



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

चतुर्थोऽध्यायः - ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगः

Chapter 4

Volume 2

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After revealing Himself to Arjuna as the अवतार पुरुष - God Incarnate - meaning परमेश्वर assuming the appearance of a human being from time to time, by the creative power of his own inherent माया शीक्त - all powerful nature, for the sole purpose of re-establishing धर्म in society, for the benefit of entire humanity, Sri Krishna continues:

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यं, एवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म, नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ 4 - 9

जन्म कर्म च, मे दिव्यं, एवं यः वेत्ति तत्त्वतः

एवं - in this manner

यः वेत्ति तत्त्वतः - the one who knows the तत्त्व - the real fact of the matter, the one who understands the truth about मे जन्म, मे कर्म च my birth and my actions as दिव्यं means दिवि भावं or ईश्वर भावं - my birth and my actions are of the very nature of परमेश्वर and they are not governed by the limitations of the laws of nature.

My birth and my actions appear peculiar because, I am in-fact, ever-existent, yet I appear to be born. I perform no action, yet I appear to be engaged in action, etc. The



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one who realizes that the appearances of my birth and actions are only manifestations of the inherent creative power of myself – the परमेश्वर, their real nature is दिव्यं - entirely Divine - the one who realizes my real nature, what happens to that person?

त्यक्त्या देहं पुनः जन्म न एति

त्यक्त्या देहं - Giving up the body, which means giving up the notion of identity with one's body, recognizing one's mistaken identity with one's body-mind-intellect complex

पुनः जन्म न एति - the person never gets another कर्म-born जन्म - the person is never reborn again as कर्मफल. The सत्यं - the truth about my जन्म and कर्म - My birth and actions as अवतार पुरुष - is also the truth about this entire ever-changing creation, its birth and its actions.

Therefore, the one who realizes the सत्यं - the truth about my जन्म and my कर्म, is also the one who realizes what is सत्यं and what is मिथ्या - what is the never changing truth and what is the ever-changing appearance. Such realization helps one to realize the Truth about one's own Self - Self-knowledge. The moment one gains such Self-knowledge, त्यक्त्या देहं पुनर्जन्म न एति - one gives up one's mistaken identity with one's physical body, and one is never again subject to rebirth.

Then what happens to that person?

सः मां एति - That person comes to ME – the परमेश्वर. That person gains identity with me, becomes one with me. That person recognizes परमेश्वर already in oneself, as प्रत्यग आत्मा - as one's innermost SELF Itself.

Because of one's ignorance about the सत्यं - The Truth about अवतार पुरुष - God Incarnate - one is searching for me - the परमेश्वर, everywhere. As soon as one gains knowledge about me as अवतार पुरुष, one also gains knowledge about oneself, and that person gains instant identity with परमेश्वर in himself as ONESELF - wherever the person may be, whatever the person may do, which means - one gains जीव-ईश्वर ऐक्यं instantly. Gaining such identity is indeed gaining आत्म ज्ञानं - Supreme Wisdom.

That is how Sri Krishna makes use of Arjuna's question to redirect his thoughts again towards आत्म ज्ञानं, which is indeed gaining श्रेयस् - gaining the परम पुरुषार्थ - the मोक्ष - The highest goal of life.



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“The process of gaining such मोक्ष is कर्म योग, as already pointed out by Sri Krishna. This process of gaining आत्म ज्ञानं through कर्म योग has been known to the Rishis for a long time. Today I am teaching you that knowledge again, so that you can also gain आत्म ज्ञानं and the श्रेयस्, the मोक्ष that you seek” so says Sri Krishna.

Does it mean that every time someone wants to gain आत्म ज्ञानं, an ईश्वर अवतार must take place? No, that is not necessary. All that one needs to do is to follow कर्म योग. Is that enough? Sure, that is enough, because भगवान् says:

वीत राग भय क्रोधा मन्मया मां उपाश्रिताः ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भाव आगताः ॥

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In the previous verse, Sri Krishna said:

“Having gained आत्म ज्ञानं, सः मां एति, that person becomes ONE with ME - the परमेश्वर.” Continuing that statement, भगवान् says:

बहवः मद्भाव आगताः - Very many people have thus gained identity with परमेश्वर, which means, giving up the notion of identity with individual जीव, they have gained the realization अहं सर्वात्मकं ब्रह्म - My true nature is indeed The All-inclusive, The All-pervading ब्रह्मन्. All this, everything in this creation - is Myself.

It is not a process of becoming. It is a process of Being. It is a process of recognition of one's being, one's आत्मा as It is. The realization of truth about आत्मा helps you recognize yourself in everything. To be in everything cannot be recognized unless you recognize yourself to be free from everything.

If you realize that you are free from everything and then if you look at the world, you will find that the world is not free from you. You are free from the world, but the world is not free from you. You are independent of your thoughts, but your thoughts are not independent of you. You are सत्यं and the world is मिथ्या. Thus very many people have gained realization of सत्यं and मिथ्या. How?



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पूताः ज्ञान तपसा - When their minds are purified by the fire of knowledge, ignorance of Self is removed by knowledge gained by आत्म विचार - enquiry about the nature of जीव-जगत् and ईश्वर. Such enquiry itself is तपस् - discipline. It is ज्ञान तपस् . That is the only kind of तपस् that is needed to gain आत्म ज्ञानं.

The fire of that enquiry, the power and enlightenment arising from such enquiry burns all ignorance about oneself, and the mind. The entire अन्तःकरण gets purified and gains the ability to recognize one's true nature.

Thus, purely by enquiry, one can gain आत्म ज्ञानं and realize identity with परमेश्वर. And, the necessary prerequisite for such enquiry is कर्म योग, which is

वीत- राग भय- क्रोधाः - freeing oneself, releasing oneself from the forces of राग (passion, likes and dislikes), भय (fear) and क्रोध (anger). Again

मन्मया - identifying oneself with ME – the परमेश्वर, in all of one's actions

मां उपाश्रिताः - with the mind directed towards परमेश्वर at all times, that is कर्म योग बुद्धि.

By such कर्म योग, followed by knowledge gained by enquiry on the nature of जीव-जगत् and ईश्वर, many people have realized जीव-ईश्वर-एक्यं - identity with परमेश्वर, and gained श्रेयस् -मोक्ष - liberation from all sorrow and distress.

So saying, Sri Krishna has brought Arjuna's mind again to the subject of ज्ञान योग and कर्म योग. From what भगवान् has said already, it is clear that कर्म is necessary for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं, and the purpose of कर्म is to make one's अन्तःकरण - mind and बुद्धि fit for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं. That purpose can be accomplished only by performing कर्म as कर्म योग.

कर्म योग means a state of existence where the mind is totally free from राग and द्वेष (passion and hatred - intense likes and dislikes), and the mind is always directed towards परमेश्वर while performing all actions as dedication to परमेश्वर. Only those



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who have this कर्म योग state of existence, this कर्म योग disposition of mind and बुद्धि, can gain आत्म ज्ञानं.

For some it may appear as though भगवान् has His own राग and द्वेष, favoring कर्म योगीs preferentially with respect to the ability to gain आत्म ज्ञानं. There should be no misunderstanding here. भगवान् has no राग or द्वेष with respect to anybody, because भगवान् says

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते, तान् तथैव भजाम्यहं ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते, मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ 4 - 11

This is one of the famous verses in the भगवत् गीता. In the first line भगवान् says

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते, तान् तथा एव भजामि अहं -

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते - In whatever manner, in whichever form, with whatever motive and to whatever extent people worship ME - the परमेश्वर

तान् तथा एव भजामि अहं - I bless them exactly in the same manner, and precisely to the same extent. As you approach, so you reach - so far, and no further. What you seek is what you get, so much and nothing more.

As the Upanishad says, तत् त्वं असि - I am in fact in you, and I am you. Whatever you seek from me, it is already in you. And whatever you seek from ME is what you will find in ME. You will get what you seek, nothing more and nothing less.

Nothing in this world is separate from ME. I am in everything, and I am everything. I say to you, the जीव, "I am You, please realize that I am indeed you, you are indeed myself. If you realize that, you will also realize that you are also everything, which means that there is no need for you to ask from ME anything special, because you are already everything.

On the other hand, if you choose to disown me in yourself, and you only want some small little things from me as fruits of your actions, surely I will give you the fruits of your actions in full measure. There is no राग or द्वेष - like or dislike on my part.



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I am already you, whether you know it or not. The fruits of your actions are already in your actions, whether you know it or not, and you will get the fruits of your action in full measure whether you want it or not.

You are a जीव. You are blessed with a बुद्धि, an instrument by which you can discriminate between good and bad, and real and unreal. You are also blessed with a free will to be able to do as you choose to do. To help you in your daily life, a प्रमाण - a means of knowledge has also been given to you in the form of Vedas and Upanishads. With all these blessings, if you have a problem, the problem is you and you alone. It is your choice of action, more particularly your motive behind your action that decides what you get out of yourself, because you are indeed everything. What you get out of yourself depends only on yourself alone, and nothing outside of yourself. I bless you exactly the way you seek my blessings. I have neither राग nor द्वेष for any one, nor am I a कर्ता - Doer of action. I am you, and you get entirely what you deserve, nothing more, nothing less.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तान् तथैव भजाम्यहम् - You may invoke me in any name, in any form, in any manner. Remaining as परमेश्वर, I will bless you through the same name, through the same form and in the same manner. Through whichever कर्म you invoke me, through the same कर्म I will bless you.

I am everywhere, in hell or heaven, in joy or sorrow. I am the कर्म फल दाता for all actions good or bad. The कर्म फल of good actions give you सुख and that of bad actions give you दुःख. I am the Giver of fruits of all actions whether they are good or bad.

I am like Fire. If you want fire to boil your water, it does. If you put your finger in the fire, it burns your finger. In either case, the fire does nothing. It remains what it is. Your water got what you wanted and your finger got what it sought. So is the case with ME, the परमेश्वर. I bless you exactly as you seek me.

I am like an ocean. One comes to the ocean with a small vessel, and carries away a vessel full of water. Another comes to the ocean with a truck and carries away a truck full of water. One cannot complain why the ocean gives only a vessel full of water to one and a truck full of water to another. How much water you can get from the ocean depends on you alone.



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With whatever motive you invoke परमेश्वर, it is reflected fully and exactly in कर्म फल. The same कर्म done with different motives produces different results according to the motives. The one who does कर्म simply as कर्म gets only the results of कर्म. The one who does the same कर्म as कर्म योग gets not only the result of the कर्म, but also अन्तःकरण शुद्धि, which is ज्ञान साधन - the means for gaining श्रेयस्. Therefore, भगवान् has no राग or द्वेष for anyone.

If one does not seek मोक्ष - Liberation - one naturally does not get it, simply because one does not seek it. For the same person, liberation from desire as well as desire for the result of an action do not take place at the same time, because desire for liberation and desire for a कर्म फल cannot co-exist in the same person.

If one does not seek any कर्म फल for one's कर्म, then what for does one do any कर्म, and what for does one worship the Lord through that कर्म?

One does one's कर्म because it is धर्म कर्म, it is नियतं कर्म, it is तेन त्यक्तेन कर्म, it is कर्म to be done as a matter of duty, being an active participant in this creation for the welfare of the society, welfare of the community, welfare of the world, and it is the कर्म that has been specially left for one to do by the very Grace of परमेश्वर. It is ईश्वर प्रसाद कर्म. By worshipping परमेश्वर with such कर्म, what one seeks is only ज्ञान वैराग्यं - steadfastness in the pursuit of ईश्वर ज्ञानं, आत्म ज्ञानं, ब्रह्म ज्ञानं and nothing else.

Thus as you approach the Lord, as you seek the Lord, so the Lord blesses you, and to that extent you realize identity with the Lord already in you. That is the meaning of the first line of the verse

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तान् तथैव भजाम्यहम्

In the second line, Sri Krishna says

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः

पार्थ - O! Arjuna



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मनुष्याः - people who follow धर्म, whether they are people in distress or whether they are people seeking fruits of actions, or whether they are people seeking मोक्ष, whatever be their kind

सर्वशः - in whatever name or in whatever form they worship the Lord, so long as they follow the path of धर्म

मम चर्तम (एव) अनुवर्तन्ते : - they follow, they pursue only मम चर्तम - My मार्ग - My path, My धर्म, the ईश्वर धर्म - the way of life ordained by परमेश्वर for the welfare and progress of human society. Everyone following धर्म is approaching परमेश्वर only, each one in one's own way, in accordance with one's own स्वभाव गुण - natural mental disposition.

मनुष्याः - means human beings. According to Vedanta, human beings are only those who use their faculty of choice to follow धर्म. Those who achieve or try to achieve a result through अधर्म - improper means, are less than human beings.

Eating, sleeping, etc. are common to all living beings. Only विवेक makes a difference between such beings. विवेक means using one's बुद्धि - one's faculty of judgment to do what is right and proper, and that is धर्म. धर्म is ईश्वर धर्म - the natural road leading to मोक्ष, the natural order for human society, the path of life ordained by परमेश्वर for the welfare and progress of all human beings. All people who follow धर्म, which is the धर्म of परमेश्वर - the way of life ordained by परमेश्वर, are only seeking परमेश्वर, each in one's own way, whether one knows it or not.

If परमेश्वर is really what people are seeking by living a life of धर्म, then why people pray for various kinds of blessings in this creation by worshipping various देवताs, instead of worshipping परमेश्वर, seeking परमेश्वर Itself and nothing less. That is because

कांक्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ 4 - 12

कांक्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं - Longing for success in their actions, praying for the results of their actions



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यजन्ते इह देवताः - इह - in this world of human beings, people worship different देवताs like इन्द्र, अग्नि, वरुण etc., instead of परमेश्वर as शिव or विष्णु. This is because of their limited vision of परमेश्वर. Ordinary people are only interested in दृष्ट फल- the fruits of actions which they can perceive. On the other hand, मोक्ष is अदृष्ट फल - it is not something that can be perceived.

From the कर्म काण्ड of the Vedas, people understand that if one worships such and such देवता, one can get such and such results. They are interested in those results only. Therefore they go in for such worship.

If people worship अग्नि, परमेश्वर becomes अग्नि to them, and परमेश्वर blesses them as अग्नि only and nothing more. If people worship वरुण, परमेश्वर blesses them as वरुण only. Similarly with respect to the worship of every other देवता. Unless people worship any देवता as परमेश्वर, as the Lord of everything, unless one seeks identity with परमेश्वर as परमेश्वर, परमेश्वर is not available to them as the Lord of everything.

Ordinary people do not seek identity with परमेश्वर. They only want a few little things from परमेश्वर. Most people worship देवताs as देवताs only because it is easier and quicker to get their desires fulfilled by such worship, as भगवान् says here:

मानुषे लोके - in this world of human beings

हि - indeed, it is well known

कर्मजा सिद्धिः क्षिप्रं भवति - the results of actions happen quickly by the worship of specific देवताs. People want quick and immediate results. They are obtained more easily by the worship of specific देवताs.

देवताs are presiding deities of Divine Power, which means that the देवताs derive their power from परमेश्वर only. They are not independent of परमेश्वर. By worshipping the देवताs one is really worshipping only the परमेश्वर. But each देवता is limited in power. अग्नि cannot give you what only the वरुण can give. Both cannot give what only इन्द्र can give, etc.



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But the worship of देवताs is also relatively easy. The Vedas prescribe the उपासन - the form of worship appropriate for each देवता. These उपासनs are limited in scope, in effort, and in the required discipline. Performing the appropriate उपासन is enough to gain the grace of the देवता, and be blessed by the दृष्ट फल - perceived fruit of action obtainable from the देवता.

On the other hand, to gain identity with परमेश्वर, to gain जीव- ब्रह्म ऐक्यं, one must gain total अन्तःकरण शुद्धि - the mind and बुद्धि must be totally free from राग, द्वेष, भय क्रोध, etc., which requires a lot of discipline on the part of the individual. And that is not enough. One must also be able to comprehend the existence of अदृष्ट फल - the imperceptible fruit of धर्म, namely मोक्ष - which one gains only from Upanishad knowledge, which requires even greater effort and personal discipline.

Both the above requirements arise only from चित्तेक बुद्धि. Because of lack of such चित्तेक बुद्धि, people worship देवताs, seeking the grace of परमेश्वर in bits and pieces, for the needs of their daily life. But so long as they follow the path of धर्म, they are still on the right path, because the path of धर्म is मम चर्म्म - it is परमेश्वर - it is the path ordained by परमेश्वर for the welfare and progress of the entire human society.

The “मम चर्म्म:” परमेश्वर धर्म is the universal सनातन धर्म for the human society as a whole. So long as people follow the परमेश्वर धर्म - the सनातन धर्म in its entirety, every one will ultimately gain मोक्ष. Sri Krishna talks more about the universal परमेश्वर धर्म in the next verse, which we will see next time.