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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

द्वादशोऽध्यायः - भक्ति योगः

dvādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ - bhakti yogaḥ

Chapter 12

Volume 1

अर्जुन उवाच

arjuna uvāca

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।

evaṁ satata yukta ye bhaktastvāṁ paryupāsate ।

ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ 12 - 1

ye cāpyakṣaramavyaktaṁ teṣāṁ ke yogavittamāḥ ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच

śrī bhagavān uvāca

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

mayyāveśya mano ye mām nityayukta upāsate ।

श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ 12 - 2

śraddhayā parayopetāḥ te me yukttamā matāḥ ॥

येत्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

yetvakṣarama nirdeśyam avyaktaṁ paryupāsate ।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवं ॥ 12 - 3

sarvatragama cintyaṁ ca kūṭastham acalaṁ dhruvaṁ ॥

सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र सम बुद्धयः ।

sanniyamyendriya grāmaṁ sarvatra sama buddhayaḥ ।

ते प्रप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ 12 - 4

te prapnuvanti mameva sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ ॥ 12 - 4

क्लेशोऽधिकरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्त चेतसाम् ।

kleśo 'dhikarasteṣāma avyaktasakta cetasām ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्विरवाप्यते ॥ 12 - 5



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avyakta hi gatirduḥkhaṁ dehavadbhiravāpyate ॥

12 - 5

This 12th chapter of भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* is entitled भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*. Each chapter of भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* is called as a particular योग *yoga*, because योग *yoga* - the essential unity, the essential identity of जीव *jīva*, जगत् *jagat* and परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, is the continuing theme of the entire भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gīta* Teachings, but the topic of discourse in each chapter is distinct in its content. For example, the last chapter is called विश्वरूपदर्शनयोग *viśva rūpa darśan yoga*, because the topic of discourse is Arjuna's विश्वरूपदर्शनं *viśva rūpa darśanam*. Likewise, this chapter is भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*, because the topic of discourse here is भक्ति *bhakti*, ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* - devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*. That means the discourse here is not on the all-inclusive भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* that Sri Krishna has been talking about in the last few chapters, but the topic of discourse here is simply on ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* - devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, which is of course part of the all-inclusive भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*.

As we may recall, at the end of the last chapter, Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।

bhaktyā tvananyayā śakya ahamevaṁvidho'rjuna ।

ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ 11 - 54

jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvena praveṣṭuṁ ca parāntapa ॥

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।

matkarmakṛṇmatparamo madbhaktaḥ saṅgavarjitaḥ ।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ 11 - 55

nirvai raḥ sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ sa māmēti pāṇḍava ॥

Any ईश्वर भक्त *īśvara bhakta* - any devotee of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* who has अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* - a devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar* wherein परमेश्वर *paramesvar* is not someone away from oneself, can see the true nature of My विश्वरूप *viśva rūpa* in all its fullness and glory and also can gain पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam* - totality of knowledge of जीव *jīva*, जगत् *jagat* and ईश्वर *īśvara*, eliminating all distance between oneself and the परमेश्वर *paramesvar*



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already in oneself. By such elimination, ईश्वर प्रवेशनं *īśvara praveśanam* – full entry into परमेश्वर *paramesvar* already in oneself is accomplished, and thus the devotee reaches one's परं धामं *param dhāmaṁ* – ultimate destination, one's मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthānam* – विष्णो परमं पदं *viṣṇo paramaṁ padaṁ* in oneself.

The means for cultivating such अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* is for one to be a मात्कर्मकृत् *mātkarmakṛt*, मत्परमः *matparamaḥ*, मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ*, संगवर्जितः *saṅgavarjitaḥ* and सर्वभूतेषु निर्वैरः *sarvabhūteṣu nivairāḥ* at all times. The one whose ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* – devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar* is so at all times, naturally reaches Me, the परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, and thus gains the श्रेयस् *śreyas* – the ultimate destination in life. So says Sri Krishna to Arjuna.

From the words of Sri Krishna, Arjuna now realizes that even though he has immense ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti*, it is still far short of अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* that he needs for gaining his goal of the श्रेयस् he seeks. Therefore, on the subject of ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* – devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, there arises a question in the mind of Arjuna. Hence, this chapter starts with a question from Arjuna.

In daily life, one's ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* – devotion to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, manifests itself as one's ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – mode of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*. Essentially, Arjuna's question is, what kind of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – mode of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* is appropriate for his needs. ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* refers to ईश्वर आराधन *īśvara ārādhana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* one does in any form in thought, word or deed in order to direct and propel one's अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, towards परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, whatever be one's vision of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* from time to time.

Sri Krishna has already talked extensively about worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in His earlier discourses on कर्म योग, *karma yoga*, ध्यान योग *dhyāna yoga* and भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*. At this point, Arjuna's question is specific to meet his immediate need, namely, knowledge about mode of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* helpful for gaining अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti*. It is common knowledge that



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people worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in very many different ways. All forms of worship, however, fall under two distinct types, namely, सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* or अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣara brahma upāsana*.

सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* means visualizing परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in different forms and names with attributes, such as समस्त कल्याण गुण विशेष *samasta kalyāṇa guṇa viśeṣas* – all the exalted virtues in incomparable infinite and absolute measure and worshipping such परमेश्वर *paramesvar* through various kinds of religious and secular activities, including meditation, ध्यान *dhyāna*, जप *japa*, पूजा *pūjaas*, Vedic rituals of various kinds, भजन् *bhajans* etc. For example, all the various modes of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* we do here at this temple constitute सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana*.

अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣara brahma upāsan* means propelling one's अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, towards परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, recognized as निर्गुण ब्रह्म *nirguṇa brahma* with no form, no name, and no attributes, referring to That निर्गुण ब्रह्म *nirguṇa brahma* simply by words such as अक्षरं *akṣarṁ*, अनिर्देश्यं *anirdeśyam*, अचिन्त्यं *acintyam*, अव्यक्तं *avyaktṁ*, etc. - indestructible, beyond the reach of thoughts and words, unmanifest, etc.

Our scriptures describe परमेश्वर *paramesvar* both as सगुण ब्रह्मन् *saguṇa brahman* as well as निर्गुण ब्रह्मन् *nirguṇa brahman*. Devotees of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* are of many kinds. Most of them can do only सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana*. Only true संन्यासी *sanyāsīs*, who are ज्ञानी *jñānīs*, can do अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣara brahma upāsana*.

Arjuna's question now is, whether सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* or अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣara brahma upāsana* is better or superior for one to gain मोक्ष *mokṣa* – meaning which kind of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – mode of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, is appropriate for him to cultivate अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti*. Arjuna asks his question in this manner

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एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।

evaṁ satata yukta ye bhaktastvāṁ paryupāsate ।

ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ 12 -1

ye cāpyakṣaramavyaktaṁ teṣāṁ ke yogavittamāḥ ॥

Arjuna says "O! Krishna, with respect to ईश्वर उपासन *īśvar upāsana* – mode of worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, I recognize that there are two ईश्वर उपासकs *īśvar upāsaks* meaning ईश्वर भक्तs *īśvar bhaktas* who are worshippers of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*. They are

ये भक्ताः एवं सततयुक्ता त्वां (परमेश्वरं *paramesvaram*) *ye bhaktaḥ evaṁ satatayukta tvāṁ*

परि उपासते *pari upāsate* – those भक्तs *bhaktas* – devotees who worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* repeatedly, meditating on परमेश्वर *paramesvar* and seeking identity with परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as their ultimate destination in life

एवं *evaṁ*– in the manner just described by you in the last verse of the last chapter, namely, being as मत्कर्मकृत् *matkarmakṛt*, मत्परमः *matparamaḥ*, मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ*, संगवर्जितः *saṅgavarjitaḥ* and सर्वभूतेषु निर्वरः सन् *sarvabhūteṣu nirveraḥ san*, which means those ईश्वर भक्तs *īśvar bhaktas* being endowed with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition who worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in the mode of सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* सततयुक्ताः *satata yuktaḥ* – all the time remaining totally committed to the pursuit of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* with unflinching mind, with a mind not yielding to distractions and temptations of any kind, all the time holding on to ईश्वर ध्यानं *īśvar dhyanam* – God consciousness, and doing ईश्वर कर्मs *īśvar karmas* – actions dedicated to परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as

भगवत् आज्ञया भगवत् कैः कर्यम् *bhagvat ājñayā bhagavat kairṅkaryam* – being always an instrument serving the will of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*



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अनन्य शरणाः सन् *ananya śaraṇaḥ san* - being endowed with a clear realization that परमेश्वर *paramesvar* is their only आश्रय *āśraya* - their only abode of peace, security and happiness.

Such people are one kind of ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas*, who worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* repeatedly in the mode of सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana*, with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition. On the other hand,

ये च भक्ताः अक्षरं अव्यक्तं त्वां *ye ca bhaktaḥ akṣaram avyaktaṁ tvāṁ* (परमेश्वरम् *parameśvaram*) परि उपासते *pari upāsate* - there are also the other kind of ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvara bhaktas* who meditate on, and seek identity with परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, repeatedly worshipping परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma*, as परमेश्वर *paramesvar* who is indestructible and unchanging and अव्यक्तं ब्रह्म *avyaktaṁ brahma*, as परमेश्वर *paramesvar* who is unmanifest and निर्गुणं *nirguṇam*, who is without any उपाधि भेदस *upādhi bhedas*, without any differences in forms, names and attributes, and who is करण अगोचरं *karaṇ agocaram*, beyond the reach of any instrument of perception and action, as परमेश्वर *paramesvar* who cannot be objectified in any way but can still be reached by one's बुद्धि *buddhi* through indicator words such as सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ*, etc. Such ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas* are निर्गुण ब्रह्म उपासकस *nirguṇa brahma upāsakas*, who are ज्ञानीस *jñānīs*, true संन्यासीस *sanyāsīs*, who seek and worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as अक्षरं अव्यक्तं ब्रह्म *akṣaram avyaktaṁ brahma*.

तेषां *teṣāṁ* - Of these two kinds of ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas*, namely those who are सगुण ब्रह्म उपासकस *saguṇa brahma upāsakas* endowed with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition, and those who are अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासकस *akṣar brahma upāsaks* - who are self-realized ज्ञानीस *jñānīs*, ज्ञान कर्म संन्यासीस *jñāna karma sanyāsīs* totally free from all worldly bondages, of these two kinds of ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas*.



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के योग वित्तमाः *ke yoga vittamāḥ* – who are the best (superlative) in terms of योग वित् *yoga vit* – as knowers of योग *yoga*, meaning, who are the best in terms of their knowledge and practice of योग *yoga*, for gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

That is Arjuna's question. The formulation of this question is rather peculiar. What Arjuna needs to know is, what mode of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvar upāsana* is best suited to his needs but what he is asking for is a comparison between कर्म योगीस *karma yogīs* and संन्यासीस *sanyāsīs* in their knowledge and practice of योग *yoga*. The form of Arjuna's question may have been prompted, consciously or unconsciously by his own continuing inclinations to take up the life of a संन्यासी *sanyāsī* and avoid participation in the war he finds himself in.

In any case, the form of Arjuna's question reveals his own inadequate appreciation of the essential difference between कर्म योगीस *karma yogīs* and संन्यासीस *sanyāsīs*, and also on the very scope of the Upanishad word योग *yoga* itself. Sri Krishna accepts Arjuna as he is, and enlightens him on the subject in clear and unambiguous terms.

We must remember that the Upanishad word योग *yoga* indicates both the means as well as the end with respect to gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*, reaching मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* – the ultimate destination already in oneself.

कर्म योग *karma yoga*, ध्यान योग *dhyāna yoga*, भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*, and ज्ञान योग *jñāna yoga*, are means of human endeavour for gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa* – for reaching the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* already in oneself, and the end of such human endeavour is being at the destination, being at the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* – विष्णोः परमं पदं *viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ* already in oneself, being in the state of मोक्ष *mokṣa* itself.

While a कर्म योगी *karma yogi* is still striving to reach the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* in oneself, a true संन्यासी *sanyāsī*, a ज्ञान कर्म संन्यासी *jñāna karma sanyāsī* is already at the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* in oneself. That is the essential difference between a कर्म योगी *karma yogi* and a संन्यासी *sanyāsī* – a ज्ञानी *jñāni*. That being so, कर्म योगीस *karma yogīs* and संन्यासीस *sanyāsīs* (ज्ञानीस *jñānis*)



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belong to two mutually distinct classes of human beings, and hence they are not directly comparable.

Later in this chapter, Sri Krishna gives the लक्षणसु *lakṣaṇas* – the distinguishing marks of ज्ञानीसु *jñānis*, which we will see later. At this point, let us understand that ज्ञानीसु *jñānis* are ज्ञान कर्म संन्यासीसु *jñāna karma sanyāsīs*, and as भगवान् *bhagavan* said earlier (7 – 18),

ज्ञानी तु आत्मैव मे मतं *jñānī tu ātmaiva me matam* – a ज्ञानी *jñāni* is परमेश्वर *paramesvar* Itself in human form.

Only ज्ञानीसु *jñānis* are capable of worshipping परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in the mode of अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣara brahma upāsana* – worshipping परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as निर्गुण ब्रह्मन् *nirguṇa brahman*, ब्रह्मन् *brahman* transcending all forms, names and attributes. Such ज्ञानीसु *jñānis*, such संन्यासीसु *sanyāsīs*, are already सम्यक् दर्शिनः *samyak darśinaḥ* – they already have a clear recognition of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in themselves. Through बुद्धि योग *buddhi yoga* they have already gained union with परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in themselves. They already have चित्त प्रसादं *citta prasādam*, ओं शान्ति *om śānti*, पूर्ण आनन्दं ब्रह्मानन्दं *pūrṇa ānandaṁ brahmānandaṁ*. When they do अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣar brahma upāsana*, they are only enjoying That ब्रह्मानन्दं *brahmānandaṁ*.

Fortunate indeed is a society wherein there are such ज्ञानीसु *jñānis*, still living in their human forms, waiting for their प्रारब्ध कर्मसु *prārabdha karmas* to be exhausted. By the very nature of the environment in which human beings live, some dust can collect from time to time in the अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* of even the ज्ञानीसु *jñānis*.

By meditation on परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, through अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣar brahma upāsana*, the ज्ञानीसु *jñānis*, the ज्ञान कर्म संन्यासीसु *jñāna karma sanyāsīs* cleanse their अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa*, keep their vision of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* clear, and continue to enjoy ब्रह्मानन्दं *brahmānandaṁ*, as long as their status as जीव *jīva*, continues. When they do अक्षर ब्रह्म उपासन *akṣar brahma upāsana* – when they meditate on परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, there is no distance between the meditator and the



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meditated, which means, as जीवs *jīvas*, the ज्ञानीs *jñānis* enjoy अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* at all times.

The situation is quite different with respect to people who consider themselves as कर्म योगीs *karma yogī*. Every ईश्वर भक्त *īśvara bhakta*, every devotee of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, considers oneself as a कर्म योगी *karma yogī* of one's own description, to different extents at different times, and practices a variety of forms of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, to achieve one's objective.

Thus there are many different kinds of कर्म योगीs *karma yogīs* practicing many different modes of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, seeking different immediate objectives, but the same one ultimate objective, namely gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*. Naturally, therefore, all the different forms of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* practiced by कर्म योगीs *karma yogīs* of different kinds cannot be equally effective in accomplishing the ultimate objective, namely, the devotee reaching the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthanam* already in oneself. In view of this situation, Sri Krishna now tells Arjuna what is the best and the most effective mode of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* for a कर्म योगी *karma yogī* of any kind.

श्री भगवानुवाच

śrī bhagavān uvāca

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

mayyāveśya mano ye mām nityayukta upāsate ।

श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ 12 - 2

śraddhayā parayopetāḥ te me yukttamā matāḥ ॥

भगवान् *bhagvān* says

मय्यावेश्य मनः मयि आवेश्य मनः *mayyāveśya manaḥ mayi āveśya manaḥ*

मयि *mayi* – परमेश्वरे *paramesvar*, विश्वरूपे *viśvarūpe*, अनन्त रूपे *ananta rūpe*,

समस्त कल्याण गुण निलय स्वरूपे *samasta kalyaṇa guṇa nilaya svarūpe*, सगुण

ब्रह्म स्वरूपे *saguṇa brahma svarūpe* (That is the meaning for मयि *mayi*)



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मयि *mayi* – In Me the परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, in My all-inclusive विश्वरूप *viśvarūp* form, in My countless forms and names, recognizing Me, The परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, as the abode of all the exalted and incomparable virtues and powers, recognizing Me, the परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in every form, name and attribute involved in सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana*.

मनः आवेश्य *manaḥ āveśya* - मनः समाधाय *manaḥ samādhaya* - Committing one's mind totally to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, bringing one's mind to rest in परमेश्वर *paramesvar*

अनन्य शरणतया *ananya śaraṇatayā* – resting the mind in total surrender to परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, recognizing परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as the only abode of all security, peace and happiness, recognizing परमेश्वर *paramesvar* as one's destination in life – मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sthānaṁ* - विष्णो परमं पदं *viṣṇo paramaṁ padaṁ* in oneself

ये मां नित्ययुक्ताः उपासते *ye mām nityayuktaḥ upāsate* - सततं नित्ययुक्ताः उपासते *satataṁ nityayuktaḥ upāsate* – those who worship Me, the परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, at all times, being in अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvar bhakti* with कर्मयोग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi*, as indicated earlier, namely

मत्कर्म कृत् *matkarma kṛt*, मत्परमः *matparamaḥ*, मद्भक्तः *madbhaktaḥ*, संगवर्जितः सर्वभूतेषु निर्वरः सन् *saṅgavarjitaḥ sarvabhūteṣu nirveraḥ san* – all the time being a God conscious कर्म योगी *karma yogī* in the pursuit of परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, all the time recognizing one's destination as परमेश्वर *paramesvar* Itself, all the time committed to gaining पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं *pūrṇa īśvara jñānaṁ* and ईश्वर प्रवेशनं *īśvar praveśanaṁ* – total entry into परमेश्वर *paramesvar* already in oneself, all the time striving to be free from all worldly material and emotional bondages, all the time striving to be free from any notion of enmity towards any being anywhere

ये मां नित्ययुक्ताः उपासते *ye mām nityayuktaḥ upāsate* – those who worship Me, The परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, in the form of सगुण ब्रह्म *saguṇa brahma* with कर्मयोग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition

नित्य युक्ताः *nitya yuktaḥ* – ever remaining steadfast in their endeavors

परया उपेताः *parayā upetāḥ* – endowed with supreme, unqualified and enlightened faith is



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In any form of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvar upāsana*, श्रद्धा *śraddha* is paramount. This faith is not blind faith. It is परया श्रद्धया *parayā śraddhaya*, श्रेष्ठया श्रद्धया *śreṣṭhayā śraddhaya* – It is enlightened faith rooted in an understanding and appreciation of Upanishad knowledge, especially that relating to जीव *jīva* and परमेश्वर *paramesvar*, and the connection between अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvar bhakti*, together with कर्मयोग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* on the one hand and मोक्ष साथनं *mokṣa sāthanam* and मोक्ष प्राप्ति *mokṣa prapti* on the other hand.

ते मे युक्ततमा मताः *te me yuktatamā matāḥ*

ते युक्ततमाः *te yuktatamāḥ* – those ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas*, those devotees who worship परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in the mode of सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* with कर्मयोग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi*, भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition and unqualified and enlightened श्रद्धा *śraddha*, they are युक्ततमाः *yuktatamās*, they are the best (superlative) in terms of their mode of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* – in their endeavour to reach परमेश्वर *paramesvar* already in themselves, in their endeavour to reach the मोक्ष स्थानं *mokṣa sāthanam* in themselves, in their endeavour to gain मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

मे मताः *me matāḥ* – that is my contention. When भगवान् *bhagavan* says मे मताः *me matāḥ*, it means “That is the Eternal Law of nature”.

Please listen to भगवान्’s *bhagavan’s* words again

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।

mayyāveśya mano ye mām nityayukta upāsate ।

श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥

śraddhayā parayopetāste me yuktatamā matāḥ ॥

In response to Arjuna’s question on के योगवित्तमाः *ke yogai vittamāḥ* – who are the best in terms of their knowledge and practice of योग *yoga*, भगवान् *bhagavan* gives a definite and highly focused answer, using the word युक्ततमः *yukta tamah*. युक्तः *yuktaḥ* refers to an action that is both proper and effective in accomplishing its objective. युक्ततमः *yukta tamah* refers to the action that is both the most proper and



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the most effective in accomplishing its objective in a superlative sense. Here the objective is योग *yoga*, both as the means as well as the end, for which Sri Krishna says

सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* with different forms, names and attributes, together with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi*, भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* disposition and supreme श्रद्धा *śraddha*– faith in both the means and the end and faith in oneself, is the most proper and the most effective means for achieving the objective of reaching परमेश्वर *paramesvar* already in oneself and thus gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa* – the परम पुरुषार्थ *param puruṣarth* for every human being.

This is a very important message from Sri Krishna, not only for Arjuna, but also for every one of us, committed to कर्म *karmas* of various kinds in our everyday life. We may recall here that Sri Krishna talked about कर्म *karma* and ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* in Chapter 2 and at the beginning of chapter 3. Arjuna responded by saying:

व्यमिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीवमे ।

vyamiśreṇeva vākyaena buddhiṁ mohayasivame ।

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहं आप्नुयाम् ॥ 3-2

tadekaṁ vada niścitya yena śreyo'haṁ āpnuyām ॥

By your contradictory words it seems as if you are confusing my बुद्धि *buddhi*. What I want is श्रेयस् *śreyas*. Should I go after कर्म *karma*, or should I go after ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*. Please tell me, ONE decisively.

Now, after many chapters of गीतोपदेश *gītōpadeś*, especially after the विश्वरूप दर्शन योग *viśvarūpa darśana yoga*, भगवान् *bhagavan* tells Arjuna in clear, unambiguous terms “Arjuna, you are not a संन्यासी *sanyāsī*. You are a man of action. If you want to gain श्रेयस् *śreyas*, there is only one way for you, and it is that you must cultivate अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* together with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi*. The most proper and the most effective way to cultivate अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti* is through सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in forms and names of your own choice, with supreme श्रद्धा *śraddha* – faith in yourself and in your mode of worship, rooted in



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understanding and appreciation of Upanishad knowledge on जीव जगत् *jīva jagat* and ईश्वर *īśvar*.

That is Sri Krishna's उपदेश *upadeśa* – teaching for Arjuna, and also for all of us. That is why people fortunate enough to be born in the Vedic tradition, build temples similar to what we have here, and provide themselves and others, opportunities to do ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsanas* of various kinds, similar to what we do at this temple.

In view of the negative attitude popularly held in certain sections of the Hindu society itself regarding the propriety or the wisdom of worshipping परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in multifarious forms and names, let us remain fully assured on the authority of the भगवत् गीता *bhagvat gītā* itself, that सगुण ब्रह्म उपासन *saguṇa brahma upāsana* – worship of परमेश्वर *paramesvar* in different forms, names and attributes, with श्रद्धा *śraddha* – with unqualified faith in oneself and in one's mode of worship is not only right and proper, it is also the best and the most effective for one's continued spiritual progress, prosperity, peace and happiness.

Sri Krishna's response to Arjuna's question continues, which we will see next time.