



## भगवत् गीता

### द्वितीयोऽध्यायः - सांख्य योगः

## Chapter 2

### Volume 13

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Sri Krishna has been describing the लक्षणs- the distinguishing characteristics of a स्थितप्रज्ञ - wise person; in other words, what makes a person wise.

Sri Krishna says - when a person,

- naturally and totally, grows out of all काम-desires - inappropriate and improper desires which arise in the mind;
- discovers the Happiness in oneself by oneself, which means that he recognizes that one's own real nature is सत्-चित्-आनन्द-स्वरूप पूर्ण आत्मा, and consequently;
- does not feel depressed in times of pain and sorrow, and, in times of pleasure and well-being, has no craving for more of such pleasure and well-being;



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- has a mind and बुद्धि totally free from any kind of राग, भय and क्रोध - passion, fear and anger;
- remains totally free from any fast attachment to anything, in this transient world of plurality, and,
- neither gets excessively elated, having got something good or desirable, nor becomes hateful or frustrated, having got something bad or undesirable

then, that person can be called a स्थितप्रज्ञ, and/or समाधिस्थः or simply, a wise person

Continuing the above description of a wise person, and now referring to a person who is not yet wise, but wants to become, such a wise person भगवान् says:

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गननीच सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2 - 58

अयं means अयं पुरुषः - That person who wants to become a स्थितप्रज्ञ - wise person, what should that person do?

इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः संहरते - that person should be able to withdraw one's sense organs from the sense objects, at will - संहरते - when one is able to do that naturally and spontaneously, then,

तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता - the बुद्धि of that person will be able to get well rooted in आत्मज्ञानं - self- knowledge, which will enable that person to become wise in due course. For such withdrawal of sense organs from sense objects at will, an example is given.

कूर्मः अङ्गानि इव - Just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs at will. The tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell, naturally, with ease and spontaneity, to protect itself from possible dangers. Similarly, the person who wants to become wise, should be able to withdraw one's sense organs from sense objects at will, naturally and spontaneously, in order to protect one's mind and बुद्धि from possible degradation.

We must understand the example given here properly: The tortoise is not a स्थितप्रज्ञ. It withdraws its limbs, out of fear. On the other hand, one who wants to become a स्थितप्रज्ञ - a wise person, does so out of विवेक बुद्धि - one's discriminative judgment, as to what is to be done and what is not to be done, in order to keep oneself in मोक्ष मार्ग - in the path of spiritual advancement.

In other words, the one who wants to be wise must recognize that the इन्द्रियs - organs of perception and action are just instruments. One must use these instruments to gain



आत्म ज्ञानं, and one must not let these instruments overpower and control one's mind and बुद्धि. This means that one must cultivate the quality of दम - mastery over organs of perception and action, and one must be able to withdraw one's sense instruments naturally and spontaneously to protect one's mind and बुद्धि from spiritual degradation.

That does not mean that one must abstain from using one's इन्द्रियs - sense organs. Not at all. The sense organs are meant for use, indeed full and effective use, but, for proper use only, always keeping them under one's full control.

Now this capacity to withdraw one's sense organs, from sense objects, can be achieved by any person by sheer will. Does it mean, that one becomes wise simply by withdrawing one's sense organs from sense objects? No, because the one who withdraws one's sense organs from sense objects not naturally or spontaneously, but by sheer will only, that person is simply suppressing one's काम-desires - inappropriate and improper desires. Such desires are not abandoned at all. Only the desire prompted actions are abandoned, but the desires themselves still linger, having a hold on the person's mind and बुद्धि. Speaking of that person, भगवान् says

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।

रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥

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The person who wants to become a स्थितप्रज्ञ - one who wants to become wise, must assiduously cultivate the personal quality of दम - control over one's instruments of perception and action as a matter of discipline, and, at the same time, ( as Sri Krishna tells later) keep the mind and बुद्धि engaged in

अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं and तत्त्व ज्ञानार्थदर्शनं which means exposure to Gita, Upanishadic knowledge every day and also clear recognition of the fact that मोक्ष - Liberation is possible only through आत्म ज्ञानं - Self Knowledge.

When one does both, namely cultivation of personal discipline and understanding and appreciation of Upanishadic knowledge, two events happen, one after the other. First, the sense objects lose their hold on the mind and बुद्धि, but the longing for sense objects and sense experiences, continues to have a hold on the mind.

Next, as the Upanishadic Knowledge begins to take roots in the mind and बुद्धि, that longing also gradually loses its hold on the mind and बुद्धि, and ultimately vanishes from



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the mind, because one's बुद्धि realizes that there is no need for external sense objects and experiences for one's happiness.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says here:

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते - meaning इन्द्रिय विषयाः विनिवर्तन्ते - by दम and विवेक बुद्धि - by discipline and enlightenment, the sense objects and experiences are naturally turned away from the mind and बुद्धि which are now engaged in the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञान through Upanishadic studies;

निराहारस्य देहिनः The sense objects and sense experiences have now no strength to over power the mind and बुद्धि, because they are now starved without food.

काम, क्रोध and भय - desire and longing for sense objects and experiences, and the resulting anger and fear constitute the food and nourishment by which the sense objects and sense experiences get their strength to overpower the mind and बुद्धि. When this food is denied by discipline and enlightenment, the power of the sense objects and sense experiences to overpower the mind and बुद्धि is enormously reduced, and hence they are effectively held away from the mind and बुद्धि, रसयजं - except for the longing of the mind for sense objects and sense experiences. That longing still has a hold on the mind and बुद्धि

Thus , in the initial stage of one's endeavour, the mind and बुद्धि of a person who wants to become wise, are not yet mature, and hence not yet free, because they are held in bondage by their longing for various kinds of sense objects and sense experiences.

However, भगवान् assures that there is no need to be discouraged; with continued cultivation of discipline, understanding and appreciation of Upanishadic knowledge,

अस्य रसः अपि निवर्तते - that longing also loses its hold on the person, and it is ultimately turned away, it ultimately vanishes. When does that happen?

परं दृष्ट्वा - When the person realizes that the real nature of all existence, including oneself, is ब्रह्मन् and there is nothing to long for. When that realization happens, there is no longer any suppression of काम-desires involved, and the person discovers all Happiness in oneself. At that stage, the person becomes a स्थितप्रज्ञ - a wise person.

We must understand the above verses properly. In order to discover Fullness and Happiness in oneself, one need not withdraw one's sense organs from all sense objects. If one stops all pursuits of one's sense organs - hearing, feeling, seeing, tasting and smelling - one cannot do any action at all.



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Sri Krishna cannot ask Arjuna to fight the war, and at the same time ask him to close his eyes and ears. What is said here is clear:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते - What is to be done, must be done because  
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः - what has been left for you to do is ईश्वर कर्म - Therefore  
योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि - whatever you need to do, do it as कर्म योग.

But, your sense organs must always be under your control. You should never be carried away by your fancies, likes and dislikes. Keeping your sense organs always under your complete control is extremely important, because, as भगवान् points out in the next verse:

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।  
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ 2 - 60

कौन्तेय O! Arjuna, please be aware of this:

यततः मनः अपि - Even the mind and बुद्धि of a person who makes proper efforts to gain  
आत्म ज्ञानं - Self Knowledge - through Upanishadic studies श्रवणं, मननं, etc, even the  
mind and बुद्धि of such a person further,

पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः मनः अपि - even the mind and बुद्धि of a person who has चिबेक ज्ञानं -  
who sees clearly what is right and what is wrong, why right is right, and why wrong is  
wrong, and therefore what is to be done. Even the mind and बुद्धि of such a person can  
be forcibly abducted by the sense organs, can be overpowered by the sense organs, if  
the mind and बुद्धि are not strong enough to keep the sense organs under complete  
control at all times.

The इन्द्रियs- the sense organs, are just instruments. They simply report to the बुद्धि the  
knowledge of the sense world around. But because of the forces of likes and dislikes,  
because of longing or thirst in the mind for sense objects and sense experiences, the  
mind gets disturbed, restless, and hence weak. Under such conditions इन्द्रियाणि  
प्रमाथीनि meaning प्रमथन शीलानि the इन्द्रियs - the sense organs throw your mind and  
बुद्धि into confusion and restlessness;

प्रसभं - by force, they make you do things which you would not do ordinarily, because,  
हरन्ति - they, the इन्द्रियs, rob your mind and बुद्धि forcibly. The mind and बुद्धि are robbed  
of चिबेक - the ability to discriminate between right and wrong, and robbed of  
प्रकाशं - enlightenment.



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Therefore, keeping the इन्द्रियस under one's watchful control through discipline and practice is absolutely important for one who wants to become wise. Continuing, भगवान् says:

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत् मत्परः ।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2 - 61

तानि सर्वाणि (इन्द्रियाणि) संयम्य meaning

वशीकरणं कृत्वा - keeping all the इन्द्रियस - all the organs of perception and action, under complete control,

युक्त आसीत् (समाहितः सन्-आसीत्) मत् परः - the one who wants to be wise, must ever remain steadfast in the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं - in God- Consciousness (मत्परः), in the Vision of परमात्मा - The परमेश्वर

वशे हि यस्य इन्द्रियाणि - तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता - The one whose organs of perception and action are always held under complete control by self-discipline, Upanishadic studies and कर्मयोग way of life, that person's mind and बुद्धि get well rooted in आत्म ज्ञानं and ईश्वरज्ञानं - God-consciousness, because in कर्मयोग way of life, all राग-द्वेष forces - forces of likes and dislikes, become powerless, and hence, one's इन्द्रियास remain simply as instruments under one's total control.

In the next 2 verses, भगवान् points out how uncontrolled mind and sense organs can bring about self- destruction and spiritual degradation. भगवान् says:

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्ते षूपजायते ।

सङ्गात् सञ्जायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ 2 - 62

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात् स्मृति विभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रंशात् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥ 2 - 63

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः

ध्यायतः - Meditating, which means sustained dwelling in thoughts on,

विषयान् - objects of some special attraction - because you cannot meditate on something unless you see something special in it; meditation on an object is more than simply seeing the object; therefore,



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ध्यायतः विषयान् -sustained dwelling in thoughts on objects which attract the mind of the person in some way

पुंसः for that person

तेषु सङ्गः उपजायते - in those objects, an attachment, a liking, a love arises.

Dwelling on the objects of the senses one develops an attachment to such objects. This kind of attachment does not happen all of a sudden. If I see something beautiful, I can only say that it is beautiful. But, if my mind dwells on that object, I develop a प्रीति for that object, I develop an emotional attachment to that object.

This happens all the time; and there is nothing wrong or bad about it, so long as the सङ्गः - that emotional attachment remains as pure appreciation, which means that, that emotional attachment is devoid of any bondages. Pure appreciation of anything is only an expression of one's appreciation of the Glory or परमेश्वर.

On the other hand, सङ्गात् सञ्जायते कामः

सङ्गात् if that emotional attachment develops into one of bondage,

सञ्जायते कामः - a काम-desire is born, naturally, inevitably

काम-desire means a तृष्णा, a desire leading to a longing for an object or experience involving something outside of oneself. Such a desire arises from राग - a passion. Let us be clear as to what is being said here.

Up to this time one had only a pure appreciation - a pure liking for the object, which is fine. Upon renewed contacts with the object in one's mind, if the mind is not pure, if the mind is already contaminated with राग, one now develops a passion - a longing for that object. That is काम-desire. Now the person becomes dependent on the fulfillment of his काम-desire for his happiness. Thus the person gets bound to काम-desire.

Now we must understand that the object itself does not bind the person. It is the काम-born out of राग that binds the person.

When काम-desire sets in, then what happens?

कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते - कामात् क्रोधः अभिजायते - From काम-desire anger is generated naturally. Thus anger is only unfulfilled desire or obstructed desire. When the काम-desire is not fulfilled or when there is some obstruction to the fulfillment of that काम-desire, that काम turns naturally into क्रोध anger. Thus





काम एव क्रोधः - That काम itself is anger. Anger is nothing but unfulfilled or obstructed काम-desire.

When that काम-desire is fulfilled, then what happens?

That काम-desire grows bigger and bigger and it is only a matter of time, it gets unfulfilled or obstructed at some point. Thus, once the काम-desire gets a hold of you, क्रोध anger is certain - कामात् क्रोधः अभिजायते. When one becomes angry, what happens?

क्रोधात् भवति संमोहः - From anger comes संमोहः - inevitable mental delusion and confusion, which means अचिचेक - incapacity to discriminate what is proper and what is improper, what is right and what is wrong.

Thus when one gets angry, one loses one's ability to think properly. Then what happens?

संमोहात् स्मृति विभ्रमः - From that संमोह inevitable loss of ability to think properly, arises loss of memory, which means the benefit of all human values you have accumulated from childhood, by virtue of your culture, upbringing and scriptural studies - all that is suddenly forgotten. All that has suddenly become ineffectual and useless, just at the time you need it most; that is loss of memory (चित्तं)

From such loss of memory, what happens?

स्मृतिभ्रंशात् बुद्धिनाशः - From such loss of memory comes the destruction of बुद्धि. Your faculty of judgment is बुद्धि . That is destroyed because in order for the अन्तःकरण - the inner instrument of perception to function as बुद्धि it must have both मनस् and चित्तं. It must have the ability to discriminate properly and it must also have the benefit of proper values gained through memory of cultural roots and knowledge, discipline and training arising from scriptural studies.

If मनस् and चित्तं are both lost, बुद्धि is naturally destroyed. Thus

बुद्धिनाशः - destruction of बुद्धि means incapability of your अन्तःकरण - inner instrument of perception, to decide what is proper and what is improper, and what is to be done and what is not to be done. When बुद्धि is destroyed, then what happens?





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बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति - From the destruction of बुद्धि, the person is destroyed, meaning spiritually degraded.

बुद्धि - the power of discriminative judgment is the most important asset for a human being. When that is lost, the person is as good as lost as a human being.

Because once बुद्धि is destroyed, the person becomes incapacitated for any kind of पुरुषार्थ - human endeavour, whether it is धर्म, अर्थ, काम or मोक्ष. The person becomes unfit and incapable for any kind of human accomplishment.

This काम desire born of uncontrolled sense organs leads a person inevitably to self-destruction and self-degradation in terms of any kind of human accomplishment. For such a person, there is no wisdom, no peace, no Happiness and no Freedom. Such a person can never become a स्थितप्रज्ञ - a wise person.

So says Sri Krishna.

Sri Krishna has more to say about स्थितप्रज्ञ which we will see next time.