



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
मोक्षसंन्यासयोगः
Chapter 18
Volume 8

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In today's verses, Sri Krishna talks about धृति and सुखं, in terms of the three माया गुणs. धृति means firmness in one's बुद्धि - fortitude and resolve in one's faculty of judgment and decision. The quality of such धृति naturally depends on the quality of the बुद्धि one has, which in turn depends on the quality of ज्ञानं one has. If one has सात्त्विक ज्ञानं, one's बुद्धि also is सात्त्विक बुद्धि, and one's धृति also is सात्त्विक धृति. Similarly, if one has राजस ज्ञानं or तामस ज्ञानं, one's बुद्धि and धृति also are likewise.

Talking about सात्त्विक धृति, a धृति - a firmness in one's बुद्धि born of सत्त्व गुण, भगवान् says:

धृत्या यया धारयते मनः प्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः।

योगेन अव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ 18 - 33

यया अव्यभिचारिण्या धृत्या - By which unflinching, unshaken, unshakable firmness

धारयते - one is able to hold, one is able to sustain

मनः प्राण इन्द्रियक्रियाः - the activities of one's mind, प्राण and all the इन्द्रियs, the activities of one's mind, one's physiological functions, including eating, and also the activities of all of one's organs of perception and action, which means, by which firmness of judgment and decision of बुद्धि, one is able to discipline the activities of one's mind and all of one's organs of perception and action, keeping them always within the bounds of धर्म (propriety in action), and simultaneously propelling them in मोक्षमार्ग - the path of gaining मोक्ष - total Fulfillment in life. How does one do that?

योगेन - by Yoga, by the all-inclusive कर्मयोग-भक्तियोग (both being identical) as Sri Krishna pointed out earlier in Chapter 11 (11 - 55), in terms of मत्कर्मकृत्,



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मत्परमः, मद्भक्तः, संगवर्जितः and सर्वभूतेषु निर्वेरः, which means, keeping the mind and बुद्धि firmly in the attitude of कर्मयोग and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति simultaneously at all times, under all circumstances, which is indeed the मोक्षमार्ग way of life, the surest path leading to मोक्ष - Total Fulfillment in life.

सा धृतिः पार्थ सात्त्विकी - That धृतिः - that firmness in बुद्धि is सात्त्विक धृतिः - firmness born of सत्त्व गुण, पार्थ O! Arjuna

Thus, let us understand that the entire ब्रह्मविद्या is about a confirmed, doubt-free and firm view of life, together with a sure and meaningful way of life.

मोक्ष - Absolute Inner Freedom, Total Fulfillment in life, is the ultimate destination for every human being, and That is the firm and confirmed view of life. The road map that leads every person surely to That Ultimate Destination, that road map is the sure and meaningful way of life for which the सात्त्विक धृतिः, धृतिः born of सत्त्व गुण is what is needed.

Therefore, one must be absolutely clear and firm about the ultimate destination to be reached in life; and one must also be absolutely clear and firm about the path by which one can surely reach that ultimate destination, wherever one may be in the road map at any particular time. ब्रह्मविद्या Knowledge, in its entirety, precisely provides the clarity of understanding with respect to both the ultimate destination to be reached, and the sure means for reaching that destination in one's very life itself.

Now about राजस धृति - a firmness in बुद्धि born of रजस्. भगवान् says:

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।

प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिःसा पार्थ राजसी ॥

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तु - whereas

यया धृत्या धारयते - by which firmness in बुद्धि, a person holds one's mind



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धर्म काम अर्थान् - in the pursuits of धर्म, काम and अर्थ, which means, for this person, the pursuits of धर्म, काम and अर्थ are an obsession. The person's mind is always dominated with the idea of :

धर्म - I must do such and such कर्म for gaining पुण्य for future happiness, security, etc.

काम - I must fulfill this desire of mine at any cost

अर्थ - I must gain this wealth by any means possible, etc.

Thus, a person's mind is always obsessed with such कर्मफल. Though the person's actions may always be legitimate, the person's motives are always for transient ends only

प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी - Anything that comes to one's attention is called प्रसङ्ग. If this person we are talking about happens to come across something which he likes, he immediately sets his mind in getting it for himself, by every means possible. His resolve, his धृति in getting his object of desire is so firm that he steadfastly works for it until he gets it. Thus, the person becomes a धर्म-काम-अर्थ-कर्मफल-आकाङ्क्षी - one who intensely craves for the fruit of all his धर्म-काम-अर्थ pursuits.

सा धृतिः पार्थ राजसी - O! Arjuna, that धृति - that kind of firmness in one's resolve, is राजसी धृति - a धृति born of रजस् गुण.

There is nothing wrong with such धृति in worldly life, but such धृति is not going to help the person to gain मोक्ष - Total Fulfillment in life. Such धृति can only increase one's worldly bondages.

Now, about तामस धृति, भगवान् says:

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।



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न विमुञ्जति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥

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यया (धृत्या) - By which firmness in one's बुद्धि, by which resolve in one's faculty of judgment and decision

स्वप्नं न विमुञ्जति - one does not give up excessive day-dreaming, one does not give up excessive sleep, being too much addicted to such sleep

भयं न विमुञ्जति - one does not give up excessive fear

शोकं न विमुञ्जति - one does not give up excessive sense of sorrow and depression

मदं एव च न विमुञ्जति - one does not give up one's excessive pursuits of sense gratifications, and further

दुर्मेधा न विमुञ्जति - one does not give up one's improper ways of thinking and distorted memories

सा धृतिः पार्थ तामसी - that धृति - the firmness of बुद्धि of such a person is called तामस धृति, a धृति born of तमस् गुण - ignorance and confusion about oneself, O! Arjuna.

Thus Sri Krishna has now talked about the different aspects of कर्म, including ज्ञानं, कर्म, कर्ता, बुद्धि and धृति in terms of the three माया गुणs - सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् गुणs. Since every person has all these three गुणs to different extents at different times, all that has been said above about कर्म apply to some extent to everybody at different times.

Ordinarily, a person does a कर्म only to experience सुखं - happiness of some kind, as कर्मफल, as a result of कर्म. That सुखं also is three-fold in nature, depending on how one gets it, how long it lasts, and what kind it is, all of which determine whether that experience of सुखं is born of सत्त्व गुण, रजस् गुण or तमस् गुण. Introducing the topic about सुखं, भगवान् says:



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सुखं तु इदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥

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भरतर्षभ - O! Arjuna

इदानीं त्रिविधं सुखं मे शृणु - मम वचनं शृणु - Now, please listen to what I have to say on the three kinds of सुख one experiences as a result of कर्म that one does.

So saying, भगवान् first talks about सात्त्विक सुखं - experience of सुख born of सत्त्व गुण.

It is obvious that if one is a सात्त्विक कर्ता, and if one does सात्त्विक कर्म, and if one has also सात्त्विक ज्ञानं, सात्त्विक बुद्धि and also सात्त्विक धृति, one must also have सात्त्विक सुखं. Now what is that सात्त्विक सुखं? भगवान् says:

अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति
यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तम् आत्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥

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अभ्यासात् रमते यत्र तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं

अभ्यासात् - From repeated practice

यत्र रमते - in which सुख, one revels, one enjoys

तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं - that experience of सुख is सात्त्विक सुख, सुख born of सत्त्व गुण.



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The सात्त्विक सुख is that सुख in the experience of which one revels, one enjoys, by repeated practice of the कर्म which gives rise to that सुख. The सात्त्विक सुख arises only from सात्त्विक ज्ञानं which is gained through continued श्रवणं, मननं and निदिध्यासनं of Upanishad knowledge. In such pursuit of Upanishad knowledge, a tremendous amount of repetition is involved, but that repetition does not bring in boredom. It brings in more and more enlightenment and greater and greater clarity of knowledge, which is a perennial source of joy, and that joy is सात्त्विक सुखं.

यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति - in which experience of सुख, one also gains, surely and definitely, the end of one's दुःख - sadness, sorrow and distress. That experience of सुख is सात्त्विक सुख.

Because सात्त्विक सुख arises from सात्त्विक ज्ञानं, which is centered on आत्मा - the सत्-चित्-आनन्दस्वरूप आत्मा, in such experience of सात्त्विक सुख, all notions that give rise to a sense of sadness, sorrow and distress simply disappear.

In every sense of sadness, sorrow or distress, there is also a sense of ego "I" involved. With the recognition of the unchanging स्वरूप of "I" as असंग आनन्द आत्मा, one is released from that ego "I", and consequently, from all notions that give rise to a sense of sadness, sorrow or distress, and one recognizes the true nature of oneself itself as सुखं - शं सुखं, ब्रह्मानन्द स्वरूपं - perennial joy arising from Exalted happiness that one truly is.

तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं - That experience of सुख is सात्त्विक सुख.

यत् तत् अग्रे विषमिव परिणामे अमृतोपमम् तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं

यत् सुखं - which experience of सुख

अग्रे - in the beginning, initially



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विषमिव - feels bitter and uncomfortable, like taking a medicine, and

परिणामे - in the end, when the medicine has worked its way through, and when the maturity of mind and बुद्धि has taken place

अमृतं उपमम् - the experience of सुख feels like अमृतं - divine nectar, sweet and comfortable

तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं - That experience of सुख is सात्त्विक सुख - सुख born of सत्त्व गुण.

What appeared initially as विषं इव सुखं - a bitter and uncomfortable experience of सुख, has at the end turned into अमृतं इव सुखं - an experience of सुख which is extraordinarily sweet, comfortable and perennial joy. Such experience of सुखं is सात्त्विक सुखं, सुखं born of सत्त्व गुण.

सात्त्विक सुखं arises only in a mature mind and बुद्धि, as a result of आत्म ज्ञानं - Self-knowledge. The pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं requires श्रद्धा, भक्ति, ध्यानं, त्याग, etc., all of which require a lot of determination, discipline, effort, etc., none of which is easy. Therefore, in the beginning, every kind of spiritual endeavor is fraught with pain of some kind. In fact, when one is intoxicated with worldly comforts and enjoyments of various kinds, one generally has no time for the pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं. Consequently, pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं itself arises only from some kind of pain, from which one sincerely wants to release oneself. Therefore, in the initial stages, the experience of सुख in the pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं - Self-knowledge is compared here to the taste of विषं - a bitter medicine, unpleasant, uncomfortable, and unwelcome. But, परिणामे - in the end, when maturity of mind and बुद्धि is gained, the experience of सुख in the continued pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं is like अमृतं, meaning Divine Nectar, perennially sweet, comfortable and welcome, because that experience of सुख is born of enlightened



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knowledge about oneself as one really IS - as one always IS, whatever be the circumstances of life. The experience of सुख gained through such enlightened knowledge about oneself is सात्त्विक सुख.

यत् सुखं आत्मबुद्धि प्रसादजं तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तम् - The experience of सुख born of ईश्वर प्रसाद, in the form of आत्म बुद्धि, which means, by the Grace of परमेश्वर, the बुद्धि has become pure and mature enough to recognize clearly the identity of oneself with आत्मा, The परमेश्वर Itself*, the experience of joy born of clarity of vision of oneself as आत्मा Itself, as सत्-चित्-आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् Itself, as परमेश्वर Itself, by the very Grace of परमेश्वर

तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तम् - That experience of सुख is well-described as सात्त्विक सुख born of सत्त्व गुण. On the other hand,

विषय इन्द्रियसंयोगात् यत् तदग्रे अमृतोपमं
परिणामे विषमिव तत् सुखं राजसं स्मृतं ॥

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यत् सुखं विषय इन्द्रियसंयोगात् - The experience of सुख which arises from the contacts, associations and interactions of विषय and इन्द्रिय - sense objects and the appropriate sense organs

तत् अग्रे अमृत उपमं - which experience of सुख is like nectar in the beginning, giving pleasure and enjoyment, but

परिणामे विषं इव - in the end, when the contacts, associations and interactions are over, which experience of सुख is like विषं, which means, which experience of सुख leaves one unhappy, unfulfilled, exhausted

(*आनन्द रूपं, अमृतं यत् विभाति as the मु. ३. says {2 -2 - 7})



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तत् सुखं राजसं स्मृतं - That experience of सुख is to be understood and remembered as राजस सुख - सुख born of राजस् गुण.

यत् अग्रे च अनुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनं आत्मनः

निद्र आलास्य प्रमाद उत्थं तत् तामसं उदाहृतं ॥

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यत् सुखं निद्र आलास्य प्रमाद उत्थं - The experience of सुख which arises from excessive sleep, indolence or laziness, and indifference or heedlessness with respect to actions which are to be done, and hence

मोहनं आत्मनः अग्रे च अनुबन्धे च - which experience of सुख deludes a person both in the beginning and in the end

तत् सुखं तामसं उदाहृतं - that experience of सुख is known as तामस सुख - सुख born of तमस् गुण. Here, there is no experience of real सुख either at the beginning or at the end of कर्म. What one experiences by one's कर्म is only delusive सुख - a deceptive सुख born of ignorance and confusion in one's mind and बुद्धि. Such deceptive सुख is तामस सुख, सुख born of तमस् गुण.

In the next verse, भगवान् concludes this discussion and then moves on to the next topic, which we will see next time.