



भगवत् गीता
द्वितीयोऽध्यायः - सांख्य योगः

Chapter 2
Volume 2

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं सङ्घ्ये द्राणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हो अरिसूदन ॥

2-4

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।

हत्वार्थकामान् तु गुरूनिहैव भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥

2-5

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामः तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥

2-6

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्यभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः ।

यत् श्रेयः स्यात् निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥

2-7

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्यात् यच्छोकमुच्छ्रोषणमिन्द्रियाणां ।

अवाप्य भूमावसपन्नमृद्धं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥

2-8

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तप ।

न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दं उक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥

2-9

तं उवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तं इदं वचः ॥

2-10

Awakened by the उत्तिष्ठ मन्त्र - the call of Sri Krishna to wake up, Arjuna begins to see his problem more and more clearly. He says:

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं सङ्घ्ये द्राणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हो अरिसूदन ॥

2-4



मधुसूदन and अरिसूदन - these words literally mean "Destroyer of enemies". Here they are just complimentary names for Sri Krishna. Throughout the भगवत् गीता, both Sri Krishna and Arjuna are referred to by various complimentary names. It is more a matter of style than of any Upanishadic content; therefore no comments based on the literary meaning of names are necessary for our purpose. Therefore we will simply refer to the individual names.

Here Arjuna tells Sri Krishna:

मधुसूदन - अरिसूदन - O! Krishna, please listen to me;

कथं, भीष्मं द्रोणं च, अहं संख्ये इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि - How can I fight shooting arrows against Bhishma and Drona who are पूजार्हौ - fit to be worshipped. That is my problem. I do not have any fear or weakness at heart; it is just a question of, with whom I am fighting. Bhishma and Drona do not deserve a fight from me, they deserve worship from me.

Thus Arjuna's vision of his problem has now shifted from some generalities he talked about in Chapter 1, to something specific, namely, while fighting with his enemies, he also has to fight with those who are not only NOT his enemies, but who command his respect. That is how Arjuna now sees his problem.

The Waking-up process together with the resulting shift in the thought-process has already started and it continues. Arjuna is asking himself now:

How did this happen? Why is it that Bhishma and Drona, who are not his enemies, are on the side of Duryodhana? They are there because, Arjuna says in the next verse, because Bhishma and Drona are अर्थकामान् - which means even though they never approved the criminal ways of Duryodhana, they still sought, accepted and enjoyed the royal hospitality of Duryodhana for so long that they now feel obligated to him so much that they simply cannot abandon Duryodhana in his time of need. That is how Bhishma and Drona are now caught on the side of Duryodhana. They have no escape, but that is their problem.

As far as I am concerned, Arjuna says:

गुरून् अहत्या हि महानु भावान्
श्रेयः भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यं अपि इह लोके ।
हत्या अर्थकामान् तु गुरून् इहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिर प्रदिग्धान् ॥

2 - 5



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

For me, it is श्रेयस् - it is Absolutely the best, if I could take to the life style of a Sanyasi and live on भिक्षा - live on alms in this world without killing the respected Teachers, rather than killing them and enjoying the royal pleasures of a kingdom gained through a blood-stained victory.

Thus Arjuna's thoughts have shifted again. He is now gaining a dispassion for worldly enjoyments. He now realizes that what he really needs is श्रेयस् - That which is the Absolute Best - That which gives Absolute Peace and Happiness for himself at all times. In Vedantic language, श्रेयस् is another word for मोक्ष - Absolute Freedom, Absolute Happiness and Total Fulfillment in life.

If it is श्रेयस् that I really need, Arjuna continues in the next verse:

न च एतत् विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्या न जिजीविषामः ते अवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ 2 - 6

न च एतत् विद्मः I do not know

नः कतरत् गरीयः means नः किं श्रेष्ठतरं - which is better for us

यद्वा जयेम, यदि वा नो जयेयुः - whether we should conquer them, or they conquer us - "they" means,

यान् एव हत्या ते अवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः, न जिजीविषामः - these very sons of Dhritarashtra standing before us, after killing whom we should not care to live.

Is it better that I live a life of Sanyasi, living on alms, or I live the life of a king with blood stained victory, this I do not know, because, I feel, whether victory is for us or for them, either way it is useless. If they are going to win, then it is useless to fight; if we are going to win, even then we are defeated, in the sense that we do not care to live after killing all those standing on the Duryodhana side. Thus, whether we win or lose, that is not going to bring श्रेयस् - abiding Peace and Happiness, to my mind. Therefore, what should I do? I do not know - That is my problem.

Thus Arjuna has now discerned his problem. What he needs is श्रेयस्. What he should do to gain That श्रेयस् he does not know. That is his problem. Therefore, he tells Sri Krishna:

कार्पण्य दोष उपहत स्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मं समूढचेताः ।
यत् श्रेयः स्यात् निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नं ॥ 2 - 7



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

This is a very beautiful verse in the भगवत् गीता. This is a prayer verse for every one of us. The mind of Arjuna is opening, and it becomes receptive to Gita Upadesa - The Teachings of The भगवत् गीता just at this point in time. Please listen to what he says now:

कार्पण्य दोष उपहत स्वभावः - O! Krishna, I realize that I am suffering from a दोष - a defect or blemish in me. What is the blemish - it is कार्पण्य दोष - the blemish arising from my disposition of miserliness. कृपण means a miser. In the Upanishadic language, a miser is (according to Brihad. Upanishad 3.8.10)

यः आत्मानं अविधित्वा (न ज्ञात्वा) अस्मात् लोकात् प्रैति -> सः कृपणः

A कृपण - a miser is one who departs from this world without knowing one's own real nature through failure to make use of one's own God given faculties. All our God-given faculties are meant only for one purpose, namely, to gain knowledge of one's own Real Nature. Instead of using one's own faculties to gain such Self-Knowledge, if one dissipates one's energies in the never-ending धर्म, अर्थ, काम pursuits only, such a person is called कृपण - a miser. In that sense, every one of us is suffering from the कृपण दोष - blemish of disposition of miserliness, in the use of God-given faculties to gain Self-Knowledge.

Fortunately, this कृपण दोष is a rectifiable blemish, and the process of rectification is achieved through the Teachings of भगवत् गीता. That is why Gita is relevant to every one of us.

Arjuna says:

कार्पण्य दोष उपहत स्वभावः - I am suffering from the blemish of my disposition of miserliness, and this disposition of miserliness is almost destroying my natural abilities (उप-हत-स्वभावः) The greatest treasure of a person is one's own self, more particularly one's own विवेक बुद्धि - faculty of discrimination. There are various levels of विवेक - the highest विवेक is नित्य-अनित्य विवेक - the ability to discriminate between what is eternal and what is transient. If this विवेक has not taken place in one's life, it is as good as a waste of life. Such waste of life is due to कार्पण्य दोष, and because of this कार्पण्य दोष, Arjuna says:



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

धर्मं संमूढचेताः - my mind is not functioning, even with respect to determining what is धर्म and what is अधर्म - what is proper and what is improper. Therefore,

त्वां पृच्छामि - I ask you

निश्चितं ब्रूहि तत् मे - please tell me decisively (without creating doubts in my mind)

यत् श्रेयः स्यात् - That which is श्रेयस् - that which is The Absolute Best for me to do, That which will give Absolute Peace and Happiness for me at all times. Please tell that to me, in definite and decisive terms;

शिष्यस्तेऽहं - I am your disciple. Please accept me as your disciple.

त्वां प्रपन्नं means त्वं शरणं गतः अस्मि - I surrender myself to you, which means, I detach myself from everything else that is binding on me, and I commit myself to you totally. Thus I surrender to you totally;

शाधि मां - मां शिक्षय - please teach me. Please teach me the means for gaining श्रेयस् - Absolute Peace and Happiness, which is same as मोक्ष - Absolute Freedom and Total Fulfillment in life.

By surrendering to Sri Krishna, seeking श्रेयस् or मोक्ष मार्ग - the means for gaining Absolute Peace and Happiness in life, the means for gaining मोक्ष - Arjuna has now become a मुमुक्षु - one with the right attitude for gaining SELF-Knowledge. Arjuna is no longer interested in any kind of transient Peace and Happiness. It is clear to him that what he needs is only श्रेयस् - Absolute Everlasting Peace and Happiness. He makes that very clear to Sri Krishna by saying:

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्यात् यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणां ।

अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यं ॥ 2-8

न हि प्रपश्यामि - Indeed, I do not at all see - I do not at all think - what?

भूमौ असपत्नं ऋद्धं राज्यं अवाप्य अपि - even gaining the unrivalled and prosperous kingdom on earth, and

सुराणां आधिपत्यं अवाप्य अपि - even gaining the over lordship of the Devas and heavens

मम शोकं अपनुद्यात् - can remove my शोक - my sadness, sorrow and distress,

यत् शोकं मम इन्द्रियाणां उच्छोषणं - which शोक dries up, incapacitates all my senses and faculties.

Neither gaining the Lordship of this unrivalled and prosperous kingdom on earth, nor gaining the over lordship of the heavenly kingdom of Devas, nor gaining both of them, can remove my acute शोक - sadness, sorrow and distress, which incapacitates all my



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

senses and faculties. Therefore I am not interested in gaining any kingdom any more. Please teach me, in definite and decisive terms, That which will lead me to श्रेयस् - मोक्ष - Absolute Peace, Freedom and Happiness. Thus Arjuna has expressed his Absolute dispassion (विराग) to the enjoyment of fruits of his own actions, here or hereafter, and he has thus become ready for आत्मज्ञानं - Self-Knowledge - Absolute Freedom and Total Fulfillment in life.

A big change has taken place in the mind of Arjuna now. The agitations have now subsided. The problem has now been discerned. What Arjuna wants is श्रेयस् - which is मोक्ष, and nothing else can satisfy his needs. That has become clear to his mind and बुद्धि. He has the greatest Teacher in front of him at this time in the Form of Sri Krishna. He surrenders to Sri Krishna and asks him to teach.

यत् श्रेयः स्यात् - That which is the Absolute Best for him to do; his mind is now ready for that Knowledge, and, for the time being, he is not interested in anything else.

Reporting this situation, Sanjaya says;

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तपः ।

न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दं उक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥

2-9

Having said this to Sri Krishna, Arjuna added the words, "न योत्स्ये" - I will not fight", and then became silent, which means that his entire body, mind and intellect is turned towards Sri Krishna in an attentive and devotional mood.

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तं इदं वचः ॥

2-10

Sri Krishna then responds to Arjuna, with a smile - प्रहसन् इव - as if smiling, which means, Sri Krishna is obviously pleased to see Arjuna ready for SELF-Knowledge - आत्म ज्ञानं - ईश्वर ज्ञानं - ब्रह्मविद्या - spiritual Knowledge, and one of the missions of His own Avatara (incarnation) is now being fulfilled through His Teachings to Arjuna, thereby to all humanity for all generations to come.

Sri Krishna accepts Arjuna as the disciple. Sri Krishna's smiling face inspires confidence in Arjuna.

तं उवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन् इव भारत ।



सेनयोः उभयोः मध्ये विषीदन्तं इदं वचः ॥

2-10

Stationed in between the two armies, Sri Krishna spoke these words, to the sorrow-stricken Arjuna. The गीतोपदेश - The Gita Teaching, starts with the next verse. Sri Krishna starts with the words: अशोच्यान् अन्यशोचस्त्वं... and ends with the words मा शुचः in verse 66 of Chapter 18.

Sri Krishna starts by saying "O! Arjuna, you are worried unnecessarily", and ends by saying "Don't worry, I will take care of you". In between these words, there is an entire teaching on the nature of Existence - the Nature of जीव-जगत् and ईश्वर, and the most practical philosophy for right conduct in everyday life, leading to Absolute Happiness and Total Fulfillment in life, which is indeed the teaching of all our scriptures - the Vedas and the Upanishads.

From here on, we are not particularly concerned with the Mahabharata War as an episode in human history, except in terms of context. On the other hand, we are concerned with the incessant war going on within every one of us, between the forces of good and bad, in our every day life. This war is of every human being, who is mature enough to realize that Joy of Life lies only in Enlightenment of the Best and the Highest in one's own self; and That is आत्म ज्ञानं - ईश्वर ज्ञानं - Self-Knowledge - God Realization.

Striving towards such Enlightenment - such Self-Knowledge - such God-Realization

- ❖ IS our heritage;
- ❖ IS our philosophy;
- ❖ IS our culture;
- ❖ IS our religion.

In order to gain such Enlightenment, one has to overcome so many obstacles within oneself - that is the great war one has to fight every day of one's life. In this war itself, there is no violence. There are no bows and arrows, bombs or shells. There is no bloodshed. There is no death. There is only a continuous process of self-endeavour, to uplift oneself, which itself is a process of continuous joy.

The destructive weapons of ordinary war are completely useless in this process of self-endeavor. The weapons needed to succeed in this war are constructive ones, and they are: अमानित्वं, अदमिबत्वं, अहिंसा - humility, modesty, non-violence, etc., about which we will talk in Chapter 13.

Among all our weapons in this process of self-endeavor, the most powerful one is अहिंसा - non-violence in thought, word and deed. That is why our Scriptures say अहिंसा परमो



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4335 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

धर्मः - Non-violence is the supreme code of conduct in daily life. The भगवत् गीता unfolds the Power of अहिंसा - Non-violence, for self-upliftment. The Teachings of The भगवत् गीता are universal, applicable to all human beings, at all times, under all circumstances.

Simply because these teachings occurred in the context of the महाभारत war, they do not constitute an incitement to violence of any kind, anywhere, at any time, under any circumstance. On the contrary, the Teachings of the भगवत् गीता unfold the Power of the all-inclusive ईश्वर भक्ति and ईश्वर ज्ञानं - to dispel Self-ignorance and gain Extraordinary Enlightenment, Fulfillment and Joy of Life for every human being.

It is That गीतोपदेश - The Gita Teachings which we will be starting to read next time.