



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

भक्ति योगः

Chapter 12

Volume 4

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Sri Krishna has been talking about सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन – mode of worship of परमेश्वर in the form and names of one's own choice, which mode of worship is appropriate for संसारिs, for people living a life of worldly activities of various kinds, and their consequences.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

The entire purpose of ईश्वर उपासन – worship of परमेश्वर, is only to cross the ocean of संसार, worldly life, safely and successfully. Safely means without hurting oneself or others, and successfully means ultimately reaching the destination to be reached, in this very life itself.

What is the destination? The destination is मोक्ष – release from this ever-changing tribulations of worldly life and reaching the never-changing state of total fulfillment, peace and happiness in life.

That मोक्ष is परमेश्वर Itself, परमेश्वर being ever-existent and all-pervasive, including oneself, gaining मोक्ष is really reaching परमेश्वर already in oneself. ईश्वर उपासन – worship of परमेश्वर, is the means for reaching that परमेश्वर already in oneself, as oneself itself, and that is indeed gaining मोक्ष. भगवान् tells here the means for gaining such मोक्ष.

Since we are all संसारिs living an everyday life of worldly activities, what भगवान् tells here is of direct and immediate interest to all of us. The means for gaining मोक्ष is the simultaneous cultivation of कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, which together constitute ईश्वर उपासन – worship of परमेश्वर for a संसारि. How to cultivate कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति simultaneously, is the subject matter of today's verses.

भगवान् says: First of all, one must be clear and be convinced about the destination to be reached, which means one must understand मोक्ष and must develop an intense yearning for gaining मोक्ष.

मोक्षो मे भूयात् इति इच्छा – An intense yearning for gaining मोक्ष must be there. If that desire is there, then all of one's activities will naturally get oriented towards gaining मोक्ष, reaching परमेश्वर. If that desire is not there, then the destination would appear to move farther and farther away from one's reach. Therefore, भगवान्'s first instruction is: मत्परमो भव – Be one for whom the ultimate destination in life is reaching परमेश्वर Itself, and nothing less. Having ascertained, beyond doubt, that परमेश्वर is the ultimate goal to be reached,



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सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य – do all actions with ईश्वर अर्पण बुद्धि – with the attitude of total dedication to परमेश्वर, which means do all actions in accordance with your own स्वधर्म. Do all actions in accordance with the dictates of your own innermost conscience. By so doing, one cultivates कर्मयोग बुद्धि. Simultaneously, अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते – worship परमेश्वर in the form and names of your own choice, with अनन्य योग बुद्धि. Worship परमेश्वर, with the clear conviction that परमेश्वर is your only आश्रय – your only real refuge, your only real source of security, peace and happiness. And, with that firm conviction, meditate on परमेश्वर, with the attitude of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति – total surrender to परमेश्वर, already in oneself. By so worshipping परमेश्वर, one cultivates अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति. For those people who thus cultivate in themselves both कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति simultaneously, भगवान् says:

तेषां अहं मृत्यु संसार सागरात् समुद्धर्ता भवामि – For them I become the समुद्धर्ता – the savior. I become the one who uplifts them from the endless tribulations of worldly life. I bless them with peace and tranquility. I free them from all mental agitations of daily life.

भगवान् being already in oneself as oneself itself, भगवान् becomes the savior. By the power of कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, one gains the capacity to uplift oneself from the tribulations, distress and sufferings of worldly life. Not only that

न चिरात् मयि आवेशित चेतसाम् – it won't be too long before one's entire अन्तःकरण – mind, बुद्धि, चित्तं and अहंकार becomes tuned for – becomes ready for ईश्वर ज्ञानं and ईश्वर प्रवेशनं – knowledge of परमेश्वर and entry into परमेश्वर already in oneself, gained through Upanishad knowledge. Ultimately मोक्ष is gained only through realized ईश्वर ज्ञानं, but one becomes fit for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं through diligent cultivation of कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, in the manner described above. Therefore, भगवान्'s instruction is

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व – Fix your mind firmly in Me, the परमेश्वर. Let there be no doubt in your mind about your pursuit of परमेश्वर, as your ultimate destination.

मयि बुद्धिम् निवेशय – Let your बुद्धि enter into Me, The परमेश्वर, through श्रवणं, मननं, and निदिध्यासनं – listening and understanding, reflecting and absorbing Upanishad



knowledge on, जीव, जगत् and ईश्वर. If you continue to do all that diligently, you will, in time, mature in ईश्वर ज्ञानं and

अथ ऊर्ध्वम् निवसिष्यसि मय्येव – you will ultimately reach Me, as Myself, as परमेश्वर Itself. There will no longer be any distance between the आत्मा of yourself and the आत्मा of परमेश्वर. There will only be ONE आत्मा, Oneself, and That is Yourself, That is Myself, and That is सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप आत्मा. Thus

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव – You will abide in Me for ever. You will reach the destination. You will gain मोक्ष

न संशयः – There can be no doubt about it. That is the Law of nature.

Simultaneous cultivation of कर्मयोग बुद्धि and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, involving pursuit of Upanishad knowledge require concentration of mind and efforts.

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरं – If you are not able to put forth the required concentration of mind and efforts, if you are not able to hold your mind steadily on परमेश्वर – on the destination to be reached, then भगवान् says

ततः अभ्यासयोगेन मां आप्तुं इच्छ – Desire to reach Me, the परमेश्वर, through अभ्यासयोग. Mind can be brought under control through अभ्यास – practice, and वैराग्य – dispassion. अभ्यासयोग is pursuit of परमेश्वर by doing all actions with the attitude of total dedication to परमेश्वर, again and again, worshipping परमेश्वर, meditating on परमेश्वर, with the attitude of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति again and again, dwelling on ब्रह्मज्ञानं through श्रवणं, मननं, and निदिध्यासनं of Upanishad knowledge again and again, and cultivating dispassion – total absence of cravings for lesser things in life. By such अभ्यासयोग, you will be able to bring your mind under discipline, and ultimately you will be able to reach the goal of मोक्ष through cultivation of कर्मयोग बुद्धि, अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति and ब्रह्मविद्या knowledge, says Sri Krishna. All this we saw in some detail last time. Continuing, भगवान् says:

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्म परमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 12 – 20



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि – If you find that you are not capable of doing such practice of अभ्यासयोग, if you cannot undertake repeated practices of ईश्वर उपासन, ईश्वर ध्यानं, Upanishad studies, etc. in the manner described above, then

मत्कर्म परमो भव – Be one for whom every कर्म is ईश्वर कर्म, and doing ईश्वर कर्म as service to परमेश्वर is itself one's ultimate destination in life, which means, you need not have to blame yourself for not being able to do ईश्वर उपासन (worship of परमेश्वर), ईश्वर ध्यानं (meditation on परमेश्वर), and undertake Upanishad studies, etc. Just be a कर्मयोगी to start with. That is enough, and everything else will follow naturally in due course, so says भगवान्.

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि – Performing all actions only for the sake of परमेश्वर, in the service of परमेश्वर, by that means also you will gain सिद्धि – success in your pursuits of परमेश्वर already in yourself. We must understand this option properly. Initially the instruction was

मत्परमो भव – Be one for whom परमेश्वर is the ultimate goal to be reached. If you cannot be so, now भगवान् says

मत्कर्म परमो भव – Be one for whom every कर्म is ईश्वर कर्म and doing ईश्वर कर्म is by itself the ultimate goal to be reached.

Every कर्म is ईश्वर कर्म means there is no काम्य कर्म for me. I have no कर्म of my own. I have no कर्म propelled by my own राग-द्वेष forces, forces of personal likes and dislikes. Every कर्म I do has come to me directly from भगवान् only.

Doing ईश्वर कर्म means performing every कर्म as भगवत् कैङ्कर्यम् – as a service to परमेश्वर. Even though I may be doing the कर्मs I do because of my पूर्वकर्मफल – because of the results of my past actions, I realize that the one who gives me the कर्मफल is always the परमेश्वर. Therefore any कर्म I do comes directly from परमेश्वर only, and thus naturally every कर्म for me is only ईश्वर कर्म.

Recalling भगवान् 's निमित्तमात्रं भव उपदेश, I am only an instrument to serve the will of परमेश्वर, and nothing more. I recognize that परमेश्वर is always पूर्णम् – Full in every



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respect. परमेश्वर does not depend on my doing or not doing any कर्म. For me, recognizing every कर्म as an ईश्वर कर्म, and doing every कर्म as service to परमेश्वर is only an expression of my own ईश्वर भक्ति – devotion to परमेश्वर.

Because of My own devotion to परमेश्वर, I do every कर्म as भगवान् आज्ञया, भगवत् कैङ्कर्यम् कर्म – as a कर्म performed as a service to परमेश्वर, under orders directly from परमेश्वर. Just as the sun shines, wind blows, rain rains, under orders from परमेश्वर, so too I do what I do. Even my ability to do what I do is by the grace of परमेश्वर only. That being so, I see परमेश्वर in Me, in every कर्म I do. Doing every कर्म with the attitude of total dedication to परमेश्वर is itself ईश्वर उपासन – worship of परमेश्वर for me. With such attitude, I soon overcome all internal and external obstacles in me, and begin to recognize that मत्कर्म परमो भव is indeed मत्परमो भव – pursuing the goal of doing ईश्वर कर्म is indeed the goal of reaching परमेश्वर itself.

So realizing, I soon gain the ability to pursue the goal of reaching परमेश्वर itself naturally, through कर्मयोग बुद्धि, अन्तःकरण शुद्धि, अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति, Upanishad studies, ईश्वर ज्ञानं and ईश्वर प्रवेशनं, and ultimately, reach परमेश्वर in oneself, and thus gain मोक्ष.

That is the means indicated by Sri Krishna's teaching मत्कर्म परमो भव. Following the above teaching, भगवान् assures

मदर्थम् अपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्, सिद्धिम् अवाप्स्यसि – performing all actions for the sake of परमेश्वर only, by that means also, you will gain सिद्धि – success.

Here the सिद्धि – the success, is realizing that मत्कर्म परमो भव is indeed मत्परमो भव, naturally followed by the simultaneous cultivation of कर्मयोग बुद्धि, अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति and pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं through Upanishad studies, in the manner described earlier.

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मध्योगमाश्रितः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥

12 - 11



अथ – Again

एतत् अपि कर्तम् अशक्तोऽसि – if you find out that you are not capable of doing even this, namely, doing every कर्म as ईश्वर कर्म dedicated to the service of परमेश्वर, if you feel that it is not possible for you even to be such a कर्म योगी, then

मध्योगमाश्रितः – provided you are fully committed to the goal of reaching परमेश्वर

ततः – then, there is another kind of कर्म योग that you can do, and that is

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं कुरु यतात्मवान् – renounce, give up all कर्मफलs – the results of all your actions to परमेश्वर, and do so deliberately, with no reaction whatsoever (यतात्मवान् = संयत चित्तः – mind fully and naturally under control), which means, totally dissociate yourself from the कर्मफल, and offer all कर्मफल to परमेश्वर, as worship of परमेश्वर. That is as good as being मत्कर्म परमो भव and also मत्परमो भव, so says भगवान्.

भगवान् is unfolding here a second, and an extraordinarily powerful version of कर्मयोग, which is applicable and practicable for every person at all times. Let us understand this as well as we can.

Now, when does one feel that one cannot look upon every कर्म as ईश्वर कर्म? One feels so only when one has काम्यकर्मs of one's own. Only when one has कर्मs to fulfill one's personal desires – कर्म s propelled by one's own worldly desires of various kinds, one feels that one cannot look upon every कर्म as ईश्वर कर्म. भगवान् says

“Alright. You can do all the काम्यकर्म s you want, provided of course, you do not transgress धर्म. Within the limits of propriety, you may do whatever कर्म you want, but you must always remember what I told you before, namely

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते, मा फलेषु कदाचन ॥ 2 – 47

Doing कर्म is, of course your prerogative, but you have no claim on the कर्मफल, because it does not belong to you. I am the कर्मफलदाता. The कर्मफल belongs to परमेश्वर only. Therefore,



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सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं कुरु – dissociate yourself totally from all कर्मफलs as they happen, and offer the results of all your actions to परमेश्वर, where they belong. Offering all कर्मफलs to परमेश्वर, as worship of परमेश्वर, is सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं – renunciation of all कर्मफलs. Such सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं – renunciation of all कर्मफल s is also another version of कर्म योग.

Thus कर्म योग has two versions, one at the level of कर्म and another at the level of कर्मफल. At the level of कर्म, कर्म योग is considering every कर्म that has come to you, as ईश्वर कर्म, and doing all such कर्म s as well as you can, as भगवत् कैङ्कर्यम् – as dedication to परमेश्वर, as service to परमेश्वर, as worship of परमेश्वर.

At the level of कर्मफल, कर्म योग is सर्वकर्मफलत्याग – renunciation of the results of all your actions, offering the results of all your actions to परमेश्वर, as worship of परमेश्वर. At both levels, कर्म योग itself is ईश्वर उपासन – appropriate worship of परमेश्वर for all संसारिs.

Let us now try to understand the meaning and potential of सर्वकर्मफलत्याग with reference to reaching परमेश्वर – gaining मोक्ष. If you offer the results of all your actions to परमेश्वर, what does परमेश्वर do? Does परमेश्वर take away the results from you? No. If you give the fruits of all your actions to भगवान्, भगवान् gives them back to you as प्रसाद, as His blessings. Thus you are a winner both ways.

You get to do whatever you were impelled to do by your own desires, and you also get to enjoy the fruits of your actions, whatever they are. In effect, you lose nothing, and also you gain something in the form of भगवान् 's blessings. Consequently, सर्वकर्मफलत्याग is something every person can do, and should like to do, if only one sincerely wants to reach परमेश्वर, wants to gain मोक्ष.

Now, what does सर्वकर्मफलत्याग really mean? It only means that you should cultivate ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि with respect to all your कर्मफलs – all results of all your actions, whatever they are. Do whatever कर्म you want to do, but learn to accept the results that follow – pleasure or pain, as ईश्वर प्रसाद – as the very grace of परमेश्वर, without



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identifying yourself with those results in any manner whatsoever. That is सर्वकर्मफलत्याग.

With respect to काम्य कर्मs initiated and propelled by one's own likes and dislikes, why does one do कर्मs in the first place? Only for their results, only for कर्मफलs. But if one is going to give up all such कर्मफलs to परमेश्वर, it is same as doing even those काम्यकर्मs, only for the sake of परमेश्वर. Therefore, सर्वकर्मफलत्याग is, in effect, the same as doing ईश्वरार्थम् कर्म - कर्म done for the sake of परमेश्वर only, and as such, it is a mode of worship of परमेश्वर. As भगवान् has said in the previous verse:

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिम् अवाप्स्यसि - doing कर्म for the sake of परमेश्वर only, one is assured of success in reaching the goal to be reached, namely परमेश्वर Itself. By cultivating ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि, you also learn that in effect, सर्वकर्मफलत्याग is the same as सर्वकर्मत्याग - renunciation of all actions themselves, which means you instantly destroy all bondages of कर्मs. Since the original कर्म itself is prompted and propelled by काम desire, in effect, सर्वकर्मफलत्याग is same as सर्वकामत्याग - renunciation of all desires propelling you to perform action.

भगवान् has already said that by such renunciation of all desires, one discovers all happiness in oneself by oneself.

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥

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That is the mark of a wise person.

Therefore, even though सर्वकर्मफलत्याग is mentioned here as the last of the four modes of ईश्वर उपासन appropriate for संसारिs, in its effectiveness to reach परमेश्वर, to gain मोक्ष, it is not only second to none, it is eminently relevant and applicable to the life of every person, and every one of us indeed.

Such is the glory of सर्वकर्मफलत्याग way of every day life. भगवान् has something more to say about सर्वकर्मफलत्याग, which we will see next time.