



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

पञ्चमोऽध्यायः - संन्यास योगः

Chapter 5

Volume 4

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Sri Krishna has been talking about a कर्मयोगी who has progressively evolved into a real संन्यासी-ज्ञानी - a person of wisdom in action. Describing the लक्षणस - the distinguishing characteristics of such a ज्ञानी, भगवान् says:

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा, संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी । नवद्वारे पुरे देही, नैव कुर्वन् न कारयन् ॥	5 - 13
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We saw this verse in detail last time. A ज्ञानी even though always fully engaged in कर्म stands totally dissociated from any notion of कर्ता - the doer of कर्म by virtue of his ज्ञानं - आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge. Therefore, he is ever cheerful, ever at peace within himself, and he never has any weariness of कर्म. He realizes that he is independent of his body-mind-intellect complex, and that he is only sitting in his physical body as a witness for the जीव to exhaust itself all its प्रारब्ध कर्मफल शेष - the already begun fruits of actions, which the physical body has still to experience. Though acting, a ज्ञानी in fact neither acts nor causes any action to take place. All actions take place naturally and



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spontaneously by virtue of the mutual interactions of the स्वभाव-गुणs of the जीव, by his very presence, in his very presence, which means by the very grace of परमेश्वर.

Continuing the above description of a ज्ञानी, भगवान् says:

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि, लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफल संयोगं, स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥

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प्रभु means आत्मा - ब्रह्मन् - परमेश्वर - That which is self-effulgent, That आत्मा, the Self in every self including oneself, That आत्मा which is Enlightenment Itself is

प्रभु : - That प्रभु, that आत्मा

कर्तृत्वं न सृजति - does not create कर्तृत्वं - the notion of being the कर्ता of कर्म, the doer of any action. आत्मा does not tell one's बुद्धि "Do this or do that or do something else". आत्मा does not go on goading one's mind, बुद्धि or one's organs of perception and action to do this or that;

लोकस्य कर्माणि न सृजति - neither does आत्मा create actions or their results for this world of beings. Further,

कर्मफल संयोगं न सृजति - neither does आत्मा create a संयोग - a connection between the कर्ता - the doer and the कर्मफल - the results of the actions of the doer.

Thus आत्मा has nothing to do either with the notion of doership, or doing actions or the results of actions or the interactions between the doer of कर्म and the resulting कर्मफल. Indeed, actions are taking place all the time in one's life. But they are not of आत्मा. They are not of ब्रह्मन्. They are because of ब्रह्माश्रया माया - they are the doings of माया, which expresses itself in everyone as त्रिगुणात्मिका - as the three-fold गुणs, namely सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् गुणs.

This माया function is called स्वभाव, means, that which exists in oneself as one's very nature. Since one's गुणs are subject to change, one's स्वभाव is also subject to change. This माया function is अविद्या लक्षणं - it is the characteristic of अविद्या, which is the absence of ब्रह्मज्ञानं - आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge. Just as darkness is nothing but the



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absence of light, all expressions of माया are nothing but the absence of ब्रह्मज्ञानं. This माया function, which serves as a barrier to ब्रह्मज्ञानं-आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge, is called माया प्रकृति or माया स्वभाव - or simply प्रकृति or स्वभाव. Therefore भगवान् says:

स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तन्ते - all actions take place because of स्वभाव. This माया स्वभाव which is in everyone in the form of the सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् गुणs.

Therefore, when one transcends the power of माया गुणs, one naturally becomes one with परमेश्वर Itself. Further,

नादत्ते कस्यचित् पापं, न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेन आवृतं ज्ञानं, तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥

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विभु is same as प्रभु in the last verse. विभु : व्यापक इति विभु : means, the all-pervading ब्रह्मन्, the आत्मा - The परमेश्वर - The Lord of all creations, past, present and future. प्रभु and विभु are word indicators for महाविष्णु. As we may remember in सहस्रनाम, we say ॐ प्रभवे नमः - ॐ विभवे नमः - That विभु , The आत्मा - The परमेश्वर.

न आदत्ते कस्यचित् पापं, न चैव सुकृतं

आदत्ते - That आत्मा does not receive or experience the sins and virtues - the पाप कर्मs and पुण्य कर्मs, the दुःखs and the सुखs of any person. They all belong to the evolving जीव only.

आत्मा is असंगः - The Self in oneself, the चैतन्य स्वरूप आत्मा - The Pure Consciousness in oneself. It is totally unconnected to, and remains totally independent of one's actions and their results.

पाप कर्मs and पुण्य कर्मs are माया लक्षणं. All actions good or bad are only in the world of माया गुणs - one's कर्म जनित-स्वभाव गुणs - one's सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् qualities generated by one's own actions.

अज्ञानेन आवृतं ज्ञानं



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ज्ञानं - The आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge is concealed by, is hidden by, one's अज्ञानं - one's Self-ignorance. Self-knowledge is concealed by, is out of reach for one's recognition, because of Self-ignorance.

अज्ञानं is absence of आत्मज्ञानं , which means Self-ignorance. अज्ञानं also means अपर ज्ञानं or अपर विद्या - all knowledge of शृष्टि-created objects, whether they are ईश्वर शृष्टि - creations of परमेश्वर, such as objects in nature together with laws of nature governing such objects, or जीव शृष्टि - man made thoughts and objects of thoughts under the laws of परमेश्वर. All such अपर ज्ञानं or अपर विद्या is also अज्ञानं - absence of आत्मज्ञानं. All objective knowledge by itself is also अज्ञानं.

That अज्ञानं - Self-ignorance, has the power to exist so long as आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge does not take place in one's mind and बुद्धि, just as darkness has the power to exist as long as light is not there.

अज्ञानं - Self ignorance has power, and that is the power of one's own माया गुणs, which have the power to create पाप कर्मs and पुण्य कर्मs, and their consequent results.

तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः

तेन अज्ञानेन - By such Self-ignorance, by the power of one's own माया गुणs

जन्तवः - all creatures, all conscious beings, all people

मुह्यन्ति - suffer various kinds of mental delusion, conflicts, sorrow and distress

The only way to overcome such delusion, conflicts, sorrow and distress is to transcend the power of माया गुणs, bringing enlightenment to oneself through ज्ञान कर्म संन्यास योग, through realization of totality of knowledge. This is the integration of objective knowledge and Upanishadic knowledge, maturing into ज्ञान कर्म संन्यास योग through कर्म योग with प्रसाद बुद्धि.

Continuing, भगवान् says:

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं, येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।

तेषां आदित्यवत्, ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत् परम् ।

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येषां, तत् आत्मनः अज्ञानं, ज्ञानेन नाशितं

येषां - for those people for whom

तत् आत्मनः अज्ञानं - that Self-ignorance

ज्ञानेन नाशितं - is destroyed by wisdom, the wisdom of Upanishadic knowledge

तेषां, तत् ज्ञानं, प्रकाशयति परम् ज्ञानं, आदित्यवत्

तेषां - for them

तत् ज्ञानं - that wisdom of Upanishadic knowledge

प्रकाशयति - spontaneously reveals itself as it is, bringing enlightenment on

परम् ज्ञानं-ब्रह्म ज्ञानं - ईश्वर ज्ञानं - आत्म ज्ञानं - knowledge about जीव-जगत् and ईश्वर, आदित्यवत् - just as the sun, by its light, instantly reveals objects truly as they are

For those people for whom अज्ञानं - Self-ignorance is destroyed by wisdom of Upanishadic knowledge, namely ब्रह्मज्ञानं, for them that wisdom of ब्रह्मज्ञानं spontaneously and instantly reveals the true nature of one's own self as ब्रह्मन् itself, so says Sri Krishna.

Here there is something important to remember. As we may recall, in Chapter 2, (2-42) Sri Krishna called attention to वेदवादरताः - people who take particular delight in engaging themselves in debates on the words of the वेदाः, without understanding their content in full.

What do such people do? They produce a number of different (what are popularly called) "Systems of Hindu Philosophy", which only serve to create conflicts and confusions in the minds of people and divide the society into many sectarian groups, promoting fanaticisms of various kinds. We must clearly understand that these "Systems of Hindu Philosophy" do not constitute ब्रह्मविद्या or ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

What exactly our Upanishads say, what exactly Sri Krishna says in The भगवत् गीता - that alone is ब्रह्मविद्या, that alone is ब्रह्मज्ञानं, and that alone is our heritage, which we should celebrate in our hearts every day of our lives by total identification. This means being in God consciousness at all times, because that Gita-Upanishad Knowledge - that ब्रह्मज्ञानं - resolves all doubts, all conflicts and all confusions in human minds.



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It integrates and uplifts all people, both individually and collectively, towards the highest goal of human existence namely मोक्ष - total fulfillment and happiness in life, through the wisdom of Upanishadic knowledge in every action - ज्ञान कर्म संन्यास योग.

The core of that wisdom is ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वं - all that exists in this creation is only परमेश्वर, and nothing else. That is the truth, absolute, eternal, plain and complete. In the matter of that truth there is no sectarian philosophy involved. What is involved is only recognition and realization, nothing more, nothing less.

That wisdom, that eternal truth, is recognizable through श्रवणं, मननं, निदिध्यासनं - through listening and understanding, followed by reflection and absorption of Gita Upanishad knowledge, and that truth is realizable through कर्मयोग attitude with प्रसाद बुद्धि maturing into ज्ञान कर्म संन्यास योग, which naturally leads to मोक्ष.

ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वं - Either you recognize and realize that eternal truth, or you don't. If you do recognize and realize that eternal truth, then you have accomplished the highest purpose of life. If you have not yet recognized or realized that eternal truth, our Mother Upanishad tells us in her infinite love "Please take immediate steps to pursue ब्रह्मविद्या and seek ब्रह्मज्ञानं while you are still living as a human being. If you do not do so, you are simply wasting your precious life, and your loss is great - as we may recall the inspiring words of केनोपनिषत्.

इह चेत् अवेदीत्, अथ सत्यं अस्ति, न चेत् इह अवेदीत्, महती चिन्ष्टिः ।
भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः, प्रेत्य अस्मात् लोकात् अमृता भवन्ति ॥

We have already seen this verse in detail (Keno Up. 2-5)

Therefore, discovering our roots through the pursuit of ब्रह्मविद्या, seeking ब्रह्मज्ञानं as unfolded by परमेश्वर in the Upanishads and the भगवत् गीता, is the overriding purpose of human existence. That is the teaching of परमेश्वर - The Self in one's own self, the teaching of one's own consciousness, The Pure Consciousness in every one of us.

That Gita Upanishad knowledge is our heritage, our wealth, our health, and our unfailing source of strength at all times. For gaining that ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, first of all ज्ञानवृत्ति has to take place in one's mind, which means that the seed of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं must somehow sprout itself



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in one's mind, and then grow into maturity. How to make such ज्ञानवृत्ति to take place in one's mind? भगवान् says:

तत् बुद्धयः तदात्मानः तन्निष्ठाः तत्परायणाः ।
गच्छन्ति अपुनरावृत्तिं, ज्ञाननिर्धृतकल्मषाः ॥

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तत् बुद्धयः - The बुद्धि must be in That. The बुद्धि must be absorbed in the pursuit of ब्रह्म विद्या for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं in order for ज्ञानवृत्ति to take place.

Now we must understand what बुद्धि is, and then why would बुद्धि gets absorbed in ब्रह्म विद्या for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं.

First about बुद्धि. Let me start with myself as I am. Obviously, I do not have ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. That means what? As pointed out earlier, just as darkness is nothing but the absence of light, my माया गुणs -स्वभाव गुणs, my nature as it is, is nothing but the absence of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं. If I do not have ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, it simply means that I have only darkness as my स्वभाव in the form of सत्त्व, रजस् and तमस् गुणs. Therefore, my अन्तःकरण - my inner instrument of perception, which we generally call mind, reflects my particular shade of darkness.

Why I do what I do, depends on my mind, which means the particular shade of darkness of my स्वभाव गुणs reflected by my अन्तःकरण -my "mind". This अन्तःकरण is a multifunctional instrument. In particular, it has four distinct functional faculties, namely मनस्, चित्तं, अहंकार and बुद्धि.

- मनस् is the faculty of mind whose nature is संकल्प - विकल्प -आत्मकं मनः - oscillation from one thought to another, vacillation between competing thoughts, and indecision and doubt.
- चित्तं is the faculty of mind, whose nature is thinking, recollection, correlation, analysis, etc.. It is also the store house of impressions and memories.
- अहंकार is the faculty of mind whose nature is one's sense of ego, one's sense of doership, ownership, etc., which makes one identify oneself with one's attributes, relationships, actions सुख - दुःख power, etc.



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- बुद्धि is the faculty of mind which makes decisions and cognitions on the basis and the strength of the data provided by the other three faculties of the mind, namely मनस्, चित्तं and अहंकार.

All these four faculties derive their particular abilities from the सत्य गुण component of the स्वभाव of a person. Thus the magnitude, strength and maturity of my सत्य गुण, relative to my other गुणs, are reflected in my shade of darkness, or simply my स्वभाव - my nature as it is.

Now भगवान् says: तत् बुद्धयः - in order for ज्ञानवृत्ति to take place in one's mind, one's बुद्धि must decide that the overriding purpose of life is only to gain ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, and because of that decision, the बुद्धि naturally gets absorbed in the pursuit of ब्रह्म विद्या to gain ब्रह्म ज्ञानं.

Now, how can I make my बुद्धि to make that decision? It is here that my स्वभाव गुण comes into the picture. If my सत्य गुण is strong and mature enough, then the inputs from the other three faculties of the mind automatically orient themselves in such a manner that my बुद्धि naturally decides to pursue ब्रह्म विद्या as the overriding purpose of life, because, as the मुण्डक उपनिषत् says:

परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणः निर्वेदं आयात् ।

परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् - Analyzing all of one's worldly experiences gained by कर्मs - efforts of various kinds

ब्राह्मणः - the one whose स्वभाव - nature, is governed by सत्य गुण,
निर्वेदं आयात् - gains dispassion towards all such worldly experiences.

Such a person realizes that the धर्म-अर्थ-काम pursuits by themselves, contribute only to bondage, and the pursuit of मोक्ष alone can give a person meaningful happiness and freedom. The pursuit of मोक्ष means living a life of कर्मयोग and स्वाध्याय प्रवचन which means living a life of कर्म योग-attitude with प्रसाद बुद्धि and continuous absorption of the content of Upanishadic knowledge. Once that realization takes place, the बुद्धि naturally



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decides to pursue ब्रह्म विद्या to gain ब्रह्मज्ञानं as the overriding purpose of life. That is the meaning of तत् बुद्धयः

तत् बुद्धयः तदात्मानः तन्निष्ठाः तत् परायणाः

We may note here that Sri Krishna talks about ज्ञानीs in plural, which means that the opportunity for one to mature into a ज्ञानी is open to every person. With respect to those who make the appropriate effort, the different stages of reaching that maturity are being pointed out here.

As the mind matures with तत् बुद्धयः, as they (the potential ज्ञानीs) mature in कर्मयोग and स्वाध्याय प्रवचन, the same कर्मयोग now becomes ज्ञान-कर्म-योग, at which stage, they realize,

तदात्मानः - तत् आत्मानः - तत् ब्रह्म आत्मा एव - they realize that the ब्रह्मन् in the pursuit of whose knowledge the बुद्धि is now continuously absorbed, That ब्रह्मन् is indeed **oneself** - The Self in oneself, independent of one's गुणs. Being in fullness of life, doing whatever कर्मs one has to do, with such realization, governed by such realization and totally consistent with such realization, is indeed ज्ञान-कर्म योग.

As the mind matures still further with तत् बुद्धयः and तत् आत्मानः, as they mature still further in ज्ञानकर्म योग and स्वाध्याय प्रवचन, the same ज्ञान कर्म योग now becomes ज्ञान कर्म संन्यास योग, at which stage they are

तन्निष्ठाः

तत् निष्ठाः - तस्मिन् ब्रह्मणि एव निष्ठाः - they find themselves fully established in themselves in terms of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं - knowledge of ब्रह्मन्. They do not have to search for ब्रह्मन् - search for परमेश्वर elsewhere. They recognize that परमेश्वर is already in themselves, in each person as आत्मा - The Self, independent of all of one's गुणs. At this stage of their evolution, as भगवान् said earlier (5-13)



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सर्व कर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्य - in their mind, by the wisdom of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, they remain totally dissociated from all actions, recognizing परमेश्वर in all actions and, at the same time recognizing all actions as the very manifestation of परमेश्वर.

They are still in the full business of life doing whatever कर्मs they have to do, but in terms of knowledge - ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, they are already fulfilled people. For them, all that needs to be done has already been done. They no longer depend on a situation to be happy, they are happy in themselves. They are आत्मनि एव-आत्मना तुष्टः. They are स्थितप्रज्ञाः-तन्निष्ठाः - which means for them ज्ञान-कर्म-योग has now matured into ज्ञान-कर्म-संन्यास-योग. At this stage of their evolution, they realize:

तत् परायणा :

तत् परं एव अयनं - परं is ब्रह्मन्. That ब्रह्मन् is their final abode. They realize they have reached home - they are at home, because they realize that ब्रह्मन् is पूर्णं, सत्यं, ज्ञानं, मोक्ष - absolute fullness, infinite eternity, all-inclusive knowledge, total freedom, happiness and peace. That is the very nature of ब्रह्मन्, and so is their own very nature. Being so,

ज्ञान निर्धृतकल्मषाः - they find themselves as people for whom all कल्मषाs - all impurities of अन्तःकरण, all the पाप-पुण्य-संसार-दोषाs, all impurities generated and accumulated in their minds throughout their worldly lives have naturally vanished by virtue of their ब्रह्मज्ञानं, the recognition and realization of ब्रह्मन् in themselves.

In the wake of ब्रह्मज्ञानं, all impurities arising from lack of ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, all माया - darkness in the अन्तःकरण have naturally vanished. Just as the sun naturally dispels darkness, ब्रह्मज्ञानं naturally dispels माया - darkness. Such natural disappearance of माया - darkness by the dawn of ब्रह्मज्ञानं in the mind - in the अन्तःकरण is called Enlightenment.

Thus ज्ञाननिर्धृतकल्मष or the Dawn of Enlightenment is the लक्षण of a ज्ञानी, the distinguishing characteristic of a wise person. With the Dawn of Enlightenment, the wise people



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

गच्छन्ति अपुनरावृत्तिं - go, from where there is no return, which means they do not go anywhere. They become one with ब्रह्मन् Itself, because ब्रह्मन् is everywhere. ब्रह्मन् is not a location or a place to go. It is simply total realization of what one already is. Even while living, a ज्ञानी is liberated, and liberated forever. All his bodily limitations are only for the body and not for him. When he dies, the death is only for the body and not for him. He is ever immortal. As ईशावास्य उपनिषत् says:

विद्यया अमृतं अश्नुते - Through ब्रह्म विद्या, gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं, one enjoys Immortality. That is the लक्षण of a ज्ञानी .

Sri Krishna's description of a ज्ञानी continues, which we will see next time.