



भगवत् गीता
द्वितीयोऽध्यायः - सांख्य योगः
Chapter 2
Volume 10

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Let us recall the last verse we saw last time.

त्रैगुण्य विषया वेदाः निस्त्रैगुण्यो भर्वाजुन । निद्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥	2-45
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This is a very important verse in **भगवत् गीता**. This verse tells exactly what everyone of us has to learn to be, in order to live a meaningful, worthwhile and a fulfilling life. This verse sets the direction for the Teachings contained in the rest of This **गीतोपदेश - The Gita Teachings**.

Arjuna has now become receptive to Vedantic Knowledge – and so we have, and hence this verse marks a new beginning for Arjuna – as well as for all of us – in **ब्रह्मविद्या** and **योगशास्त्र**.

Sri Krishna has been talking about **कामात्मानः** - those who have become dependant on the fulfillment of their own desires, and as a result, have lost their capacity for **विचेक बुद्धि** – discriminative enquiry, on what is **सत्यं** and what is **मिथ्या**; what is eternal and what is transient and hence, what is essential and what is non-essential. Such people are called **कामात्मानः**. For **कामात्मानः**, for those people, Sri Krishna says:



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त्रैगुण्य विषया वेदाः – The subject matter of the Veda is concerned only with the three मायागुणs – the inherent power of ब्रह्मन् – of परमेश्वर – manifesting itself as the three गुणs – the personal qualities, namely सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् गुणs, in accordance with one's own past कर्मs.

The सत्त्व गुण is one's ability to gain knowledge;

The रजस् गुण is one's ability to act; and

The तमस् गुण is one's ability to be inert, insensitive or indifferent.

More about these three गुणs, Sri Krishna tells later (Chapter 14).

Every person has these three गुणs in differentiated forms, which means, that while every person has abilities to learn, to act and to be inert, every person is different from every other person in terms of one's specific abilities.

These three गुणs are together called objective Knowledge in their differentiated forms. In their undifferentiated form, these three गुणs are together called माया or अविद्या. More about माया or अविद्या we will see later. In their differentiated forms, these three गुणs constitute the objective Knowledge of a person in संसार विषयs – transactions of worldly life.

भगवान् says here that for कामात्मानः - for the people who are propelled by worldly desires of various kinds, the Vedas deal only with संसार विषयs – the Do's and Don't's of daily life for transient happiness, because

- सत्त्व गुण gives Knowledge and Happiness,
- रजस् गुण gives sometimes Happiness and sometimes Unhappiness,
- तमस् गुण gives only indifference

Every one of us is a mixture of these three गुणs. Our differences lie only in the differentiated forms, names and expressions of these three गुणs. That is all. The Do's and Don't's of कर्म are merely to seek some सुख – transient happiness, and avoid some दुख – transient unhappiness; and that is all life is about – according to कामात्मानः.

That is really not true. Life is far more than seeking happiness and avoiding unhappiness. Life is really meant for realizing in oneself That Happiness, which can



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neither be created nor destroyed. That Happiness can be realized only through Spiritual Knowledge – ईश्वर ज्ञान – God Consciousness.

Therefore, we have to learn to get established in God Consciousness at all times - मच्चित्तः सततं भव – as Sri Krishna says later. All our Vedic verses and rituals continuously try to inculcate God Consciousness in our mind and बुद्धि. But this aspect of our Vedas and Vedic rituals, escapes the attention of most people, because of the preoccupations of the mind and बुद्धि with कर्म and कर्मफलs – actions and their desired results.

Now Sri Krishna advises Arjuna, not to get caught by the संसार विषयs – propulsions of the mind and बुद्धि drowned in the transactions of worldly life. Therefore, भगवान् says:

O! Arjuna, Do not be like कामात्मानः – uplift yourself and be:

निस्त्रैगुण्यो भव, निद्वन्द्वो भव, नित्यसत्त्वस्थो भव, निर्योगक्षेमो भव, आत्मवान् भव
निस्त्रैगुण्यो भव essentially means निष्कामो भव – Be free from the overpowering forces of your own desires for worldly objects and achievements. Let not mere worldly desires push you into action. By pouring oil, you are not going to put out fire.

Surely there is nothing wrong with having desires, so long as they are consistent with धर्म – propriety. By all means, have all such desires happily, but do not depend on the fulfillment of worldly desires for your happiness, because fulfillment of worldly desires is not fulfillment in Life.

If you must have a desire, let that be only ONE desire and that is Happiness Itself, independent of any desire you may have. Therefore,

निस्त्रैगुण्यो भव means learn to transcend the bondages of objective Knowledge - माया गुणs. While various kinds of objective Knowledge are necessary for daily life, they are totally inadequate to give you lasting Happiness in life. Further,

निद्वन्द्वो भव – Learn to become free from the forces of opposites such as pleasure and pain, success and failure, etc. encountered in daily life. There are indeed countless objects which are looked upon as instruments of pleasure and pain in life; learn to release yourself from the hold of such objects on you. Learn to be above the power of elation and depression. One who is susceptible to elation is also susceptible to depression. Such susceptibility arises from कर्मफल अभिसन्धि, expected results of actions.



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Neither कर्म nor कर्मफल, by themselves are binding on a person; but the expected result of an action is always a source of bondage. What binds, limits and degrades a person is neither कर्म nor कर्मफल. It is one's incapacity to accept the results cheerfully as they come. That incapacity subjects the person to दुन्दु – opposites in reactions, such as सुख and दुःख etc. Learn to uplift yourself from the hold of such दुन्दु – opposites in reactions. Further,

नित्यसत्त्वस्थो भव – Here नित्यसत्त्वं does not refer to सत्त्व गुण, because भगवान् has already said, निस्त्रैगुण्यो भव – be above the hold of all the three गुणs, including सत्त्व गुण. Here नित्यसत्त्वं refers to सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन्.

Therefore, नित्यसत्त्वस्थो भव means "Be steadfast in God Consciousness at all times". - As we will see later, भगवान् tells :

बुद्धिं योगं उपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव । (18 -57)

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात् तरिष्यसि (18 - 58)

Always directing your mind and बुद्धि to the state of अनन्य ईश्वर शरणागति – total surrender to परमेश्वर – total identity with आत्मा – The परमेश्वर in oneself – be in परमेश्वर – be in God Consciousness with ज्ञानलक्षण ईश्वर भक्ति. Being so, by the grace of परमेश्वर, you will overcome all obstacles to gaining the श्रेयस् – the मोक्ष – you seek. Again,

निर्योगक्षेमो भव – Release yourself from overriding concerns about your worldly possessions.

योगक्षेम is going after things you do not have, and protecting things that you do have. These are concerns of daily survival. These concerns are necessary, but they do not constitute the purpose of life. You do need a few things in daily life. Certainly get them and protect them by doing whatever you need to do. But, let it not be your overriding concern in life because when योगक्षेम becomes your overriding concern, life simply degrades itself into a longing for creature comforts. Such longing should never be one's dedicated pursuit in life; भगवान् tells later:

अनन्याः चिन्तयन्तो मां, ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहं ॥

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You concentrate on cultivating God Consciousness in your mind and बुद्धि; and I will take care of all your योगक्षेम needs, so assures Sri Krishna. For one whom योगक्षेम alone is all important, for that person, no progress in the pursuit of मोक्ष is possible. Therefore, भगवान् says:

निर्योगक्षेमो भव - Release yourself from overriding concerns about your योगक्षेम possessions; further,

आत्मवान् भव - What you really need is to realize the Best and Highest in yourself; and That is possible only through कर्म योग and ईश्वर ज्ञानं.

Realize that, and be committed to such SELF-Realization only. That Self Realization is आत्म ज्ञानं, ईश्वर ज्ञानं, ब्रह्म ज्ञानं - SELF Knowledge - The one who is committed to such SELF Knowledge is आत्मवान्. Therefore don't be indifferent to Yourself - The Best and the Highest in yourself - Become आत्मवान् through कर्म योग and ईश्वर ज्ञानं.

Thus, for you Arjuna, who is committed to स्वधर्म - duty to yourself, one for whom actions are done only because they are to be done in terms of स्वधर्म, for a person like you, who is committed to स्वधर्म, the teaching is:

- ✓ निस्त्रैगुण्यो भव - Learn to transcend the bondages of objective knowledge - माया गुणः
- ✓ निद्वन्द्वो भव - Learn to become free from the forces of opposites encountered in daily life;
- ✓ नित्यसत्त्वस्थो भव - Learn to be steadfast in God Consciousness at all times
- ✓ निर्योगक्षेमो भव - Learn to release yourself from overriding concerns about your योगक्षेम possessions; and
- ✓ आत्मवान् भव - Learn to commit yourself to Self Realization through कर्म योग and ईश्वर ज्ञानं.

That is Sri Krishna's teaching to Arjuna, and That is also the Upanishadic Teaching for all of us, and this Teaching is the subject matter of the entire Gita Updesa - ब्रह्म विद्या and योग शास्त्र. Continuing this Teaching, भगवान् says:

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके
तावान् सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥

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It is common scenery that in summer time, many river beds become dry, people in the nearby community dig small wells in such river beds, and these wells provide good drinking water for the local community. These drinking water providing wells in dry river beds are called उदपान. In the rainy season, the entire river bed is full of flowing water everywhere and these wells no longer serve any purpose and they essentially disappear in the river bed.

भगवान् tells here :

यावान् अर्थः उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुत उदके - To the extent a small well in the river bed is significant as a source of water, when the entire river is flooded with water everywhere,

तावान् - to that extent only,

सर्वेषु वेदेषु meaning सर्वेषु वेदोक्तेषु कर्मसु यत् कर्म फलं उक्तं - the कर्म फल - the fruits of action arising from all the कर्मs enjoined by the Vedas - which means all कर्म फलs arising from all objective knowledge,

ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः - they are significant for a ब्राह्मण who is enlightened in Self Knowledge - one who is established in ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

Obviously for such an Enlightened person, the purpose served by कर्म फलs arising from all objective knowledge is insignificant.

The Enlightened person has already gained the ज्ञान फल - The Fruit of Knowledge and That is ब्रह्मानन्द - The Supreme Joy of Life. Compared to that ब्रह्मानन्द any happiness arising from any कर्म फल of any कर्म is indeed insignificant.

But until that flood of ब्रह्मानन्द takes place, until the rainy season arrives, and the river is full of water, the small wells in the river bed do indeed serve a useful purpose as good sources of water and they should certainly be made use of. Similarly, until that state of ब्रह्मानन्द takes place, कर्मs are the only means available to us to uplift ourselves, and we should make use of them as the means for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं, which is possible only by performing कर्म as कर्मयोग - as ईश्वर आराधनं - as worship of परमेश्वर, receiving cheerfully whatever arises from such karma as ईश्वर-प्रसाद, The very Grace of परमेश्वर.

Therefore, at this stage of one's development, which means, until one reaches that state of ब्रह्मानन्द - until one reaches that state of spiritual maturity, one must make the full and most effective use of कर्म as the means for one's spiritual progress. For doing so, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:



कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूः मा ते संगोऽस्तु अकर्मणि ॥

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This is probably the most often quoted verse in the entire भगवत् गीता – and it is immediately relevant to the life of every person. Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:

कर्मणि एव अधिकारः ते
ते अधिकारः ते कर्मणि एव

Your अधिकार is only over your कर्मs, which means you have authority – you have power – you have choice – you have duty only with respect to your own actions, and मा फलेषु कदाचन – never over fruits of actions, at any time (कदाचन). Once you do your कर्म, your duty – your authority – your choice – ends there.

Surely, every कर्म yields कर्म फल – fruits of action according to the unchanging laws of nature, all of which are not known to any individual person, because the कर्म फल दाता – the giver of the fruits of actions is only परमेश्वर – The Lord.

The कर्म फल – fruits of action, whatever that be, if and when that comes, accept it as ईश्वर प्रसादं – the Very Grace of परमेश्वर. For doing the कर्म itself, no Vedantic Teaching is necessary; but, to make that कर्म, an asset to you at all times, i.e, to make that कर्म as कर्मयोग – Vedantic Teaching is necessary. That Teaching is only to educate you on the nature of कर्म and कर्मफल and help you to grow up to your fullest potential.

As you assimilate this teaching, the कर्मयोग attitude – the attitude of ईश्वर आराधन बुद्धि – the attitude of ईश्वर अर्पित बुद्धि – the attitude of Total Dedication to परमेश्वर – will naturally develop in you. But you must keep a watch on yourself.

मा कर्मफल हेतुः भूः – Never become a हेतु – a means, an instrument, for going after कर्म फल – fruits of action.

Please understand this. You are a हेतु – you are a means, you are an instrument, only for doing कर्म - not for going after the fruits of कर्म over which you have absolutely no control. In performing your actions, never develop a thirst (a तृष्णा) for the fruits of actions. If you entertain a thirst for the fruits of actions, you are surely in for disappointments, sooner or later.



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

कर्म as कर्मयोग – as ईश्वर आराधन – as worship of परमेश्वर – is always a Joy. On the other hand, कर्म only for the sake of कर्म फल – fruits of action always ends in दुःख, now or later. Because, even if you get the कर्म फल, it is not always in keeping with what you want; and, even if it is what you want, what guarantee is there that it is going to be with you forever;

Being a फल - fruit, it is always subject to change. In any case, if it is really a fruit you must go for, go in for That Fruit which is the Highest – which includes all fruits and which is never subject to change. That fruit, of course, is ज्ञानफल which is आत्मज्ञानं – ईश्वर ज्ञानं – ब्रह्मज्ञानं itself. Do not go after anything less.

Please understand that कर्म is the same for both कामी as well as कर्मयोगी. Both get कर्म फल. The कर्म फल for the कामी – desire propelled person is some little fruit of action, perishable and transient in nature. The कर्म फल for the कर्मयोगी is चित्तशुद्धि – restoration of the purity of mind and बुद्धि and ultimately ज्ञाननिष्ठा ब्रह्मज्ञानं, which is the fruit of all fruits, unchanging and imperishable.

But then, don't say – “I have no thirst for कर्म फल; I know कर्म फल gives only दुःख now or later; therefore, I'm not interested in any action; therefore, I do not do any कर्म”. To say so, is indeed stupid, says भगवान्.

मा ते संगः अस्तु अकर्मणि – Never develop any attachment to inaction or laziness. You are blessed with an active body, mind and intellect; you are blessed with unlimited opportunities to uplift yourself to your fullest potential, both materially and spiritually. Do not degrade yourself, through attachment to inaction. Act you must, at all times, in accordance with धर्म; that is, by far, better than being inactive and lazy.

Remember कर्मणि एव अधिकारः ते – You have a duty to yourself to perform the actions left for you to do by virtue of your birth and circumstances of life. How should you do your actions? भगवान् says:

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्धिं असिद्धयोः समोभूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

योगस्थः कुरु कर्मणि - Firmly remaining in कर्मयोग, perform all actions, all your duties – religious or secular, perform all duties without exception, always with कर्मयोग attitude.

संगं त्यक्त्वा, कुरु कर्मणि - make sure you do all the कर्मs with absolutely no attachment to the कर्म फल; further,

सिद्धि असिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा, कुरु कर्मणि - Perform all कर्मs with an even mind, in the events of either सिद्धि or असिद्धि – success or failure, accomplishment or no accomplishment. Do your कर्म as well as you can, and do not worry whether that कर्म brings you सिद्धि or असिद्धि – success or failure.

समत्वं योग उच्यते - Such समत्वं – even-mindedness is called कर्मयोग. Only when such even-mindedness is there, total undissipated dedication of कर्म – as ईश्वर आराधन – as Worship of परमेश्वर – as कर्मयोग – is possible, so says Sri Krishna.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्मणि संगं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

सिद्धि असिद्धयोः समोभूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

We will see more of this verse next time.