



श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
षष्ठोऽध्यायः - ध्यानयोगः
Chapter 6
Volume 2

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As we saw last time, Sri Krishna has pointed out that **कर्मयोग** and **संन्यास** are not only not opposed to each other, but they are indeed identical, with different manifestations at different stages of one's maturity. To start with, a **कर्मयोगी** is only a **कर्मफल संन्यासी** – one who has naturally given up, naturally renounced all desires, all longings for fruits of actions. As he matures in **कर्मयोग**, he becomes a **कर्मसंकल्प संन्यासी** – one who has naturally renounced the very thought of being the **कर्ता** of a **कर्म** – the doer of an action, that is real **संन्यास**. That **संन्यास** – the development of that stage of mental disposition,



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is possible only when कर्मयोग is always associated with ध्यानयोग - meditation and contemplation on परमेश्वर.

Having said that, Sri Krishna now talks about ध्यानयोग.

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।
योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥

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Being engaged in ध्यानयोग is like riding on a horse back. One must first know the means, the technique of how to mount oneself on the horse back, and then how to maintain oneself securely on the horse-back, as the horse is galloping fast. Therefore, भगवान् says,

आरुरुक्षोः means आरोढं इच्छो. For the person who is desirous of mounting upon the back of a horse of ध्यानयोग, who is that person?

मुनेः - For that मुनि, for that कर्मयोगी

As we may recall, Sri Krishna has already described a कर्मयोगी as a मुनिः मोक्षपरायणः (5 - 28). A कर्मयोगी is a मुनि (मनन-शीलः) - one who is capable of thinking as a चिन्तेक. A कर्मयोगी is a मुनि because of his चिन्तेक बुद्धि, because of his realization that मोक्ष is the ultimate goal of human existence and because of such realization, a कर्मयोगी is committed to the goal of मोक्ष through the pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं.

The purpose of कर्मयोग is to bring about अन्तःकरण शुद्धि - restoring the mind and बुद्धि to its original state of purity.

Mind is naturally pure. The virtues of love, charity, etc. are spontaneous expressions of such pure mind. Mind means the entire अन्तःकरण. Therefore, अन्तःकरण शुद्धि - purification of the mind does not involve any change in the intrinsic nature of the mind. It involves only the removal of impurities, such as the forces of राग and द्वेष - passion and hatred, superficially deposited into the mind through ignorance-born actions of various kinds.

अन्तःकरण is only a करण, which means that mind and बुद्धि are just instruments. They by themselves do no harm. But they are capable of gathering a lot of dust, just like any



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other instrument, and then they lose their natural harmlessness. कर्मयोग is the process of removing the superficial dust in the अन्तःकरण, and the one who wants to develop the disposition of a कर्मयोगी is a मुनि. For such a मुनि

योगं कर्म कारणं उच्यते - कर्मयोग is said to be the means as well as the cause for entering into a life of ध्यानयोग. Here कर्म stands for कर्मयोग and योगं stands for ध्यानयोग.

First, one must have the कर्मयोग attitude in order to be able to get into ध्यानयोग. As one cultivates ध्यानयोग, one progressively matures into कर्मयोग. Therefore, first, live a life of कर्मयोग, giving up all cravings for कर्मफल with the help of ईश्वर ध्यान - a contemplative God-conscious attitude. Through such life, your राग-द्वेष forces - your intense likes and dislikes will lose their hold on your mind, because of your विवेक बुद्धि - because of your realization that what you really want is to discover the best in yourself, and be the best in yourself. When the love to be the best in yourself is cultivated, the longing to be something else will naturally disappear.

As a कर्मयोगी matures, the restlessness in the mind also progressively disappears, which helps in gaining maturity in ध्यानयोग. Thus कर्मयोग becomes the cause - the कारण for gaining maturity in ध्यानयोग. What is at first an attitude, that itself later becomes a natural disposition. Therefore, an active कर्मयोग life with a contemplative disposition matures into a contemplative life of ध्यानयोग, with an active disposition.

One does not become a contemplative person suddenly. The nature of contemplation (शमः - the quietude of mind) has to be understood, and a love for a contemplative mind - a love for quietude has to be cultivated. Once you gain a contemplative mind, then that becomes the कारण, the cause for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं - Self Knowledge. That is what भगवान् says in the next line.

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणं उच्यते ॥

तस्यैव - For the same person, for the same कर्मयोगी



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योगारूढस्य - once he has climbed the horse of ध्यानयोग, once he has become capable of contemplation on परमेश्वर, once he has become capable of absorbing Upanishadic knowledge - आत्मज्ञानं-ईश्वरज्ञानं, knowledge about oneself, knowledge about ईश्वर, for that person

शमः कारणं उच्यते - quietude of mind, which means ध्यानयोग, becomes the means for gaining आत्मज्ञानं - Self Knowledge

Thus कर्मयोग is the means for cultivating ध्यानयोग, and कर्मयोग and ध्यानयोग together become the means for gaining ब्रह्मज्ञानं - Knowledge about the true nature of all existence. Gaining ब्रह्मज्ञानं means recognition of ब्रह्मन् in all existence, including oneself, and such recognition is मोक्ष - Freedom and wisdom, which is indeed the overriding goal of life for everybody.

Before going into the details on how to get started in ध्यानयोग in one's own daily life, Sri Krishna talks about the लक्षणs of a person who has gained सिद्धि - total fulfillment in ध्यानयोग - the distinguishing characteristics of a person who has matured into a ज्ञानी through ध्यानयोग and कर्मयोग. Sri Krishna talks about the लक्षणs of such a person to help us create in ourselves the proper mental environment necessary for entering into the initial discipline of ध्यानयोग, भगवान् says:

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मसु अनुषज्जते ।
सर्वसंकल्प संन्यासी योगरूढस्तदोच्यते ॥

6 - 4

यदा - When

हि - verily, surely, when that person who is practicing ध्यानयोग, who is cultivating a life of contemplation on परमेश्वर

न इन्द्रियार्थेषु अनुषज्जते - does not get attached or bound to sense objects, also

न कर्मसु अनुषज्जते - does not get attached to, or bound to actions themselves

सर्व संकल्प संन्यासी - when one becomes a true संन्यासी, totally free from the notion of doership itself



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तदा योगारूढः उच्यते – then the person is said to be a योगारूढ – one who has successfully climbed the top of ध्यानयोग, which means one who has become a ज्ञानी, a person of wisdom in action.

As we have seen before, the word योग refers to both the means and the end. When a person engaged in ध्यानयोग, progresses to that stage, when one has no attachments to sense objects, no identification with one's actions, and when one is free from any notion of doership, then that person is a योगारूढ, one who has reached the top of ध्यानयोग, the fullness of ध्यानयोग, one who has gained सिद्धि in ध्यानयोग, one who has grown up to become a ज्ञानी, a person of wisdom. That person does not go after anything for self-fulfillment. Whatever actions arise from him, they are spontaneous and natural.

Therefore, the purpose of ध्यानयोग is to help oneself to gain such सिद्धि – total fulfillment in life. In view of that purpose, भगवान् says:

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं न आत्मानं आवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव हि आत्मनो बन्धुः आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

6 - 5

भगवान् pleads with Arjuna. Sri Krishna as the teacher, pleads with every one of us, just as a mother does, for the welfare of her child:

उद्धरेत् आत्मना आत्मानं – Uplift yourself, by yourself, by your own self-effort. Nobody else can do that for you. You have to do the uplifting by your own efforts, which involves श्रवणं, मननं, and निदिध्यासनं – listening and understanding the message of the Vedas and the Upanishads, reflecting on that message by enquiry and repeated questioning of one's own understanding, and absorbing the content of that message in one's own daily life through total commitment to knowledge and service at the highest possible level, at all times.

न आत्मानं अवसादयेत् – Do not **let** yourself down. Do not **lead** yourself down. Do not **afflict** yourself. Do not **condemn** yourself. Do not **fritter away** your opportunity to awaken yourself and uplift yourself

आत्मैव हि आत्मनो बन्धुः – You are your own well-wisher. You are your **only** well-wisher. Other than yourself there is no person who can release you from your sorrow and distress. At the same time



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आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः – आत्मा एव आत्मनः रिपुः – You are your own enemy. You **alone** are your enemy. There is, and there can be **no enemy** outside of yourself. Because others can obstruct your pursuit of मोक्ष only when you give them a handle to obstruct you. Every outside enemy is a self-created obstruction in your quest for absolute freedom.

If that is so, what kind of person becomes a बन्धु – a well-wisher for oneself, and what kind of person becomes an enemy, a शत्रु for oneself. भगवान् says

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥

6 - 6

येन आत्मा आत्मनः जितः, तस्य आत्मा आत्मनः बन्धुः

येन – By whom, आत्मा which means one's body, mind, sense organs, organs of action, etc, or one's body and all the instruments therein

जितः – are conquered or mastered

आत्मना – by one's efforts

तस्य आत्मा, आत्मनः बन्धुः (भवति) – the self of that person becomes a बन्धु - a well-wisher for oneself

The one who conquers or gains mastery over one's own physical body-mind-intellect complex, the one who is able to control one's thoughts, words and actions by one's own efforts, for that person, one is one's own बन्धु. One becomes a helper for one's own self for gaining ब्रह्मज्ञानं, for gaining मोक्ष. On the other hand

अनात्मनः तु, आत्मा एव शत्रुत्वे वर्तेत, शत्रुवत्

तु – whereas

अनात्मनः – for the person who has not brought one's instruments of perception and action under total control

आत्मा एव शत्रुत्वे वर्तेत – one's own self would be in a state of enmity

शत्रुवत् – like an outside enemy

If your organs of perception and action are not brought under total control by your own efforts, then you would yourself stand **against yourself** in your progress towards मोक्ष. Thus, if your body, mind and intellect and all organs of perception and action are under



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your total control, then you will discover yourself as your friend in your spiritual progress. If **not**, you **are** your own enemy.

If one is a जितेन्द्रिय, if one has one's इन्द्रियाः under total control, what good does it do to the person? भगवान् says

जितात्मानः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥

6 - 7

These are the लक्षणः of a योगरूढ - the one who has reached the top of ध्यानयोग, which means the one who has matured into a ज्ञानी - a person of wisdom in action through ध्यानयोग, which is inseparable from कर्मयोग.

जितात्मानः - The one who is a जितेन्द्रिय, the one who has full mastery over one's इन्द्रियाः - one's internal and external organs of perception and action, and

प्रशान्तस्य - the one whose mind is peaceful, free from agitations of any kind, that person is a

परमात्मा - a सिद्ध पुरुष, a self-fulfilled person. Such a fulfilled person, such a परमात्मा

शीतोष्ण सुख दुःखेषु, तथा मान- अपमानयोः

समाहितः - Such a परमात्मा is a समाहितः. He is always in a natural state of balanced well-being.

शीतोष्ण सुखदुःखेषु समाहितः - He always remains without being oscillated by the pairs of opposites, such as

शीत and उष्ण - cold and heat,

सुख and दुःख - pleasure and pain, and

तथा - likewise

मान-अपमानयोः - in honour and dishonor, praise and censure.

Under all circumstances that person enjoys a balanced disposition. In other words, such a परमात्मा is a ज्ञानी, a person of wisdom in constant communion with परमेश्वर in himself, remaining ever active in daily life, and at the same time, ever realizing one's identity with परमेश्वर. Further,



ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकंचनः ॥

6 - 8

युक्त इति उच्यते योगी - योगी युक्त इति उच्यते

योगी - That ध्यानयोगी who has matured into a सिद्ध पुरुष - a fulfilled person, a ज्ञानी.

युक्तः इति उच्यते - is said to be a युक्त, meaning समाहित चित्तः, one who is very well established in a life of peace and harmony. Not only that, such a ध्यानयोगी is also a ज्ञान विज्ञान तृप्तात्मा - A person who has gained fulfillment in life both in terms of ज्ञानं and विज्ञानं

ज्ञानं is clear understanding and appreciation of Upanishadic knowledge through श्रवणं and मननं. विज्ञानं is realization of that knowledge in one's own experience. स्व-अनुभव ज्ञानं is integration of Upanishadic knowledge in one's own daily life through निदिध्यासनं - total commitment to knowledge and service at the highest level at all times. Consequently, such a ध्यानयोगी is

कूटस्थः - one whose mind and बुद्धि remain unshaken and unmoved from सत्यं and धर्मं, one whose अन्तःकरण is well-rooted in परमेश्वर in oneself, and विजितेन्द्रियः - one whose body-mind-intellect complex, indeed all the external and internal organs of perception and action are naturally and spontaneously under one's total control at all times. For such a mature ध्यानयोगी सम-लोष्ट-अश्म-काञ्चनः - a lump of clay, a piece of stone and a block of gold are all of equal value, in the sense that the ज्ञानी has समबुद्धि with respect to all objects.

A सिद्ध-पुरुष - a fulfilled person, recognizes the same ब्रह्मन् in everything that exists. Not only that, a सिद्ध-पुरुष - a fulfilled ध्यानयोगी has सम-बुद्धि with respect to all people also. As the next verse says

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीन मध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥

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सुहृत्, मित्र, अरि, उदासीन मध्यस्थ द्वेष्य बन्धुषु



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साधुषु पापेषु च - With reference to all these people, who are they?

सुहृत् - The one who helps without expecting anything in return

मित्र - a friend by association

अरि a शत्रु - an enemy

उदासीनः - one who is neither a friend nor an enemy

मध्यस्थः - the one in the middle, the one who wishes well for both sides

द्वेष्यः - the one who is द्वेष - योग्यः - one who deserves to be hated

बन्धुः - a relative through body connections

साधुषु अपि - and those who live a life of धर्म - propriety and gratitude in daily life

पापेषु च - and also those who live a life of impropriety, who live an unethical life

Towards all such people, the सिद्धयोगी, the ज्ञानी has सम बुद्धि - equanimity of mind, which means a बुद्धि free from the notions of doership.

A सिद्ध पुरुष realizes that आत्मा is अकर्ता. There is no doership in आत्मा, and all actions are being done only by प्रकृति गुणाs, one's nature, born of one's past कर्मs. This fact does not prevent a mature ध्यानयोगी from recognizing आत्मा, the all-pervading self in every self, in every person, whoever that may be. By recognizing the आत्मा the self in every self, the mature ध्यानयोगी,

विशिष्यते - excels in his own existence. By his very presence, he brings peace and happiness to everybody.

Such are the लक्षणs- the distinguishing characteristics of a योगरूढ - a ध्यानयोगी who has matured into a सिद्ध-पुरुष - a fulfilled person, a ज्ञानी.

From the next verse onwards, Sri Krishna talks about how one gets started in ध्यानयोग, which we will see next time.