



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता  
गुणत्रय विभाग योगः  
**Chapter 14**  
**Volume 5**

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गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम  
चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

In the last verse we saw last time, भगवान् says:

एतान् त्रीन् गुणान् अतीत्य, देही अमृतं अश्नुते ।

By uplifting oneself from the hold of all the three गुणs, namely सत्व गुण, रजस् गुण and तमस् गुण, a person gains identity with one's स्वरूप, one's true nature, gains identity with परमेश्वर, already in oneself, and gains recognition of one's inherent immortality and hence gains मोक्ष – Absolute Liberation, श्रेयस् – total fulfillment in life.

This statement from Sri Krishna prompts Arjuna to ask Sri Krishna some pertinent questions

अर्जुन उवाच

कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन् गुणान्, एतान् अतीतो भवति प्रभो ।

किं आचारः कथं च, एतान् त्रीन् गुणान् अतिवर्तते ॥ 14-21

कैः लिङ्गैः – a लिङ्ग is a pointer mark for something. For example, Lord Shiva is all in ONE, means, all forms in ONE. When all forms are put into ONE, that ONE Itself has no definite form. That is why Lord Shiva is always pointed out by a लिङ्ग – a formless form. When you see a Shiva Linga, as we have in this temple, please recognize That form as All in ONE. That is ब्रह्मन्, the सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्मन्, the आत्मा, the परमेश्वर already in yourself, in myself and in every self there is in this creation. Here, in this verse, addressing Sri Krishna, Arjuna says

प्रभो – O! Lord

कैः लिङ्गैः – By what pointer mark, by what identifying criterion

एतान् त्रीन् गुणान् अतीतः भवति – a person becomes, a person can be identified as, a person can be considered as, one who has crossed all these three गुणs, and hence,



such a person is a गुणातीत. In other words, to be a गुणातीत – a person being above the hold of these three गुणs means what? That is Arjuna's first question.

किं आचारः – How does such a person, a गुणातीत, conduct himself or herself in daily life? In other words, what are the लक्षणs - the distinguishing characteristics of a गुणातीत – one who is above the hold of these गुणs? That is Arjuna's second question.

कथं एतान् त्रीन् गुणान् अतिवर्तते – By what means does one uplift oneself from the hold of these three गुणs? In other words, how does one become a गुणातीत? That is Arjuna's third question.

For any person to be a गुणातीत means what? What are the लक्षणs of a गुणातीत? How does one become a गुणातीत? These are Arjuna's questions. These questions are similar to those asked by him in Chapter 2 (2-54) regarding स्थितप्रज्ञ. भगवान् answers Arjuna's present questions also in a similar manner, more briefly, but in a highly focused manner.

श्री भगवान् उवाच

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहं एव च पाण्डव ।

न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि, न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥

14-22

Answering Arjuna's first question, भगवान् says:

पाण्डव – O! Arjuna, please listen.

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहं एव च

प्रकाशं, प्रवृत्तिं and मोह – these are the products of सत्त्व गुण, रजस् गुण and तमस् गुण respectively. प्रकाशं is manifestations of ज्ञानं and सुखं. ज्ञानं refers to awareness and clarity of knowledge, even limited knowledge of any kind, and सुखं refers to experiences of happiness, comfort, well-being, etc., at least for the time-being. All these are products of सत्त्व गुण. प्रवृत्ति is manifestations of activities propelled by the forces of desire for various objects and sense experiences, which are all products of रजस्



गुण, and मोह is manifestations of dullness, delusion born of confusion, and inability to understand, discriminate and decide which are all products of तमस् गुण.

Every person has all these three गुणs in different orders, with different magnitude and intensities of गुण, and consequently, every person experiences the products of all the three गुणs to different extents, in different forms, at different times, in different contexts.

संप्रवृत्तानि, निवृत्तानि च – These experiences of the products of गुणs come and go. They appear and disappear. They occur and vanish naturally. That being the case, भगवान् says that a गुणातीत – the one who remains uplifted from all the three गुणs

न द्वेष्टि, न काङ्क्षति – neither hates nor desires. A गुणातीत feels neither repelled nor attracted towards the natural appearances and disappearances of the different products of गुणs, which means, when the undesirable manifestations of the गुण appear, a गुणातीत is not repelled by them, and when the desirable manifestations of the गुणs disappear, he (or she) has no longing or craving for them. This again means that the appearances or disappearances of प्रकाश, प्रवृत्ति and मोह – the products of the three गुणs, have absolutely no effect on the disposition of the गुणातीत – the one who remains uplifted from all the three गुणs.

The above statement must be understood properly. Whether or not a person is affected by the appearances or disappearances of the products of गुणs is not the criterion to judge whether or not the person is a गुणातीत. The state of being of a गुणातीत – the state of being ONE above the hold of all गुणs is only for The आत्मा, The ब्रह्मन्, The परमेश्वर already in oneself, because, The आत्मा, The Self I, The स्वरूप – the true nature of oneself is असंगः – It ever remains unbound and free.

Therefore, if one is already a गुणातीत, then the question "What is it to be a गुणातीत?" does not arise; if one is not yet a गुणातीत, then only that question arises for which the answer is: To be a गुणातीत is simply to recognize one's स्वरूप – one's true nature as



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The आत्मा, The Self I. That is Sri Krishna's answer to Arjuna's first question. In the next three verses, भगवान् answers Arjuna's second question on the लक्षणस - the distinguishing characteristics of a गुणातीत – one who is absolutely free from the hold of these three गुणस.

उदासीनवत् आसीनः गुणैः यः न विचाल्यते ।  
गुणाः वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥ 14-23

समदुःख सुखः च स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।  
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरः तुल्यनिन्दा आत्मसंस्तुतिः ॥ 14-24

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यः तुल्यः मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।  
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥ 14-25

The one who has all the distinguishing characteristics indicated in the above three verses गुणातीतः स उच्यते – that person is said to be a गुणातीत. We are now talking about a जीवन् मुक्तः – a person still living, carrying on in life just like anybody else, except he or she has already uplifted oneself from the products of all the three गुणस through Self realization and Self recognition of one's own identity with The आत्मा – The Self I, The ब्रह्मन्– The परमेश्वर, already in oneself. The लक्षणस - the distinguishing characteristics of such a गुणातीत are as follows:

उदासीनवत् आसीनः – A गुणातीत conducts oneself in daily life as one abiding in oneself, ever remaining an uninvolved and unconcerned witness to everything that one does in life for the exhaustion of one's प्रारब्ध कर्मस - exhaustion of the results of one's own past कर्मस. As भगवान् said earlier (13-22), a गुणातीत ever remains उपद्रष्टा अनुमन्ता च, as शुद्ध-चैतन्य साक्षी स्वरूप आत्मा – as ever present witness supporting all the activities of the body, mind and the senses, by lending them existence and lighting them up. Further



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गुणैः यः न विचाल्यते – the गुणातीत ever remains unshaken and unaffected by any of the products of the गुणs, because of his (or her) विवेक ज्ञानं – discriminating knowledge.

So long as the body exists, गुणाः वर्तन्ते – all the three गुणs do exist, but where do they exist? As भगवान् said earlier (3-28)

गुणाः गुणेषु वर्तन्ते – the गुणs exist only among गुणs interacting with each other. That is the विवेक ज्ञानं here. Being clear about this knowledge

इति (ज्ञानं) एव यः अवतिष्ठति, सः न इङ्गते (न चलति – स्वरूपावस्थ एव भवति) – the one who abides firmly in the knowledge of the स्वरूप of oneself as The आत्मा, that person never moves from the vision of oneself as The आत्मा, which means, that person never identifies oneself with one's गुणs.

That is the nature of a गुणातीत – the one who has already uplifted oneself from the hold of all the three गुणs. Further, for a गुणातीत

समदुःख सुखः – दुःख and सुखः are equal, which means that person is not carried away by events which bring about दुःख or सुख – unhappiness or happiness. In other words, a गुणातीत is not subject to depression or elation of any kind, at any time, because

स्वस्थः – स्वे आत्मनि स्थितः – प्रसन्नः – the अन्तः करण – the mind and बुद्धि of a गुणातीत being always awake to The आत्मा, abide in The आत्मा, whose very nature is प्रसन्नः – cheerfulness Itself. Being so, the गुणातीत is always happy, Happy about what? Happy about being ONESELF Itself. The happiness of a गुणातीत is not a matter of attitude. It is a matter of being awake to one's सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप आत्मा. Because of one's आत्मज्ञानं – Self knowledge,

सम लोष्ट अश्म काञ्चनः – for a गुणातीत, a lump of clay, a piece of stone, a bar of gold are all the same, in the sense, he sees the same आत्मा in all of them. Again, because of his being a स्वस्थः, because of his आत्मज्ञानं



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तुल्य- प्रिय -अप्रियः - a गुणातीत remains the same towards प्रिय and अप्रिय - desirables and undesirables. He has no likes and dislikes, love or hatred towards anything. Therefore, he is a

धीरः - a wise person, an enlightened person. Consequently

तुल्य - निन्दा - आत्मसंस्तुतिः - a गुणातीत remains the same both in censure and in self-praise. Further

मान अपमानयोः तुल्यः - a गुणातीत remains the same both in honor and in dishonor, which means, there is no हर्ष or शोक, no particular happiness or unhappiness in any situation.

तुल्यः मित्र - अरि - पक्षयोः - For a गुणातीत, everybody is a friend. There is no enemy. But there may be some people who look upon a गुणातीत as an enemy because of their own गुणs. But the गुणातीत remains the same to everyone whether one looks upon him as a friend or enemy. Further, a गुणातीत is also a

सर्वारम्भ परित्यागी - he has the capacity to renounce all notions of initiating actions of any kind, which means he has no कर्तृत्व भाव - he is totally free from अहंकार. He is totally free from any notion of being a doer of any action, because आत्मा is अकर्ता. आत्मा is not the doer of any कर्म. Being a गुणातीत, he is अकर्ता at all times.

गुणातीतः स उच्यते - What has been said above are the लक्षणs - the distinguishing characteristics of a गुणातीत. Those who have all the above mentioned characteristics are already गुणातीतs, and those who are not yet गुणातीतs, but want to become गुणातीतs, should strive to acquire and cultivate those qualities to maturity. That is Sri Krishna's answer to Arjuna's second question.

Having said that, in the next two verses, Sri Krishna answers Arjuna's all-important third question, namely, "how does one become a गुणातीत? भगवान् says

मां च यो अव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।  
स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥

14-26



ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहम् अमृतस्य अव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्य एकान्तिकस्य च ॥

14-27

यः मां सेवते – यः मां, परमेश्वरं, सर्वभूतहृदय

आश्रितं नारायणं परमेश्वरं सेवते – The one who serves Me, worships Me, The परमेश्वर, Sri Narayana, abiding in the hearts of all beings, the one who totally recognizes one's body vehicle as simply an instrument to serve the will of परमेश्वर, the one who always remembers भगवान्'s निमित्तमात्रं भव उपदेश, and worships परमेश्वर with that attitude at all times, that is the meaning of यः मां सेवते. Now, how to worship परमेश्वर in that manner?

अव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन – By the all-inclusive भक्तियोग, steadfastly, with no distraction or impropriety whatsoever. Now, what is that all-inclusive भक्तियोग? भगवान् has said that already:

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु (9-34)

मत्कर्मकृत् मत्परमः मत्भक्तः संगवर्जितः  
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु (11-55)

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मां एकं शरणं व्रज (18-66)

In short, अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति together with कर्मयोग बुद्धि, सर्वकर्मफलत्याग बुद्धि, ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि and the attitude of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति – total surrender to परमेश्वर already in oneself, total surrender to one's own Pure Consciousness at all times, that is the अव्यभिचार भक्तियोग – undistracted भक्तियोग. The one who worships Me, The परमेश्वर, by such भक्तियोग

सः – that person

एतान् गुणान् समतीत्य – सम्यक् अतीत्य – transcending all these three गुण's naturally through आत्मज्ञानं, आत्मविज्ञानं, आत्म अनुदर्शनं – Self-knowledge, Self-realization, Self-recognition





ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते – becomes fit for gaining the state of ब्रह्मन्, becomes fit for gaining श्रेयस् (मोक्ष) – becomes fit to be a गुणातीत – one beyond the hold of all the three गुणs, because

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहम् –अहं हि ब्रह्मणः प्रतिष्ठा – I, The परमेश्वर, am indeed the abode of ब्रह्मन्, The आत्मा, The Self I, the content of I in every person, The क्षेत्रज्ञ in every क्षेत्र, the प्रत्यग आत्मा – the innermost Self in every being in this creation is indeed the abode of ब्रह्मन् – that सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म,

अहं हि अमृतस्य प्रतिष्ठा – I, The परमेश्वर, The आत्मा, The Self I in every person, is indeed the abode of immortality in existence

अहं हि अमृतस्य च प्रतिष्ठा – I, The परमेश्वर, The आत्मा, The Self I in every person, is indeed the abode of the imperishable Pure Consciousness in all beings in this creation. Further,

अहं हि शाश्वतस्य च प्रतिष्ठा, धर्मस्य च प्रतिष्ठा,

सुखस्य च प्रतिष्ठा, एकान्तिकस्य च प्रतिष्ठा – I, The परमेश्वर, The आत्मा, in every person is indeed the abode of

शाश्वतं – नित्यं ever existence eternity

धर्मम् – समस्त कल्याणगुण विशेषं – The manifestation of the totality of all exalted virtues in this eternal order of existence

सुखं – शं सुखं – ब्रह्मानन्द सुखं – Absolute Happiness. The आत्मा, The Self I, The परमेश्वर already in oneself is indeed

एकान्तिकं – the ultimate destination. The वैष्णवं परमं पदं – the abode of the ONE in all and the all in One.

The true nature of The Self I in Myself, in yourself and in every self indeed. विष्णु and शिव in ONE, declares Sri Krishna. That is आत्मज्ञानं – आत्म अनुदर्शनं – Self knowledge, Self recognition, recognition of the true nature of oneself as The आत्मा, The परमेश्वर already in oneself. That is what one gains through अव्यभिचार भक्तियोग- undistracted भक्तियोग. Therefore, regarding Arjuna's third question "How does one become a गुणातीत?" the answer is: One becomes fit to be a गुणातीत through



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undistracted pursuit of the all-inclusive भक्तियोग, rooted in आत्मज्ञानं– आत्म – अनुदर्शनं – Self-knowledge, Self-recognition. That is the glory of undistracted भक्तियोग. So saying, Sri Krishna concludes the 14th chapter of the भगवत् गीता entitled गुणत्रय विभागयोग.

We will continue next time.