ME – The परमेश्वर, for that person, I will never be away from his vision, and he also will never lose the vision of Myself – The परमेश्वर.”

Sri Krishna expands the same theme, as विभूति योग in Chapter 10, and विश्वरूपदर्शन योग in this Chapter 11. परमेश्वर is ONE. That ONE परमेश्वर is in all that exists in this creation. That is a Glory of परमेश्वर, which was the focus of attention in the last chapter on विभूति योग.

All that exists in this creation is in ONE परमेश्वर – That is also a Glory of परमेश्वर, which is the focus of attention in this Chapter on विश्वरूपदर्शन योग. These two Chapters, 10 and 11, serve two different purposes in Sri Krishna’s continuing Discourse on भक्ति योग.

The purpose of विभूति योग is to show the Means for reaching परमेश्वर, for recognizing परमेश्वर in everything that exists in this creation, including oneself, through Meditation on the Glories of परमेश्वर, and contemplation on परमेश्वर Itself.

The purpose of विश्वरूपदर्शन योग is to show that we are mere instruments, born to carry out the Will of परमेश्वर, and nothing more, and, our entire job in life is only to do what is left for us to do, and do it as well as we can, with well-rooted attitude of prayer, devotion and total surrender to परमेश्वर.

This latter purpose, when realized, naturally subdues one’s ego, and serves to bring about a profound change in one’s attitude towards life, and also everything one does in life, thereby uplifting oneself to a higher plane of ईश्वर भक्ति, and hence a higher plane of human existence. Such a profound change does take place in Arjuna in this chapter on विश्वरूपदर्शन योग.

In the first Chapter of The भगवत् गीता, we see Arjuna going through very difficult emotions, arising from his vision of the war that is yet to begin. In this 11th Chapter of The भगवत् गीता, we see Arjuna, again going through similar and even more difficult emotions, arising from his frightening vision of Sri Krishna, as कालाग्नि – the Fire of the Flow of Time, into which all the great warriors in the battle field are inescapably drawn to Death. It is that frightening vision, seen in the all-inclusive विश्वरूप of Sri Krishna, that brings about the profound change in the attitude of Arjuna with respect to



life in general, and his own part in the immediate war situation in particular. We will see the manifestations of this change in the mind-set of Arjuna as we read this Chapter.

As Arjuna goes through his own difficult emotions, as participants in this ज्ञान-यज्ञ we will also go through parallel emotions, each in one's own way. Ultimately however, this experience will be good for us, in our own times as it has been to Arjuna in his own times.

This is how this chapter on विश्वरूपदर्शन योग unfolds itself. Arjuna recalls Sri Krishna's last statement in the last Chapter:

विष्टभ्याहम् इदं कृत्स्नम्, एकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥

10-42

Pervading and supporting this entire creation with only a minute fraction of My Infinite Powers, I remain as the Unmanifest, Unchanging, Ever Existent SELF of all selves – as the सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप पूर्ण आत्मा.

Again, Arjuna also recalls Sri Krishna's earlier statement in Chapter 9, where He says:

मत्स्थानि सर्व भूतानि (9-4) – All beings in this creation, have their existence in ME.

Recalling the above two statements gives rise to an impulsive thought bubble, in the form of a desire, in the mind of Arjuna. Arjuna seems to think in this way:

I see Krishna in front of me. He says He is all, and all are in Him. I certainly believe what He says. Still, if I could see the Form of Krishna with the entire creation in Him, it would be an extraordinary and delightful sight indeed. Therefore, let me ask Krishna to show me His विश्वरूपं – meaning His ईश्वर रूपं – His all-inclusive Form.

Impelled by this desire, Arjuna requests Sri Krishna to show His ईश्वर रूपं. Complying with his request, Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to get ready to see His all-inclusive Form and then assumes that Form, so that Arjuna alone can see that Form. Arjuna, "seeing Sri Krishna in His All-inclusive Form" is विश्वरूपदर्शनं, which is the subject matter of this chapter. What Arjuna sees is indeed awe-inspiring, but at the same time, it is frightening, striking fear in his mind.

It is that fear that uplifts him to a higher plane of ईश्वर भक्ति. Thus the purpose of the विश्वरूपदर्शन योग is accomplished. We will see the details as we go along.

In order to be able to appreciate the content of this Chapter, we must be clear in our own minds about:

✓ the nature of विश्वरूपं



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

- ✓ the source of Arjuna's fear, and
- ✓ the relevance of विश्वरूपदर्शनं to भक्ति योग

The Nature of विश्वरूप : Arjuna requests Sri Krishna to show him His ईश्वर रूपं. ईश्वर रूपं is made up of ब्रह्मस्वरूपं and मायास्वरूपं, both in ONE. ब्रह्मस्वरूपं is Unmanifest and not available for objectification. ब्रह्मन् can be recognized only through Knowledge. On the other hand, मायास्वरूपं is manifest, and it includes the entire creation. The ईश्वर रूपं that can be seen as an object is only मायारूपं. Therefore, the विश्वरूपं – the all-inclusive form of Sri Krishna, seen by Arjuna, is only मायारूपं. Further, the panorama of this मायारूपं continuously changes with the flow of time.

Even if one is shown everything in this creation, what is it that one can see, in detail, is conditioned by one's own immediate mental and physical environment. At this time, Arjuna's mind is committed to ईश्वरज्ञानं, and he finds himself in the physical environment of the battlefield. Therefore, what we must understand is, that the Nature of विश्वरूपं is माया, and what Arjuna sees in detail, in विश्वरूपं is conditioned by his mental and physical environment at this time, in other words, what one is blessed to see, at that time, and nothing more.

The Source of Arjuna's Fear : Arjuna is seeing Sri Krishna – is seeing परमेश्वर, as विश्वरूपं for his personal entertainment, in the privacy of his own vision. When that is the case, what is the source of fear for Arjuna? This needs to be understood. What happens here is this: Arjuna, the subject, is seeing परमेश्वर's विश्वरूपं, as object. Thus there is a clear subject-object division in the mind of Arjuna, which means, Arjuna does not see himself in परमेश्वर's विश्वरूपं. What he sees in विश्वरूपं is everything in this creation minus himself. Consequently, Arjuna is in fact entertaining a notion of Division between himself and परमेश्वर. That notion of Division is the source of Arjuna's fear.

As the Taittiriya Upanishad says:

एतस्मिन् (ब्रह्मणि) उदरं अन्तरं कुरुते, अथ तस्य भयं भवति – When one entertains a notion of Division from ब्रह्मन्, even to a minute extent (उदरं अपि = अल्पं अपि), then ब्रह्मन् becomes the source, the cause, and the means for fear. So long as one does not recognize पूर्णं ब्रह्मन् in everything there is, one will continue to experience fear in



oneself. Such lack of recognition of ब्रह्मन् – such lack of ब्रह्मज्ञानं is the source for Arjuna's fear.

The Relevance of विश्वरूपदर्शनं to भक्ति योगः One can reach परमेश्वर – one can recognize परमेश्वर in oneself and also in all that exist in this creation, and thus get total fulfillment in life, only through पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति – Total surrender to परमेश्वर – through अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति – Devotion to परमेश्वर already in oneself, inseparable from oneself. Arjuna is uplifted to such ईश्वर भक्ति through the spontaneous development of the attitude of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति gained through his विश्वरूपदर्शनं. That is the relevance of विश्वरूपदर्शन योग to भक्ति योग. With this understanding, we are now ready to read the Gita verses in this Chapter.

Opening this Chapter, Arjuna tells Sri Krishna

अर्जुन उवाच

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यम् अध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोयं विगतो मम ॥

11 - 1

मदनुग्रहाय – Purely out of compassion for me, purely for the purpose of blessing me with knowledge

परमं गुह्यम् अध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् यत् त्वया उक्तं वचः, तेन – by the words spoken by you, to bring me clarity of understanding आत्मज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, which is indeed a Great and incomparable Secret

मम अयं मोहः विगतः - my confusion about that knowledge – my confusion about what is आत्मा and what is not आत्मा, has vanished. By your Grace, by your Teachings on आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-Knowledge, I have now gained आत्म-अनात्म विवेक बुद्धि. Further,

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां, श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष, माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥

11 - 2

Addressing Krishna as कमलपत्राक्ष, one with lotus-like beautiful and pleasing eyes. Arjuna says:

कमलपत्राक्ष – O! Krishna

हि – indeed



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भूतानां भवाप्ययौ - भूतानां भवः अप्ययः च - the knowledge about the birth and dissolution of beings in this creation

मया विस्तरशः त्वत्तः श्रुतौ - has been heard by me from you, in detail

अव्ययं माहात्म्यं अपि, त्वत्तः श्रुतं च - I have also heard from you, your perennial glories, your inexhaustible Greatness. By your Grace, I could hear all these from You, Yourself - from परमेश्वर Itself, directly.

एवमेतद्यथात्वं त्वं आत्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपं ऐश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥

11 - 3

Again addressing Krishna as परमेश्वर and पुरुषोत्तम, Arjuna continues,

परमेश्वर - O! Supreme Lord

यथा आत्वं त्वं आत्मानं - whatever you have said about Yourself

एवं एतत् - for me, all that is exactly so, in all details just as You said. I have no

doubt in my mind that You are exactly the way You have described Yourself to be. I

have श्रद्धा in what You say. I appreciate You as You are, just as You have described Yourself, You are. But, still,

पुरुषोत्तम - O! Lord

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते ऐश्वरं रूपं - I wish to see Your ईश्वर रूपं - your all-inclusive cosmic Form, your विश्वरूपं, not because of any doubt on my part about what You say about Yourself, but just because of my curiosity and nothing else.

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शय आत्मानं अव्ययम् ॥

11 - 4

प्रभो - O! Lord

योगेश्वर - O! Lord of Yogis - The Wielder of माया

तत् मया द्रष्टं शक्यं इति, मन्यसे यदि - If you consider that it is possible for me, that I am fit to see Your all-inclusive cosmic Form.

ततः - then

मे - मदर्थं - त्वं अव्ययं आत्मानं दर्शय - for my sake, please show me Your अव्यय आत्मा - अनन्त आत्मा the Form of Your perennial Eternal SELF - Your all-inclusive विश्वरूपं.



Thus, using proper words, Arjuna makes his desire known to Sri Krishna, to see Sri Krishna's ईश्वर रूपं विश्वरूपं.

At this time, Arjuna does not know what he is really in for, by his request. But, it is clear that Sri Krishna created this desire in him, just to uplift him through visual Teaching to a higher plane of ईश्वर भक्ति, in continuation of His Discourses on भक्ति योग. Now, भगवान् responds to Arjuna's request.

श्री भगवान् उवाच

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि, शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥

11 - 5

पार्थ - O! Arjuna,

पश्य - See

भगवान् is telling here what He is going to show Arjuna in His विश्वरूप - all-inclusive Form. Therefore, पश्य here means दर्शनार्थम् अर्हो भव - दृष्टुं योग्यो भव - may you become qualified to see, and be ready to see. See, what?

मे रूपाणि - My forms. What kind of forms?

शतशः, अथ सहस्रशः रूपाणि - hundreds and thousands of forms; countless and immeasurable forms, in terms of number and attributes

नानाविधानि रूपाणि - forms of very many different kinds, including

दिव्यानि रूपाणि - Divine Forms, not perceptible in this world of human beings

नानावर्ण आकृतीनि च - forms of many different kinds in different shapes, sizes, colors and attributes. Thus, you will see countless forms in Me. Further,

पश्य आदित्यान् वसून् रुद्रान्, अश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।

बहूनि अदृष्टपूर्वाणि, पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥

11 - 6

भारत - O! Arjuna

पश्य - Be ready to see

आदित्यान् वसून् रुद्रान्, तथा मरुतः - the 12 आदित्य देवताs, 8 वसु देवताs, 11 रुद्र देवताs, 2 अश्विनि देवताs, 49 वायु देवताs,

तथा - likewise

पश्य - be ready to see.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

बहूनि अदृष्टपूर्वाणि, आश्चर्याणि च (भूतानि) – many other wonderful beings, never seen before by you. Furthermore,

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यत् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥

11 – 7

गुडाकेश – O! Arjuna

पश्य – Be ready to see

अद्य – now, in front of you

एकस्थं मम देहे – standing in My ONE body.

कृत्स्नं जगत् – this entire universe

सचराचरम् – along with all the movable and immovable beings in it

यः च अन्यत् द्रष्टुं इच्छसि, अद्य पश्य – and also any other thing that you want to see, you can also see them now in ME, just in front of you

Standing in the battlefield, Arjuna has a continuing concern on the eventual outcome of the War that is imminent. Sri Krishna knows that. If Arjuna wants to know what is going to happen in this war, that also, Arjuna will be able to see in the विश्वरूप of Sri Krishna. Therefore, भगवान् says:

यः च अन्यत् द्रष्टुं इच्छसि – अद्य पश्य – whatever else you would like to see – the past, present, or the future – you can see them also, now, in ME. But, भगवान् adds:

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुं , अनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।

दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥

11 – 8

अनेन स्वचक्षुषा एव, मां द्रष्टुं न शक्यसे – By your own ordinary human eyes only, you cannot see My cosmic Form. You will not be able to see My विश्वरूपं – all-inclusive Form, by your ordinary human eyes. Therefore,

ते ददामि दिव्यं चक्षुः : – I give you – I bless you by My माया Power – Divine Eyes, meaning Super-human eyes capable of seeing everything in My विश्वरूपं – whatever you want to see in it. Being now endowed with दिव्य चक्षुः : Divine eyes.

पश्य मे योगं ऐश्वरम् (9-5) - Be ready to see and enjoy My ईश्वर योग – the extraordinary connection between Myself and this entire creation – My माया. So saying,



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भगवान् assumes His विश्वरूपं – His all-inclusive cosmic Form, for the private vision of Arjuna only.

What happens next, we will see next time.