



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
तृतीयोऽध्यायः - कर्मयोगः
Chapter 3
Volume 5

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As we may recall, in the verses that we saw last time, Sri Krishna told Arjuna "For every person who is not yet a ज्ञानी, कर्म योग is the only means available for gaining श्रेयस् - Total fulfillment in life". In continuation of the same message, in today's verses, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna "Whether you are a ज्ञानी or अज्ञानी - whether you are an Enlightened person or not yet Enlightened person, you must do your कर्तव्यं कर्म, your duty-bound कर्म as कर्म योग, both for reaching your own goal in life and also in the interests of the welfare of the world at large to which you are committed by your very nature".



ब्रह्मचिद्या **Brahma Vidya**

This is how Sri Krishna communicates this latter message

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिं आस्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोकसंग्रह मेवापि, संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥

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कर्मणा एव हि संसिद्धिं आस्थिताः जनकादयः

हि - It is well-known

जनकादयः - Janaka and others like him

In terms of the Vedic society, people like जनक, भागीरथ, etc. were क्षत्रियाs, as well as पण्डिताs - they were men of action and at the same time they were men of wisdom. Citing them as examples, भगवान् says

जनकादयः - People like Janaka

संसिद्धिं आस्थिता : - were engaged in the pursuit of संसिद्धिं - Total Fulfillment in life

कर्मणा एव - only through performing their duty-bound कर्मs

It is well known that people like जनक were totally committed to the pursuit of Total Fulfillment in life only through performing their duty-bound कर्मs. This statement can be understood in two ways.

- They were engaged in their respective कर्मs for the goal of मोक्ष only, not for धर्म, अर्थ or काम. Janaka was all the time busy ruling the kingdom. He did all his royal duties, and he did them all very well indeed, as a कर्म योगी, and at the same time, his goal of life was only मोक्ष, not anything else.
- Or, one can say that जनक was already a ज्ञानी. He was already a स्थितप्रज्ञ, he was already an आत्मरतिः, आत्मतृप्तः and आत्मसंतुष्टः, which means that he was already a liberated person. Yet he was so busy every day engaged in his कर्तव्यं कर्मs - royal duties, because of the strength and momentum of his प्रारब्ध-कर्म बल - जन्मान्तर कृत कर्म अनुग्रह - past कर्मs



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The power and expression of प्रारब्ध कर्म (past कर्मs) are different for different people. The प्रारब्ध कर्म of Janaka was to rule the kingdom for the welfare of the people. On the other hand, the प्रारब्ध कर्म of Ramana Maharishi was simply to do apparently nothing, and yet bring peace and happiness to those around him by his very presence.

Therefore, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna

लोक संग्रहं एव अपि संपश्यन् कर्तुं अर्हसि

संपश्यन् अपि - Even if you have a clear vision of आत्म ज्ञानं, even if you think that you are already a ज्ञानी

कार्यं कर्म कर्तुं अर्हसि - you must do the कर्म that has come to you as your duty, just like Janaka

लोकसंग्रहं एव - for the welfare of the world

लोकसंग्रहं - is to protect the people from improper pursuits and improper actions.

Being in the situation in which you are, it is your प्रारब्ध कर्म to fight this war as ईश्वर अर्पित कर्म - as a यज्ञ कर्म dedicated to परमेश्वर, for the welfare of the world, to establish the path of धर्म in the society.

If you are a कामी - a desire prompted person, then you must naturally do your कर्तव्यं कर्म in order to achieve the object of your desire, whatever it is. If you are a मुमुक्षु, one desirous of gaining मोक्ष, श्रेयस्, then you must do your कर्तव्यं कर्म as कर्म योग. If you are a ज्ञानी - an already Enlightened person, then also you must do the कर्तव्यं कर्म for लोक संग्रहं - for the welfare of the world. As a ज्ञानी, कर्म does not mean anything to you, but it means very much for the world that you are in.

In any case, you must do your कर्तव्यं कर्म - your duty. You have no choice. That is your प्रारब्ध कर्म फल - the result of your past कर्मs which have already started yielding results. If you ask "Why should I do my कर्तव्यं कर्म - my duty for लोक संग्रहं - for the welfare of the world?" You must do your कर्तव्यं कर्म because

यद्यत् आचरति श्रेष्ठः तत्तत् एव इतरो जनः ।



ब्रह्मचिद्या **Brahma Vidya**

स यत् प्रमाणं कुरुते, लोकः तदनुवर्तते ॥

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यत् यत् आचरति श्रेष्ठः

यत् यत् कर्म - whatever कर्म

श्रेष्ठः - means

प्रधान पुरुषः - one who is looked upon as a great person or a leader by virtue of one's position, power, accomplishments, etc,

आचरति करोति - does

तत् तत् कर्म एव इतरः जनः आचरति

तत् तत् कर्म एव - that कर्म alone

इतरः जनः आचरति - other people do

Whatever कर्म a great person, a leader does, that is followed by other people.

सः यत् प्रमाणं कुरुते - Whatever प्रमाणं, whatever standard or philosophy is set by a great person, by a leader, whether it is with respect to worldly matters or scriptural matters

लोकः तत् अनुवर्तते - people follow, making that standard or philosophy their own. People go by the example set by the leader.

O! Arjuna, you are not an ordinary person. You are a well recognized, well-established, well respected leader among people. People follow your example. Therefore, in the public interest, you must do कर्तव्यं कर्म, you must do your duty. Then only other people will do their duties. That is the nature of society.

In case you have any doubt, whether you should do your duty or reject your duty, whether you should do कर्तव्यं कर्म or whether you should choose a life of ordinary संन्यास, then just see what I am doing.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं, त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

न अनवाप्तं अवाप्तव्यं , वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

पार्थ - O! Arjuna

त्रिषु लोकेषु - In all the three worlds, which means in the past, in the present and in the future

मे कर्तव्यं किञ्चन न अस्ति - There is absolutely nothing that I need to do. I am not bound to any कर्म or to any कर्म फल. I require nothing, because

न अनवाप्तं - For me, there is nothing that has not been achieved

न अवाप्तव्यं - There is nothing that is yet to be achieved, which means I am everything at all times, past, present and future. All that exists in this creation is Myself only. Even then, even when that is the case

वर्त एव च कर्मणि, अहं - I always remain in कर्म. I am active all the time. Why?

लोकसंग्रहार्थं - simply for the welfare of the world

Then you might ask, if you are everything, who asked you to be engaged in कर्म? What will happen to the world if you do not do any कर्म? Answering that question, Sri Krishna says

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं, जातु कर्मणि अतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्तमानवर्तन्ते, मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

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Even in his own manifested life time on earth, Sri Krishna was recognized as a Great man, as a Godly man, and all the people who came in contact with him wanted to follow his example. Therefore Sri Krishna says here

यदि हि, कर्मणि अहं न वर्तेयं जातु अतन्द्रितः :

यदि - Suppose, if

हि - indeed

कर्मणि अहं न वर्तेयं - I am not engaged in कर्तव्यं कर्म - in कर्म that is to be done by me

जातु - at any time

अतन्द्रितः - either by virtue of indifference or by sheer laziness

पार्थ - O! Arjuna, suppose if at any time, either due to indifference or laziness, I do not do the कर्म that has to be done by me, as a matter of duty, do you know what will happen?



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

मनुष्याः : मम वर्त्म अनुवर्तन्ते सर्वशः

मनुष्याः - People

मम वर्त्म अनुवर्तन्ते - will follow my example

सर्वशः सर्वप्रकारैः : - by all means, in all respects in their own lives. Even if I am indifferent or lazy with respect to only one कर्म - one duty, people will be ready to follow that example with respect to any or every duty in their own lives.

Adherence to proper behaviour and devotion to duty at all times are the लक्षणसः - distinguishing characteristics of great people. But the ordinary people in society do not usually feel inclined to emulate the merits in the great people. If there be any lapses in them, they are readily followed by ordinary people. They will even cite shortcomings in the great people, as precedents to justify their own shortcomings. Sri Krishna is naturally exemplary in his conduct at all times:

If people follow the shortcomings of the leaders in the society, what will happen?
भगवान् says

उत्सीदेयुः इमे लोकाः न कुर्याम् कर्म चेदहम् ।

संकरस्य च कर्तास्याम् उपहन्याम् इमाः प्रजाः ॥

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उत्सीदेयुः इमे लोकाः

इमे लोकाः सर्वे लोकाः - all people in this world

उत्सीदेयुः चिनश्येयुः - will ruin themselves. If the people follow the shortcomings of the leaders in the society, they will only ruin themselves.

The harmony in this world is maintained only by everybody doing what each one is duty-bound to do. So many things that one enjoys in one's everyday life are the result of somebody else's work. Even though one may pay for them, they are actually the result of कर्मसः done by somebody else. If the majority of the people stop working, the harmony in this world is effectively destroyed, and even the शरीर यात्रा - even the mere maintenance of the physical body will not be possible. Therefore, भगवान् says

उत्सीदेयुः : इमे लोकाः : न कुर्यान् कर्म चेत् अहं



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

अहं कर्म न कुर्यां चेत् उत्सीदेयुः इमे लोकाः - If I do not do the कर्म that I need to do, that I must do by virtue of my situation in life, then people will certainly follow my example, and thereby they will hurt themselves, and the entire world will be ruined.

The whole creation is a process of action. The sun rises, the wind blows, the rain falls and the earth moves. Action never stops and it is incessant. That is the nature of the world. If harmony is not maintained in this natural process, there will only be all-round confusion and misery. If that happens

संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यां - I will be the कर्ता - the author of such confusion, and उपहन्यां इमाः प्रजाः - I would be the cause for the destruction of the people and their right to happiness. To do so, is against my own nature, the nature of ईश्वर - the nature of आत्मा.

The nature of ईश्वर is प्रजानां अनुग्रहाय प्रवृत्तः - to bless the society with fullness and happiness, which means, to remove every kind of sorrow and distress.

ईश्वर is धर्म पालन कर्ता, as Sri Krishna says in the next chapter.

धर्म संस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे "I am born from time to time to reestablish order in society, so that everybody may tread the path of कर्म योग, and ultimately realize मोक्ष. Therefore, I must do the कर्तव्यं कर्म, and that is what I am doing right now. And that is also what you must do, both for your sake and for the welfare of the world.

How one should do one's कर्तव्यं कर्म - actions to be done? भगवान् says

सक्ताःकर्मणि अविद्वांसः, यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्यात् विद्वान् तथा असक्तः चिकीर्षुः लोक संग्रहं ॥

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भारत - O! Arjuna

सक्ताः कर्मणि अविद्वांसः यथा कुर्वन्ति

यथा - Just as

अविद्वांसः कुर्वन्ति the ordinary - not yet enlightened people do their कर्मs. How do they do their कर्मs?



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

कर्मणि सक्ताः - they are bound to their कर्मs, they are really attached to their कर्म फल - the result of their कर्मs. Therefore कर्म फल is the driving force behind their actions. Even though they really do not know what results they will get, what happiness they will bring to them, still they are pushed into कर्म by their thirst for the results they hope that their कर्मs will bring to them. Such people are

अविद्वान्सः - not enlightened people

पुरुषार्थ विवेक रहिताः - people who do not have the capacity for discriminative judgment regarding Real and Transient.

यथा कुर्यान्ति - Just as those people go about doing their कर्मs with full force of their energy, interest and enthusiasm,

कुर्यात् विद्वान् तथा, असक्तः, चिकीर्षुः लोकसंग्रहं

तथा - in the same manner, with the same full force of energy, interest and enthusiasm

विद्वान् कुर्यात् - an Enlightened person also must do the कर्म that has come to one by virtue of one's circumstances, only with this difference, namely

असक्तः - not bound to कर्म and not bound to कर्म फल. One must do one's कर्तव्यं कर्म - कर्म to be done as a Free person

चिकीर्षुः लोक संग्रहं - wishing only for the welfare of the world to uplift people, to bring back people from their wrong paths, from their misguided ill-fated or self-destructive ways of life.

Thus with respect to कर्तव्यं कर्म - actions to be done, there is no difference between a विद्वान् or अविद्वान्, an Enlightened person or a Not-yet-enlightened person. Both must perform action with full energy, interest and enthusiasm. The difference is only in attitude.

The person who is not yet mature, who is अविद्वान् - Not yet enlightened person, does कर्म prompted by कर्म फल. On the other hand, the Enlightened person, the विद्वान्, the ज्ञानी performs कर्म simply because it has been left for him to do by ईश्वर. Therefore the action is ईश्वर कर्म and the purpose of ईश्वर कर्म is लोक संग्रहं - welfare of the world.

Thus भगवान् tells here the duty of a wise person - a ज्ञानी. For a ज्ञानी - for a self-realized person, there is really no such thing as a कर्तव्यं कर्म, कर्मs to be done,



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because a ज्ञानी does not look upon himself as a कर्ता - as the Doer of a कर्म. Still he does whatever has been left for him to do as ईश्वर कर्म - as यज्ञ कर्म - as कर्म योग for the welfare of the world. Further,

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेत् अज्ञानां कर्मसंगिनाम् ।

जोषयेत् सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान् युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

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Here, भगवान् tells what a wise man, as a leader in the society, must do, and must not do. First, He says,

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेत् अज्ञानां कर्म संगिनां - Let not the wise man create confusion in the minds of those who are bound to कर्म, who are attached to कर्म फल. Let not the wise man create confusion in the minds of people who are committed to कर्म for the sake of enjoying the results of कर्म.

For example, let not the wise man go and tell them, in the name of Enlightenment that "कर्म will not give you Freedom, कर्म will not give you security, and कर्म will not give you lasting happiness", etc. In the name of Enlightenment, if you convince a person attached to कर्म फल that कर्म is useless, what will that person do? He will only give up कर्म.

If he does that, he will neither get कर्म फल, the fruits of the कर्म, nor will he get any Enlightenment, because Enlightenment is not a matter of doing nothing. **It is not a matter of Not doing कर्म.** Therefore, what should a wise man as a leader in society do?

जोषयेत् सर्व कर्माणि, विद्वान् युक्तः समाचरन्

जोषयेत् सर्व कर्माणि, विद्वान् युक्तः सम्यक् आचरन् - The wise man must create joy and enthusiasm in all work. How? The विद्वान् - the wise man, serving as an example to the society, must himself do all work with propriety, gratitude, joy and enthusiasm. As Sri Krishna said earlier:

यद्यत् आचरति श्रेष्ठः तत्तत् एव इतरो जनः - Whatever a great person does, that is followed by other people. Therefore, the wise man, the leader in the society, should set



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an example by himself, doing all कर्मs properly, joyfully and enthusiastically, so that other people would naturally like to follow his example.

The attitude of one who is bound to कर्म is different from the attitude of one who is in कर्म योग. The one who is bound to कर्म cannot sit and contemplate on ईश्वर. He can only contemplate on कर्म and कर्म फल. For such a person, please do not degrade कर्म. On the other hand, for such a person, glorify कर्म by turning every कर्म into the path of धर्म and सत्यं, so that he may get the best out of that कर्म, even in his own terms. When कर्म is rooted in धर्म and सत्यं, in due course of time every कर्म will mature into कर्म योग and ultimately into ज्ञानं and मोक्ष.

To do कर्म or not to do कर्म is a matter of decision, a matter of will. Decision one can always make. A कर्म योग attitude is not born of decision. It is a disposition of body mind and intellect, to which one has to grow naturally. By will, you can give up anything, or take up anything. But you cannot gain कर्म योग attitude by will. कर्म योग attitude can come only from ईश्वर आराधन बुद्धि, into which one has to grow naturally. That is where the temple culture comes in, into our community life.

All our Temple Rituals serve to help every individual to understand, appreciate and progressively cultivate That ईश्वर आराधन बुद्धि and कर्म योग attitude, naturally.

Sri Krishna's discourse on कर्म योग continues, which we will see next time.