



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता मोक्षसंन्यासयोगः Chapter 18 Volume 6

सर्वभूतेषु येनेकं भावं अव्ययम् ईक्षते । अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकं ॥	18 - 20
पृथक्त्वेन तु यत् ज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् । वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं ॥	18 - 21
यत्तु कृत्स्नवत् एकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तं अहेतुकम् । अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च तत् तामसं उदाहृतम् ॥	18 - 22
नियतं सङ्गरहितं अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् । अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत् यत् सात्त्विकं उच्यते ॥	18 - 23
यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः । क्रियते बहुलायासं तत् राजसं उदाहृतम् ॥	18 - 24
अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसां अनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् । मोहात् आरभ्यते कर्म यत् तत् तामसम् उच्यते ॥	18 - 25

Sri Krishna has been talking about different aspects of कर्म. Anything that one does is कर्म. कर्म, whatever be its form and name, is born entirely of माया, the सत्त्व, राजस् and तमस् गुणs, which are the constituents of माया - The Inherent Power of परमेश्वर. Sri Krishna is now talking about कर्म in terms of their मायागुणs.



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

What impels a person to do any particular कर्म in the first place? भगवान् says that there are three factors involved, namely ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं and परिज्ञाता. ज्ञानं here means some prior knowledge, ordinary objective knowledge about the कर्म itself. Based on the above knowledge, what is desired to be accomplished by the कर्म is ज्ञेयं. परिज्ञाता is the person who has the will to do the कर्म on the basis of the above ज्ञानं and ज्ञेयं. Thus ज्ञानं, ज्ञेयं and परिज्ञाता, together impel a person, prompt a person, to do a particular कर्म.

Being thus impelled to do the कर्म, one then performs the कर्म. In the performance of the कर्म itself, there are three factors involved. They are करणं, कर्म and कर्ता. करणं refers to the instruments needed to perform the कर्म, the most important instrument being one's अन्तःकरण - mind and बुद्धि, especially one's बुद्धि. कर्म refers to the attitudes, motives, etc., governing the performance of the कर्म; and कर्ता refers to the personal qualities of the person who does the कर्म. When करणं, कर्म and कर्ता are there together, then the performance of the कर्म takes place.

When one has ज्ञानं - some prior knowledge about the कर्म, ज्ञेयं - what is desired to be accomplished by the कर्म is decided by one's बुद्धि, then the परिज्ञाता - the one who has ज्ञानं, ज्ञेयं and the will to do the कर्म, becomes the कर्ता - the doer of the कर्म. Therefore, परिज्ञाता is the कर्ता - doer of कर्म.

Therefore, in the matter of impelling a person to do a कर्म, and subsequently in the performance of the कर्म itself, there are essentially four factors involved, and they are: ज्ञानं, करणं, कर्म and कर्ता, all of which are born of सत्त्व, राजस and तमस गुणः



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

of **माया**. Consequently, each one of the above four factors is of three kinds, based on differences in one's prevailing **गुण**s - personal qualities, which means, with respect to **ज्ञानं**, there are three kinds, namely **सात्त्विक ज्ञानं**, **राजस ज्ञानं** and **तमस ज्ञानं**. Similarly, with respect to **करणं**, **कर्म** and **कर्ता**, there are three kinds in each.

भगवन् first talks about the three kinds of **ज्ञानं**. Describing **सात्त्विक ज्ञानं**, **भगवन्** says:

सर्वभूतेषु येनेकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥

18 - 20

That **ज्ञानं** - That Knowledge by which a person is able to see, is able to recognize clearly, directly and immediately

एकं अव्ययं भावं - ONE Changeless Supreme Being, which means, ONE **आत्म** वस्तु, ONE **सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म**, ONE **परमेश्वर** in every being in this creation, manifest or unmanifest, animate or inanimate, big or small, in every being in this creation, and one is able to recognize That **एकं भावं अव्ययं** - That ONE changeless Supreme Being, That ONE **आत्मा** - remaining undivided among all that appears divided in this creation, That knowledge, That **ज्ञानं** is **सात्त्विक ज्ञानं** - born of **सत्त्व गुण**.

In other words, That **ज्ञानं** - That Knowledge by which a person is able to recognize and appreciate, clearly, directly and immediately that **ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वम्** - The ONE **परमेश्वर**, changeless and Undivided, is indeed everything, everywhere, at all times, That Knowledge, That **ज्ञानं** is **सात्त्विक ज्ञानं**, **ज्ञानं** born of **सत्त्व गुण**. That means,



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

- ✿ even while seeing, recognizing, understanding and appreciating everything in this world of changes and differences, everything in this world of varieties forms, names, attributes, actions, differences and divisions
- ✿ even while seeing and discovering new forms, new names, new attributes, new actions, new differences and new divisions, every day in this world of changes
- ✿ even while appreciating that all these changes, differences, and divisions are indeed true as long as they exist, and they are not illusory,
- ✿ even while recognizing all that, when a person is able to recognize also that there is one truth behind all truths - सत्यस्य सत्यं - and That TRUTH is The ONE Absolute Reality behind and beyond all that exist in this entire world of changes, differences and divisions
- ✿ That ONE TRUTH, ONE Absolute Reality is Eternal, Changeless, Formless, Attributeless, Actionless, Divisionless, All-inclusive and All-pervading
- ✿ indeed all forms, all attributes, all actions, all changes, all differences and all divisions appearing in this transient world arise only from That ONE Absolute Reality alone, are sustained by That ONE Absolute Reality alone, and ultimately merge into That ONE Absolute Reality alone in every cycle of creation.

Consequently, existence as a whole, is an extraordinary and inseparable combination of क्षेत्र and क्षेत्रज्ञ, अपर and पर, माया and परमेश्वर (means an extraordinary combination of all forms, all changes, all attributes, all actions, all differences and all divisions in this creation) on the one hand, AND, on the other hand, That ONE Eternal, Changeless, Formless, Attributeless, Actionless, Divisionless, All-inclusive, All-pervading Absolute Reality, both of which together constitute ONE whole TRUTH behind all truths.

That knowledge by which a person can recognize That ONE Unchanging Reality, That ONE Eternal Truth in all beings in this creation, That ज्ञानं is सात्त्विक ज्ञानं. In contrast to such सात्त्विक ज्ञानं, भगवान् says:

पृथक्त्वेन तु यत् ज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं ॥

18 - 21

भगवान् now talks about राजस ज्ञानं



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

तु यत् ज्ञानं वेत्ति - That ज्ञानं - That Knowledge by which one recognizes, only this much, namely

सर्व भूतेषु पृथक्त्वेन वेत्ति - one recognizes, understands and appreciates all beings in this creation, only in terms of their separateness from each other. Again

सर्व भूतेषु नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् - One recognizes, understands and appreciates all beings in this creation only in terms of their varieties in existence such as kinds, forms, names, attributes, actions, divisions etc., and in terms of their differences from each other

तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं - that kind of knowledge must be understood as राजस ज्ञानं.

That ज्ञानं - that kind of knowledge by which one can recognize, understand and appreciate all beings in this creation ONLY in terms of objective knowledge, that is, in terms of their separateness from each other - their varieties, differences and divisions from each other, such objective knowledge, that ज्ञानं - that knowledge is राजस ज्ञानं - knowledge born from रजस् गुण.

Why राजस ज्ञानं? It is राजस ज्ञानं because, objective knowledge, however extensive it may be, by itself, is both incomplete and inadequate. It is incomplete with respect to totality of knowledge, and it is inadequate with respect to total fulfillment in life.

All knowledge that we generally accumulate through worldly experiences, education, training, research, development, etc., all such knowledge is objective knowledge, knowledge in the world of changes, differences, and divisions. One is ordinarily familiar with such knowledge, which is essentially knowledge of structural forms, not knowledge of total content. Every researcher of objective knowledge knows that every progress in such knowledge leads only to a deeper awareness of one's own ignorance. Thus, all objective knowledge is only a form of learned ignorance, because, such knowledge, by itself, is, and will always be, incomplete knowledge. The same is also true with respect to spiritual knowledge, by itself.



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

Therefore, realization of totality of knowledge (पूर्ण ज्ञानं) is possible only when both objective knowledge and spiritual knowledge are cultivated together, properly, steadily and steadfastly. Now about तामस ज्ञानं, भगवान् says:

यत् कृत्स्नवत् एकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तं अहेतुकम् ।

अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च तत् तामसं उदाहृतम् ॥

18 - 22

कार्यं is an effect arising from a cause, and कृत्स्नवत् सक्तं is a commitment to something as if it is everything. It is total. Therefore,

यत् ज्ञानं एकस्मिन् कार्ये कृत्स्नवत् सक्तं - That ज्ञानं, that knowledge which clings to one single effect, as if it is everything. That knowledge which is in the form of a fanatic attachment to a single object, or one single effect, or a single vision, or one single view, as if it is everything, it is total, it is complete

अहेतुकम् - with no real basis or reasoning behind such fanatic attachment

अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च - which attachment is both essentially meaningless and also trivial, devoid of any real knowledge content

तत् ज्ञानं तामसं उदाहृतम् - That ज्ञानं, that knowledge is called तामस ज्ञानं - knowledge born of ignorance - तमस् गुण. In other words, that knowledge which is in the form of fanaticism of any kind, is तामस ज्ञानं - knowledge born of ignorance, which should naturally be avoided.

In society, we are familiar with various forms of fanaticism, both in religious life and secular life. Every form of fanaticism leads only to degradation, and ultimately, to destruction, because it is तामस ज्ञानं - knowledge born of ignorance.

In terms of one's endeavor to gain मोक्ष - Absolute Liberation, there are at least two kinds of fanaticism which one must particularly avoid. One is to identify आत्मा - The Self I, with one's शरीर - physical body. Such identification would mean that there are as



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

many आत्माs as there are शरीरs, and when the शरीर dies, आत्मा also dies, which is not true, in terms of Upanishad knowledge on आत्मा - The Self I.

The second is the view that one should worship परमेश्वर in only one particular form, and no other. The person who is fanatic about such view of ईश्वर उपासन - worship of परमेश्वर, has no real understanding and appreciation of either परमेश्वर or worship of परमेश्वर.

Having thus pointed out what are सात्त्विक ज्ञानं, राजस ज्ञानं and तामस ज्ञानं, Sri Krishna now talks about कर्म, which is again three-fold, namely सात्त्विक कर्म, राजस कर्म, and तामस कर्म. About सात्त्विक कर्म, भगवान् says:

नियतं सङ्गरहितं अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत् तत् सात्त्विकं उच्यते ॥

18 - 23

यत् नियतं कर्म - That कर्म which is a नियत कर्म, कर्म mandated by परमेश्वर, enjoined in the Vedas and the Upanishads, such as सत्यं वद धर्मम् चर स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः, यज्ञ कर्मs, दान कर्मs, तपस् कर्मs, etc., including all of one's obligatory duties, duties to oneself, one's family, one's profession, and duties to the public at large, all such कर्मs are नियत कर्मs, कर्मs mandated by परमेश्वर. As we have already seen, for a कर्मयोगी, all कर्मs which come to him by virtue of his circumstances in life, are only नियत कर्मs, ईश्वर कर्मs. There is no other कर्म for a कर्मयोगी. With respect to such नियत कर्मs, भगवान् says:



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

सङ्गरहितं कृतम् कर्म - when the कर्म is done with no trace of मम बुद्धि - egoistic notion, that "I am the doer of कर्म" , which means the कर्म is done just because it is to be done - that is all about it - that is the attitude governing one's action. Further

अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् कर्म - when the कर्म is done without being impelled by one's forces of likes and dislikes

कृतम् कर्म - further, when the कर्म is done without any binding desire, craving or expectation for gaining any कर्मफल - any fruit of action, such as पुण्य, health, wealth, power, etc., which means, when the कर्म is totally done with कर्मयोग बुद्धि and ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि, then

तत् कर्म सात्त्विकं उच्यते - That कर्म is called सात्त्विक कर्म - कर्म born of सत्त्व गुण.

There is something very important to note here. Whether the कर्म is सात्त्विक कर्म or not, does not depend on the कर्म itself. It depends on one's गुण governing the कर्म. In the matter of कर्म itself, there is nothing superior or inferior, but in the matter of one's गुण, there is indeed something superior and something inferior. सत्त्व गुण is superior, तमस् गुण is inferior and रजस् गुण is somewhere in between.

Now about राजस कर्म, भगवान् says:

यत् कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तत् राजसं उदाहृतम् ॥

18 - 24

पुनः - Again

यत् कर्म कामेप्सुना कर्म क्रियते - On the other hand



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

That कर्म, That नियतं कर्म or any कर्म which is done by one desiring, expecting or craving for some कर्मफल - fruit of action, and hence

साहंकारेण क्रियते कर्म - that कर्म which is done with अहंकार बुद्धि - with a sense of pride and arrogance in being the कर्ता of the कर्म - doer of the action, which is expected to yield the desired result, and hence again

बहुलायासं क्रियते कर्म - that कर्म which is done with lots of effort and emotion, energy, etc. because of one's intense desire and anxiety to gain the expected fruit of action

तत् कर्म राजसं उदाहृतम् - that कर्म is called राजस कर्म, कर्म born of राजस गुण

That कर्म which is done by one desiring, expecting and craving for some कर्मफल - fruit of action, and hence done with lots of pride and arrogance in being the doer of the कर्म, which is expected to yield the desired कर्मफल, and because of such expectation, doing that कर्म with the intense effort and energy and emotion in one's anxiety to gain that कर्मफल - that कर्म is called राजस कर्म - कर्म born of रजस् गुण.

Now about तामस कर्म, भगवान् says:

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसां अनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषं ।

मोहात् आरभ्यते कर्म यत् तत् तामसं उच्यते ॥

18 - 25

यत् कर्म मोहात् आरभ्यते - That कर्म which is begun, which is initiated from मोह - delusory thinking, which means stupid, erroneous, misleading, self-deceiving and self-destroying thinking

अनपेक्ष्य - not taking into consideration

अनुबन्धं - the inevitable consequences of such कर्म



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

क्षयं - the potential losses involved in such कर्म - losses such as those of resources, credibility, character, etc.

हिंसां - how that कर्म might hurt others, and

पौरुषं - one's own personal ability and limitations to do the कर्म

यत् कर्म मोहात् आरभ्यते - That कर्म which is begun, which is initiated from such delusory thinking

तत् कर्म तामसं उच्यते - That कर्म is called तामस कर्म, कर्म born of तमस् गुण.

Such तामस कर्म must always be avoided.

भगवान् next talks about कर्ता - the doer of कर्म, which we will see next time.