



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ विभाग योगः

Chapter 13
Volume 8

अमानित्वं, अदंभित्वं, अहिंसा, क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं, शौचं, स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ 13-7

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जन्ममृत्यु, जरा व्याधि, दुःख, दोषानुदर्शनम् ॥ 13-8

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अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं, तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
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Sri Krishna is in the process of pointing out here a set of 20 personal qualities as ज्ञान साधनं – as wisdom helpful for gaining purity of mind and बुद्धि, necessary for making oneself fit for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. We have already talked briefly about the first 13 such personal qualities, namely

अमानित्वं, अदंभित्वं, अहिंसा, क्षान्तिरार्जवम्
आचार्योपासनं, शौचं, स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यम्, अनहङ्कार, एव च
जन्ममृत्यु, जरा व्याधि, दुःख, दोषानुदर्शनम्

and असक्तिः. Let us now continue with the next one



14. अनभिष्वंगः पुत्र – दार – गृहादिषु – Total absence of excessive care, love and affection for your dear ones, is ज्ञान साधनं – a help in your pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, says Sri Krishna.

Everybody has some dear ones, such as पुत्र – sons and daughters, दार – wife or husband, गृहादिषु – house, wealth of different kinds, relatives, friends, etc. All of them are different kinds of possessions, whom you care, and for whom you have love and affection, and also duties and responsibilities. Such care, love and affection is called स्वङ्गः – all that is natural, proper and good. But, when that care, love and affection become excessive, it is अनभिष्वंगः, and that is not a help to your pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, because, with excessive care, love and affection for your dear possessions, you get bound to those possessions, and hence your mind and बुद्धि are no longer free to pursue आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.

Therefore, you must know where to draw the line between your natural care, love and affection and excessive care, love and affection with respect to your dear ones, whoever or whatever they are. When your care, love and affection for your dear ones become an impediment to your pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, that is where you draw the line, and detach yourself from such kinds of care, love and affection.

We must understand that on such detachment, your care, love and affection for your dear ones do not become any less, but they are no longer sources of bondage to you, and your mind and बुद्धि are free to pursue ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. Being सर्वात्मकत्वं and सर्व कल्याण लक्षणसंपन्नं, The आत्मा being the Self of all beings, and ब्रह्म ज्ञानं being the abode of all virtues and happiness, you are never really isolated from the well-being of your dear ones, and your contribution to their welfare and happiness is even far more because of your pursuit of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, whether it is so recognized or not. Therefore, avoid excessive care, love and affection for anyone or any object in life.

15. नित्यं च समचित्तत्वं इष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु – Always maintain a continuous state of evenness of mind, an equanimity of mind, whatever happens to you, whatever comes to you in life, whether it is इष्ट or अनिष्ट – desirable or undesirable, pleasure or pain. That is नित्यं च समचित्तत्वं.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Now, we must understand how one gets that continuous state of evenness of mind at all times, and how such state of mind becomes ज्ञान साधनं – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. It is कर्म योग बुद्धि, more particularly सर्व कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि – an attitude of renunciation of the fruits of all of one's actions, which means offering the fruits of all of one's actions to परमेश्वर as worship of परमेश्वर. It is only such कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि that gives one evenness of mind at all times. Whatever you are, whatever happens to you, whatever comes to you every day of your life, all that is your कर्मफल. The mind always tends to react to every कर्मफल, but, when that कर्मफल is given up as कर्मफल त्याग, when that कर्मफल is totally returned to परमेश्वर as ईश्वर उपासनं – as worship of परमेश्वर, which means when that कर्मफल is welcomed and accepted as ईश्वर प्रसादं, as the very manifestation of the grace of परमेश्वर, then there is nothing left for the mind to react.

From such कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि – ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि, what comes is ONLY immediate peace of mind. Therefore, by continuous कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि, one gains continuous peace of mind, and that is continuous evenness of mind. That is how one gets a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times.

In the absence of such evenness of mind, such peace of mind, the mind tends to react to every कर्मफल that manifests itself every day of one's life. Since कर्म changes continuously, the कर्मफल also changes continuously, and if the mind also changes continuously with कर्मफल, the mind will be in a constant state of reaction, which means a constant state of agitation. A mind in a constant state of agitation is not conducive to the diligent pursuit of any knowledge. For the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, an evenness of mind, devoid of agitations is absolutely necessary. That is how नित्यं समचित्तत्वं – a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times becomes ज्ञान साधनं – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं - Self-knowledge.

Therefore, maintain a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times, including all kinds of pleasure or pain, by cultivating an attitude of कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि – ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि at all times, as a value in life.



16. मयि (परमेश्वरे) अनन्ययोगेन भक्ति अव्यभिचारिणी – The cultivation of सर्व कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि – ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि at all times is possible only if one has अव्यभिचारिणी ईश्वर भक्ति, which means abiding, unflinching, undistracted and undistractable devotion to परमेश्वर, gained through अनन्य योग ईश्वर भक्ति, which means firm, total and undivided devotion to परमेश्वर already in oneself as आत्मा – The Self I in oneself.

How does that kind of ईश्वर भक्ति – devotion to परमेश्वर become ज्ञान साधनं – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge? Because, That परमेश्वर, already in oneself as आत्मा – The Self I in oneself, is the goal to be reached, constantly keeping that goal in mind, and being totally free and committed to reaching that goal is certainly a help in ultimately reaching that goal.

17. विविक्त देश सेवित्वं – Cultivate a love for विविक्त देश. विविक्त देश is a place which is quiet, clean, pleasing and free from any cause for fear. Such a place may be an आश्रम, a hermitage in a forest setting, a river bank, a mountain top, a temple, a corner in one's own house, hut or apartment, or just oneself, which means one has to discover in oneself a love for being oneself, by oneself. That is a विविक्त देश सेवित्वं. Such love is ज्ञान साधनं – a help for the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.

Let us note here that भगवान् is teaching विविक्त देश सेवित्वं to Arjuna in a battlefield. Is a battlefield a विविक्त देश सेवित्वं – a quiet and pleasing place, free from fear for one to contemplate on आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge? The answer is, if one can discover the place of quietude and freedom from fear in one's own अन्तः करण – mind and बुद्धि, then it does not matter whether one is in a battlefield or in a busy market place. It is only the विविक्त देश सेवित्वं of one's own mind and बुद्धि that really makes this शरीर – this physical body a क्षेत्र – a holy place.

Therefore, discover peace and tranquility in yourself, and cultivate a love for being yourself, by yourself, as a value for the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Does that mean one should avoid the company of people? No, not all people, but one should avoid the company of certain kinds of people. Who are they? भगवान् says:

18. अरतिः जनसंसदि – Cultivate a natural distaste (अरतिः) for being in the midst of people seeking pleasures and entertainments of various kinds through improper activities (जनसंसदि). From the point of view of the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge and cultivation of ईश्वर भक्ति – devotion to परमेश्वर already in oneself, such people are प्राकृत जनाः

संस्कार शून्याः – such people are devoid of culture and God-consciousness in their thinking and values, and their ways of life can be powerful enough to distract one from ब्रह्म ज्ञानं – ईश्वर भक्ति. For that reason, any environment which draws such people together must be entirely avoided.

Therefore, भगवान् says - cultivate a natural distaste for degrading environments and the company of people associated with improper, immoral and unethical activities. Such अरतिः जनसंसदि is ज्ञान साधनं – a help for one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.

While all the 18 personal qualities mentioned so far are necessary, they themselves are not sufficient to become ज्ञान साधनं. They become ज्ञान साधनं – a help in gaining Self-knowledge, only if they are also simultaneously combined with two other personal qualities, namely अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं, and तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं.

19. अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं is प्रत्यग आत्मज्ञान नित्यत्वं – Daily exposure to knowledge about one's own Innermost self, and that knowledge is ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. For us, such daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge comes only from वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापकं – daily recitation of at least a few Veda Upanishad mantras, with proper understanding and appreciation, together with the daily practice of such Veda Upanishad knowledge so gained.

This integrated process of वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापकं is called स्वाध्यायप्रवचनं, whose importance for one's peace, progress and happiness has been repeatedly emphasized in the Taittiriya Upanishad.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

Because such स्वाध्यायप्रवचनं is मोक्ष साधनं – a great help in one's pursuit of मोक्ष – total fulfillment in life, which is the overriding purpose of all human existence, even if you are not interested in मोक्ष right now, as you mature, you will certainly become interested in It, and you will certainly need this knowledge for reaching your highest destination in life, whether or not that destination is clear to your mind and बुद्धि at this time.

If such स्वाध्यायप्रवचनं is so important for every person, as a value in life, what can we do about it, being here where we are, at this time of our lives? Obviously, there are very many traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापकं practiced by different groups of people, either individually or collectively. One method is what a few devotees are doing here at this temple every Sunday morning, reciting Rudram together with some related Veda mantras, in the traditional manner. It is indeed an extraordinary, exhilarating and uplifting experience even to listen to these Vedic sounds again and again, especially if you can understand and appreciate the content of these Veda mantras. There are also other traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापकं involving Veda mantras with or without simultaneous Vedic rituals of some kind.

While all such traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं and वेद अध्यापकं do help in अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं – in maintaining daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, they are not easily practicable for most of us here in the environment in which we live. But, what we can do easily and effectively is what we are doing here, right now, and indeed, every week at this time, namely, hear and listen to the scripture readings, and also the Veda Upadesa mantras which we recite towards the conclusion of our current Puja schedule. The content of these Veda mantras is now available for any one who seeks this knowledge. Let us continue to hear and listen to these Veda mantras, and also scripture readings again and again, with श्रद्धा – unqualified faith in ourselves and in our own roots.

भगवत् गीता is considered to be समस्त वेद अर्थ सार संग्रहं – the very essence of the teachings of all the Vedas and the Upanishads. The ईश, केन, कठ, तैत्तिरीय and मुण्डक Upanishads are among the most enlightening Vedic knowledge helpful for a fuller and deeper understanding and appreciation of the teachings of the भगवत् गीता. Thus the ब्रह्मविद्या scripture readings at this temple are totally focused on cultivation of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.



For those among us who really wish to cultivate the personal quality of अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं – daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं as ज्ञान साधनं – as a help in one's meaningful pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, the easiest starting point is to persuade oneself to listen, from oneself itself, the scripture readings we hear at this temple, on the भगवत् गीता and the Upanishads, on a continuing basis, limiting oneself to only ONE scripture reading per day, every day, always followed by a few minutes of reflection on its contents, in the context of one's own life, consistent with the message of the scripture readings being heard every day from oneself, by oneself.

One will soon discover such अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं – daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं is indeed a great help, a ज्ञान साधनं, for one's meaningful pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. Finally

20. तत्त्वज्ञान अर्थदर्शनं – तत्त्वज्ञानं is आत्म तत्त्वज्ञानं – the knowledge about the true nature of oneself as आत्मा – The Self I, and that is ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, gained with the help of all the 19 personal qualities mentioned above, starting from अमानित्वं, अदंभित्वं, अहिंसा etc., up to अध्यात्मज्ञान नित्यत्वं, which means gaining maturity in each one of these personal qualities, both individually and collectively, is the means for gaining अन्तःकरण शुद्धि – purity of mind and बुद्धि, necessary for gaining तत्त्वज्ञानं – ब्रह्म ज्ञानं – आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.

तत्त्वज्ञान अर्थ is तत्त्वज्ञान फल – what you get out of such तत्त्वज्ञानं – Self-knowledge and That is मोक्ष – total freedom from all kinds of अविद्या, काम, कर्म बन्धनस – all bondages born of Self-ignorance. Therefore,

तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं is मोक्ष दर्शनं – seeing clearly That तत्त्वज्ञानं – Self-knowledge is not only for gaining मोक्ष, That तत्त्वज्ञानं एव मोक्षं, The Self-knowledge Itself is मोक्ष.

Thus, तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं means seeing clearly that मोक्ष – total freedom from all bondages, total freedom in life, absolute peace, joy, happiness is achievable by तत्त्वज्ञानं, and by तत्त्वज्ञानं only, by Self-knowledge only. That realization brings मोक्ष into your sight.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

That means, all 19 pre-required personal qualities mentioned above, together, bring मोक्ष total fulfillment in life, into your direct vision, so that you are now able to see clearly that मोक्ष, the overriding purpose of life is within the reach of your बुद्धि. That मोक्ष दर्शनं – that vision of मोक्ष is ज्ञान साधनं – a help in actually gaining मोक्ष, just as, when the objective of your endeavor comes into view of your sight, you naturally go in for that objective, with renewed faith, confidence and enthusiasm. That is how तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं or मोक्ष दर्शनं becomes ज्ञान साधनं – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge.

We must understand that अमानित्वं etc., all the 19 qualities mentioned above together result in तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं, which then becomes the 20th ज्ञान साधनं, helpful for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं - आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. Having thus listed all the 20 pre-required personal qualities necessary for making one's mind and बुद्धि fit for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge, भगवान् goes on to say:

एतत् ज्ञानं इति प्रोक्तं – all these 20 personal qualities together constitute the one great ज्ञानं, meaning ज्ञान साधनं – the ONE great help for one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं – Self-knowledge. Further यत् अतः अन्यथा (तत्) अज्ञानं – whatever is opposed to any or all of these 20 personal qualities is अज्ञानं meaning, अज्ञान साधनं – help only in the perpetuation of अज्ञानं – Self-ignorance and all its consequences.

Thus concludes Sri Krishna's short discourse on ज्ञानं as ज्ञान साधनं – the personal qualities one must cultivate, and have in full measure in order to gain पूर्ण अन्तः करण् शुद्धि – absolute purity of mind and बुद्धि, necessary to make oneself fit for gaining Self-knowledge, which means gaining the ability to recognize आत्मा – The Self I, The परमेश्वर already in oneself, by oneself, as oneself Itself.

In the next six enlightening verses Sri Krishna tells how one can recognize That आत्मा – The Self I, The परमेश्वर already in oneself, which we will see next time.