



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
गुणत्रय विभाग योगः
Chapter 14
Volume 1

श्री भगवान् उवाच

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।
यत् ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिं इतो गताः ॥ 14-1

इदं ज्ञानं उपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यम् आगताः ।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ 14-2

मम योनिः महत् ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भम् दधाम्यहं ।
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ 14-3

सर्वं योनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महत् योनिः अहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ 14-4

The 14th chapter of the भगवत् गीता is entitled गुणत्रयविभागयोग – the threefold division of गुणs and their distinct characteristics. Sri Krishna has been talking about गुणs in everyone of his earlier discourses, with particular reference to the subject matter under discussion. In this chapter, the subject matter itself is: The three-fold गुणs - qualities of beings in this creation. As we may recall, in the last chapter भगवान् said:

कारणं गुण सङ्गोऽस्य सदसत् योनि जन्मसु 13 -21

For the birth of an individual person in various good and bad wombs, the reason is the mistaken association of प्रकृति गुणs with those of the आत्मा – The Self I Itself. In this discourse, भगवान् tells specifically

- What the प्रकृति गुणs are



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

- How their apparent association with the आत्मा takes place
- How one can uplift oneself from such association, and
- What are the distinguishing marks of a person who is released from the bondages of गुणs

भगवान् opens the discourse with two introductory verses.

श्री भगवान् उवाच

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानं उत्तमम् ।

यत् ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिं इतो गताः ॥

14-1

भगवान् says:

भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि – I will tell you again, in more details, about

परं ज्ञानं, ज्ञानानां ज्ञानं उत्तमम् – the Supreme Knowledge, the ब्रह्मज्ञानं which is ज्ञानानां ज्ञानं उत्तमम् – the highest and the most exalted among all disciplines of knowledge.

Even though I have given you that knowledge already, I am going to talk about it again, because, the communication of that knowledge needs repetition for your own benefit.

While ब्रह्मज्ञानं is easily gained by those who have absolute अन्तः करण शुद्धि – purity of mind and बुद्धि, it is hardest to gain for those who are still committed to various kinds of worldly pursuits. Therefore, that knowledge needs to be communicated again and again, from different points of view, until it is grasped clearly and firmly by one's own mind and बुद्धि.

ब्रह्मज्ञानं is परम् ज्ञानं, because it is परमात्म ज्ञानं – it is knowledge about परमेश्वर Itself, and ब्रह्मज्ञानं is उत्तमं ज्ञानं – the highest and the most exalted among all disciplines of knowledge, because of its उत्तम फलं – what one gains from ब्रह्मज्ञानं is the highest and the most exalted among all पुरुषार्थs – all the needs and goals of life, namely मोक्ष itself.



No discipline of objective knowledge, by itself, can lead one to मोक्ष. Only ब्रह्मज्ञानं can lead one to मोक्ष – the ultimate destination for human life.

यत् ज्ञात्वा – Gaining that ब्रह्मज्ञानं

सर्वे मुनयः – सर्वे मननशीलाः – सर्वे अधिकारिणः – all sages, all the Rishis, all those who are qualified for this knowledge

इतः – have uplifted themselves from the bondages of गुण, कर्म and कर्मफल and परां सिद्धिम् गताः – they have gained total fulfillment in life. They have gained मोक्ष.

मोक्ष, once gained, is gained for ever, because, भगवान् says in the next verse:

इदं ज्ञानं उपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यम् आगताः ।

सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥

14-2

इदं ज्ञानं उपाश्रित्य – अनुष्ठाय – Pursuing ब्रह्मज्ञानं through cultivation of अमानित्वादि qualities, the 20 personal qualities भगवान् described earlier (13-7 to 11), together with श्रवणं, मननं and निदिध्यासनं – hearing, listening and understanding Upanishad knowledge, followed by reflection through repeated questioning of one's own understanding and absorbing Upanishad knowledge through contemplation and ईश्वर कैङ्कर्यम् – service to परमेश्वर, thus pursuing ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

मम साधर्म्यम् आगताः – the enlightened ones, the sages, the Rishis have come to discover परमेश्वर स्वरूपं– सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूपं in themselves, which means they have become ज्ञानीs, they have gained मोक्ष.

As भगवान् said earlier (7-18)

ज्ञानी तु आत्मैव मे मतं – a ज्ञानी is indeed Myself, a ज्ञानी is परमेश्वर स्वरूपं
मम साधर्म्यम् means परमेश्वर स्वरूपं. For any ईश्वर भक्त, identity with परमेश्वर is only in terms of one's स्वरूप and not स्वभाव. So long as one has physical body, the



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

physical body will always have its own limitations arising from one's स्वभाव – प्रारब्ध कर्मफल – results of one's past actions, and the consequent unique disposition of one's अन्तःकरण – mind and बुद्धि. That means, a ज्ञानी is परमेश्वर Itself only in terms of knowledge. On exhaustion of the प्रारब्ध कर्म's, when the body falls, the ज्ञानी having gained मोक्ष already, has no further individuality, and becomes ONE with the all-pervading ब्रह्मन् Itself. Consequently.

सर्गेः अपि न उपजायते – even at the time of creation, the ज्ञानी's do not come into being, again as individuals. The ज्ञानी's are not reborn. Similarly प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च – even at the time of dissolution of the universe, the ज्ञानी's do not go into the state of dissolution, because, having already gained मोक्ष, the ज्ञानी's have already gained नित्यत्वं – eternal existence, ONE with ब्रह्मन् Itself. The ज्ञानी's neither die, nor are they reborn. Thus, मोक्ष once gained, is gained forever. That is the glory of ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

In the first two introductory verses, भगवान् thus calls attention to the glory of ब्रह्मज्ञानं, so that Arjuna 's attention may not be dissipated by what may appear as repetition of what has been said already. In fact, in the matter of communicating ब्रह्मज्ञानं, there is, and there can be, no real repetition, because, every time a statement is formally repeated, a new dimension of ब्रह्मज्ञानं unfolds itself, depending on the state of one's spiritual maturity at that moment.

Consequently, every repetition of Upanishad words on ब्रह्मज्ञानं is always welcome, and no amount of repetition can be enough until one gains पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं, until one reaches मोक्षस्थानं. Until that time, if any seeker of ब्रह्मज्ञानं thinks that he knows all about ब्रह्मन्, he is grossly mistaken, so warns केनोपनिषत् in these words:

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति, दभ्रमेवापि नूनं
त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपं । (केनो 2-1)



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

If you think that you know very well about ब्रह्मन्, then you know very little indeed about ब्रह्मन्. So says केनोपनिषत्. This is a timely warning for every one of us.

After thus creating renewed interest and enthusiasm for gaining ब्रह्मज्ञानं in Arjuna, by the above introduction, Sri Krishna now opens the subject matter of this discourse.

Sri Krishna first talks about the birth of beings, how this entire creation has come into existence. भगवान् uses here words in common use, namely योनि the womb, पिता the father, बीज the seed and गर्भम् the pregnancy, to tell how this entire creation has come into existence. These words must be understood properly, in terms of ब्रह्मज्ञानं, to understand clearly how भगवान् is both the mother as well as the father for this entire creation.

The inherent infinite power of परमेश्वर – the माया of परमेश्वर, the स्वभाव of परमेश्वर, is the mother for all creation, because this entire creation is born from माया only, from the inherent infinite power of परमेश्वर only. The स्वरूप of परमेश्वर – the सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप of परमेश्वर is the father for this entire creation.

As we have seen already in the last chapter, the स्वरूप and स्वभाव are not two different beings. They are two-fold aspects of one and the same being, namely परमेश्वर itself. The स्वरूप of परमेश्वर is called पुरुष, and the माया of परमेश्वर is called प्रकृति. Thus पुरुष and प्रकृति are the two-fold aspects of ONE and the same परमेश्वर.

Every person is an inseparable combination of स्वरूप and स्वभाव. It is only by the presence of the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर already in oneself that one is able to activate one's स्वभाव – one is able to exercise one's will. The intrinsic unchanging and unchangeable nature of all beings is the स्वरूप – The सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म, and the incidental ever-changing and ever changeable nature peculiar to each being is the स्वभाव of the particular being, manifested as त्रिगुणात्मिका माया in the form of one's transient गुण's - personal qualities and attributes. Every one is different from every one else, only in



terms of one's स्वभाव – incidental nature, and not in terms of one's स्वरूप – intrinsic nature. With this understanding, let us hear now what भगवान् says here:

मम योनिः महत् ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भम् दधाम्यहं ।
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥

14-3

In our prayers, we recognize भगवान् both as mother as well as the father for this entire creation, and consequently for every being in this creation. How भगवान् becomes both the mother and the father for this entire creation is being told here. First भगवान् talks about the mother aspect.

मम योनिः महत् ब्रह्म – My womb is महत् ब्रह्म
तस्मिन् गर्भम् दधामि अहं – In that womb, I give pregnancy
ततः Then, thereby
सर्वभूतानां संभवः भवति – the birth of all beings takes place,
भारत – O! Arjuna

That is the literal meaning of the above verse. As pointed out earlier, भगवान्'s words here must be understood properly in terms of ब्रह्मज्ञानं. Please listen.

मम योनिः – My womb, the womb of परमेश्वर, which is the inherent creative power of परमेश्वर – the माया. Therefore, मम योनिः means मम माया. The माया is called योनि – the womb, because माया is the प्रकृति – the cause for birth of all beings in this creation.

The माया, the प्रकृति is totally under the will of परमेश्वर – ब्रह्मश्रया माया. The माया has no independent existence and it is inseparable from ब्रह्मन् – The परमेश्वर. Therefore the योनि of भगवान् is inseparable from भगवान्.

Thus मम योनिः – the मम माया – the माया of परमेश्वर is inseparable from the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर. That मम योनि, the मम माया is called as महत् ब्रह्म – the great ब्रह्मन्.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

How can माया be called ब्रह्मन्? Because ब्रह्मन् has two meanings, That which is incomparably big is ब्रह्मन्. That is सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन्. That which sustains everything is also called ब्रह्मन् – that is the meaning here.

Since ब्रह्मन् sustains माया, and hence the entire creation born of माया, the मम योनि, माया, is called महत् ब्रह्म – the great sustainer of the entire creation. In that योनि – the womb, अहं गर्भम् दधामि – I give गर्भम् – pregnancy. That गर्भम् is called हिरण्यगर्भम्, which is the infinite power of माया to create and manifest.

When भगवान् says तस्मिन् गर्भम् दधामि अहं – In That माया योनि I give गर्भम्, that means "I bless माया so that creation and manifestation can take place". Blessing माया means giving existence and consciousness - सत् and चित् to माया. With such blessing, माया gains power to create and to manifest, and thereby माया becomes the cause for the entire creation.

भगवान् being सर्वशक्तिमान्, all powerful, by activating माया through हिरण्यगर्भ सर्वभूतानां संभवः भवति – from the हिरण्यगर्भ the birth of all beings takes place.

गर्भ दानं – "Giving pregnancy to माया " should be understood properly.

गर्भ दानं is ईश्वर कटाक्षं – ईश्वर संकल्पं – the desire, the will of परमेश्वर as we saw in Taittiriya Upanishad,

सोऽकामयत । बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति ।

The सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् – desired "may I manifest Myself as many , by creation". When, and why did that ब्रह्मन् so desire?

In every cycle of creation, just prior to creation ब्रह्मन् so desired. Why? Out of compassion for the welfare and spiritual progress of the countless जीवs, currently existing within Itself in the unmanifest state, but soon becoming mature enough for remanifestation and fulfilling themselves in the natural cycle of creation



सः अकामयत – That ब्रह्मन्, That परमेश्वर desired. That desire is the seed "बीज" for गर्भ दानं – हिरण्यगर्भ, the activation of माया.

ईश्वर संकल्पं – The will of परमेश्वर, being the necessary seed-requirement for activation of माया into हिरण्यगर्भ, ईश्वर becomes the पिता – the father for this creation, which is pointed out in the next verse.

सर्व योनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महत् योनिः अहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥

14-4

कौन्तेय - O! Arjuna

याः मूर्तयः सर्व योनिषु संभवन्ति – the infinite varieties of physical bodies born from the infinite varieties of wombs in this entire creation

तासां – मूर्तीनां योनिः महत् ब्रह्म – for all of them, the cause is that महत् ब्रह्म – the माया and

अहं बीजप्रदः पिता – I am the father, the गर्भ दान कर्ता – I am the giver of pregnancy to माया – I am the activator of माया into हिरण्यगर्भ by My will.

Thus परमेश्वर identifies Itself as पिता – The father, as the निमित्त कारणं – as the efficient cause, the instrumental cause, the cause involving knowledge, power and skill for this entire creation. Thus we understand that the स्वभाव of परमेश्वर, which is the inherent, infinite power of परमेश्वर, the माया, whose very nature is the three-fold गुणs, is the mother. And the स्वरूप of परमेश्वर whose very nature is सत् चित् आनन्द ब्रह्मन् is the father for this entire creation. That is how ONE परमेश्वर becomes both the उपादान कारणं as well as the निमित्त कारणं – the material cause as well as the efficient (or the instrumental) cause, the mother as well as the father, for this entire creation.

Having said that, Sri Krishna now turns to the subject matter of this particular discourse, namely the three-fold गुणs, which constitute the very nature of माया.

We will talk about manifestations of the three-fold गुणs next time.