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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः - क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ विभाग योगः

trayodaśo'dhyāyaḥ - kṣetra-kṣetrajñā vibhāga yogaḥ

Chapter 13

Volume 2

श्री भगवानुवाच *śrī bhagavān uvāca*

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।

idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya kṣetramityabhidhīyate ।

एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥ 13-1

etadyo vetti taṁ prāhuḥ kṣetrajñā iti tadvidaḥ ॥

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्व क्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata ।

क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञं योज्ञानं यत तत् ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ 13-2

kṣetra kṣetrajñāṁ yojñānaṁ yat tat jñānaṁ mataṁ mama ॥

Sri Krishna unfolds the extraordinary relationship that exists between क्षेत्र *kṣetra* and क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā*, which means

- Between शरीर *śarīra* – one's physical body and आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I in oneself.
- between the known and the knowable world of objects, and परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* – The All-Knower
- between जीव *jīva* – a limited individual person, and सत्यं-ज्ञानं-अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ-jñānaṁ-anantaṁ brahma* – the ever-existent, all-conscious, ever-conscious, all-inclusive, limitless ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, The आत्मा *ātmā*, The परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*

As we saw last time, Sri Krishna opens this discourse with these words:

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इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।



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idam śarīram kaunteya kṣetramityabhidhīyate ।

एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥ 13-1

etadhyo vetti taṁ prāhuḥ kṣetrājña iti tadvidah ॥

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna:

कौन्तेय *kaunteya* – O! Arjuna, please listen

इदं शरीरं *idam śarīram*, क्षेत्रं इति अभिधीयते *kṣetram iti abhidhīyate* – This शरीर *śarīra* – this physical body, is called क्षेत्रं *kṣetram*. Sri Krishna points to His own physical body, and says इदं शरीरं *śarīram* – this physical body, not a physical body remote from oneself, but the physical body closest to oneself, and that is one's own physical body.

इदं शरीरं *idam śarīram*, क्षेत्रं इति अभिधीयते *kṣetram iti abhidhīyate* – This physical body, one's own physical body, is called क्षेत्रं *kṣetram*, which means one's own शरीर *śarīra*, one's own physical body must be understood as क्षेत्रं *kṣetram*, as an object of one's knowledge, not as oneself itself, not as "I" itself.

Looking at Arjuna face to face, Sri Krishna says: " You are not your शरीर *śarīra* – you are not your body. While your body and yourself are always naturally together, they are mutually distinct from each other. Your body is only a क्षेत्रं *kṣetram* – an object for which you are the subject "I".

एतत् यो वेत्ति, तं प्राहुः, क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः *etat yo vetti, taṁ prāhuḥ, kṣetrājña iti tadvidah*

एतत् *etat*, इदं शरीरं *idam śarīram*, क्षेत्रं यः वेत्ति *kṣetram yaḥ vetti* - The one who knows, the one who recognizes this fact, namely that one's own शरीर *śarīra* – one's own body is a क्षेत्रं *etram*, an object of one's knowledge, that knower, that subject "I", That Self in oneself, That आत्मा *ātmā* I, is called क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrājña*, by people who recognize the distinct nature of both शरीर *śarīra* – the physical body, and आत्मा *ātmā* I - The Self in oneself.



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Therefore, your शरीर *śarīra* – your body is क्षेत्रं *kṣetram*, and you are क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – the knower of your body. Thus you are distinct from your body. Further, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्व क्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi māṁ vidhdi sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata ।

क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञं योजानं यत तत् ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ 13-2

kṣetra kṣetrajñāṁ yojñānaṁ yat tat jñānaṁ mataṁ mama ॥

च अपि *cha api* – and also क्षेत्रज्ञं मां विद्धि *kṣetrajñāṁ māṁ vidhdi* – please understand That क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Please understand That क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – The Knower in this शरीर *śarīra*, who recognizes this शरीर *śarīra*, as क्षेत्रं *kṣetram* as an object of knowledge, That क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Please understand The चेतन आत्मा *cetana ātmā* – The conscious Self, The "I" in this शरीर *śarīra*, who recognizes this शरीर *śarīra* - this body, as an object, as a क्षेत्रं *kṣetram*, That चेतन आत्मा *cetana ātmā* – That "I", That SELF, That आत्मा *ātmā* "I", That क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* is Myself, the परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. That means, your body is an object of your knowledge, and you the subject, is परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself. Not only that, भगवान् *bhagavān* says further to Arjuna.

सर्व क्षेत्रेषु मां विद्धि *sarva kṣetreṣu māṁ vidhdi* – In all क्षेत्रs *kṣetras*, The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Not only The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – the knower in this शरीर *śarīra* is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* in all शरीरs *śarīras* - The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* in every शरीर *śarīra* in this creation is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which means The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* in your शरीर *śarīra* also is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. The SELF in yourself is also Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

If you choose to identify yourself in terms of क्षेत्र *kṣetra* – the form, name and attributes of your body vehicle, then you must also learn to understand and recognize the true



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nature of yourself as क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – the nature of "I" in yourself as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself. While your शरीर *śarīra* – your body, exists naturally and inseparably together with yourself, you yourself - the "I" in yourself, is distinct from your body, is independent of your body. It is not an isolated "I" in your body. It is the universal "I" existing in every body, That I, That क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā*, That आत्मा *ātmā*, That Self in yourself is Myself, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* – The ever-existent, ever conscious, all-inclusive, limitless परमेश्वर *parameśvar* – The ब्रह्मन् *brahman* Itself, so says Sri Krishna.

Thus भगवान् *bhagavān* Sri Krishna, identifies क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – The आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self, the "I" in every शरीर *śarīra* as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself, which makes the statement क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्व क्षेत्रेषु भारत *kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata* – as the महावाक्य *mahāvākya* - a great declaration of truth in गीतोपनिषत् *gītōpaniṣat*. It has the same meaning and the same significance as the महावाक्य *mahāvākya* in छान्दोग्य *chāndogya* Upanishad, namely तत् त्वं असि *tat tvam asi* – That you are, That परमेश्वर *parameśvar* you are, That ब्रह्मन् *brahman* you are. This महावाक्य *mahāvākya* of गीतोपनिषत् *gītōpaniṣat* is not only addressed to Arjuna, it is addressed to every भारत *bhārata* – every person for whom enlightenment through knowledge is Joy - that is what the word भारत *bhārata* means.

When we understand that क्षेत्र *kṣetra* includes everything that can be objectified, either by thought, word or deed, manifest or unmanifest, animate or inanimate, then the महावाक्य *mahāvākya* of गीतोपनिषत् *gītōpaniṣat* declares That the आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self of all that exist in this creation is indeed परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which means, as our Upanishad says:

ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वम् *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam*

मया ततमिदं सर्वम् *mayā tatamidaṁ sarvam*

अन्तर्बहिश्च तत् सर्वम् व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः *antarbahiśca tat sarvam vyāpya nārāyaṇaḥ sthitaḥ*

etc., as we have seen already.



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Thus the क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञ लक्षण *kṣetra kṣetrajñā lakṣaṇa* – the extraordinary relationship existing between क्षेत्र *kṣetra* and क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* – between the world of objects and परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, unfolds itself as पूर्ण ज्ञानं *pūrṇa jñānam*, ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam* – complete knowledge of जीव *jīva*, जगत् *jagat* and ईश्वर *īśvara*. Therefore भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञयोः ज्ञानं यत्, तत् ज्ञानं, मतं मम ॥

kṣetra kṣetrajñayoh jñānam yat, tat jñānam, mataṁ mama ॥

That which is क्षेत्र *kṣetra* – क्षेत्रज्ञ ज्ञानं *kṣetrajñā jñānam* – knowledge about क्षेत्र *kṣetra* and क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajñā* and their combinations, that ज्ञानं *jñānam*, that knowledge is indeed सम्यक् ज्ञानं *samyak jñānam*, पूर्ण ज्ञानं *pūrṇa jñānam* – real knowledge, clear knowledge, complete knowledge.

मतं मम *mataṁ mama* – That is My declaration. That is eternal truth, so says Sri Krishna in the first two verses of this chapter. The message communicated by the महावाक्य *mahāvākya* – the great truth declaration, namely "क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि, सर्वं क्षेत्रेषु भारत *kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi māṁ viddhi, sarva kṣetraeṣu bhārata*", is a matter of knowledge to be understood and recognized. It is not a matter of blind belief or indoctrination of any kind. It is knowledge for enlightenment to be reflected upon, and understood by every person, blessed with the ability to understand, appreciate and enjoy Enlightenment through knowledge.

Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* uses the command word विद्धि *viddhi* – please learn to understand. Now, how does one learn to understand ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam* – knowledge about परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, knowledge about आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self in oneself? This knowledge can be gained only by those who sincerely seek this knowledge. For such people, Sri Krishna has already pointed out the means for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam* – Self-Knowledge, in Chapter 4, where he says:

तत् विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया (4 – 34)

tat viddhi praṇipātena pariprśnenena sevayā



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The means for understanding ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam* is through the simultaneous process of प्रणिपातनं परिप्रश्नं *praṇipātanam paripraśnam* and सेवनं *sevanam*, together. प्रणिपातनं *praṇipātanam* means approaching knowledgeable teachers with श्रद्धा sincere interest, humility and dedication in the pursuit of ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*. परिप्रश्नं *paripraśnam* means reflecting on the content of the teachings, through repeated questioning of one's own understanding of such teachings, and ultimately resolving all doubts in one's mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* by oneself, and सेवनं *sevanam* means service. Service here is for ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*, which is service to परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*, which means doing every कर्म *karma* in daily life as ईश्वर कैङ्कर्य कर्म *īśvara kainkarya karma*, as service to परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*, which again means cultivating कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and अनन्य ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya īśvara bhakti*.

Let us understand that any service, done to anyone, anywhere, at any time, with the attitude of ईश्वर कैङ्कर्य कर्म *īśvara kainkarya karma* – as service dedicated to परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*, is indeed the best and the highest service one can do to oneself, because, the best and highest in oneself is परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* itself. Accordingly, in the context of the situation we are now, the three-fold means for understanding the महावाक्य *mahavākya* of गीतोपनिषत् *gītopaniṣat* is the following:

- The Gita and the Upanishad mantras are our real teachers. We study these mantras with श्रद्धा *śraddha*, sincere interest, humility and dedication, making use of whatever help becomes available to us from time to time.
- We reflect on the content of these mantras by repeated questioning; we do not question the mantras, but we do question our understanding of these mantras, until all our doubts are resolved by ourselves.

Our dedicated pursuit of ब्रह्मविद्या *brahmavidyā* itself is our ईश्वर कैङ्कर्यम् *īśvara kainkaryam* – service to परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*.

By the above three-fold means of प्रणिपातनं *praṇipātanam*, परिप्रश्नं *paripraśnam* and सेवनं *sevanam*, let us now try to understand the context of the महावाक्य *mahavākya* of गीतोपनिषत् *gītopaniṣat* again.



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क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि *kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi*, सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत *sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata* – भगवान् *bhagavān* declares here: The क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajña* – the आत्मा *ātmā*, The Self "I" in my शरीर *śarīra*, in my body, in your body in every body, in every person, is परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* itself, which means I am not my शरीर *śarīra*, I am not my form, name and attributes, but I am परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* Itself, and my शरीर *śarīra* – my body, is a क्षेत्र *kṣetra* – an object, which naturally exists, inseparable from परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*, while परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* Itself exists independent from my शरीर *śarīra*, independent of my form, name and attributes.

This is not only an extraordinary fact, but it is also an eternal fact, which is what I need to understand and recognize by विचार *vicār* – incisive enquiry. We have already seen such an enquiry in तैत्तिरीय *taittirīya* Upanishad, where

क्षेत्र *kṣetra* is pointed out in terms of the origin and evolution of the entire creation, and the शरीर *śarīra* – the physical body has been unfolded in terms of five कोशs *kośas* - five apparent barriers, namely अन्नमय *annamaya*, प्राणमय *prāṇamaya*, मनोमय *manomaya*, विज्ञानमय *vijñānamaya* and आनन्दमय *ānandmaya*, in every शरीर *śarīra*, in every person,

- क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajña* The आत्मा *ātmā*, The परमेश्वर *paramēśvar* has been unfolded as सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma* and
- the क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञ लक्षणं *kṣetra kṣetrajña lakṣaṇam* - the extraordinary inseparable co-existence of क्षेत्र *kṣetra* and क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajña*, शरीर *śarīra*, and आत्मा *ātmā* – body and The Self I, is pointed out by the ईश्वर *īśvara* – अनुप्रवेश श्रुति *anupraveśa śruti* communicated by the words तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानु प्राविशत् *tat sṛṣṭvā tadevānu prāviśat* etc.,

all of which finally leading to the Upanishad declaration स यश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चासावादित्ये *sa yaścāyaṁ puruṣe yaścāsāvāditye*, स एकः *sa ekaḥ*



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The आत्मा *ātmā* in this शरीर *śarīra* - the आनन्द स्वरूप आत्मा *ānand svarūpa ātmā* in परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, That is ONE, which is same as the content of महावाक्य *mahāvākya*, भगवान्'s *bhagavān's* declaration

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि *kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi*, सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत *sarva kṣetreṣu bhārata* – In spite of the enlightening knowledge unfolded by the Taittiriya Upanishad, the content of Sri Krishna's message that "I am, in fact, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself", does raise an immediate question, and any ordinary person can formulate this question in the following manner:

"In terms of my own daily experience in daily life, I see myself, I recognize myself, only as a संसारि *saṁsāri* "

संसारि *saṁsāri* means what? The word संसार *saṁsār* refers to this entire world of transient existence. In the context here, the words संसार *saṁsār*, संसारि *saṁsāri*, संसारित्वं *saṁsāritvaṁ* – all these words represent a worldly life of transient pleasures and pain, success and failure, hopes and fears, sorrow and distress, ailments and sufferings, bondage and mortality, etc., generally a life of never-ending wants, cravings and limitations, dissatisfaction and unfulfilled desires of various kinds, from all of which one would certainly wish to get a total release if possible. But such a life of संसार *saṁsāri* seems to be the very nature of worldly life for every human being.

From what I go through in every day life, it is clear to me that I am indeed a संसारि *saṁsāri* – a worldly person, going through the ups and downs of daily life from which absolute freedom seems impossible. But Sri Krishna says that, in fact, I am परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself. The other Upanishads also say so. How is that possible?

If I am परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself, then either परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is also a संसारि *saṁsāri* going through a miserable life of ups and downs of daily existence, just like most of us are in this world, in which case there can never be any absolute freedom from संसारित्वं *saṁsāritvaṁ*, either for me or anyone else, or there is really no such thing as a संसारित्वं *saṁsāritvaṁ*, there is really no such thing as ups and downs at all in this worldly life, which is against all common experience.



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From all that one understands about the nature of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself from the Upanishads and also from Sri Krishna's earlier teachings, it is clear to me that परमेश्वर *parameśvar* cannot be a संसारि *saṁsāri* like all of us, and परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is ever absolutely free from all ups and downs of worldly life. And, at the same time, it is equally clear to me that I am indeed a संसारि *saṁsāri*, never absolutely free from the ups and downs of worldly life.

That being so, how can I understand the content of Sri Krishna's declaration that "I am in fact परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself?"

That is the question which any person can ask, for which a satisfactory answer is needed. First of all, is this question a sensible one? If so, what is the answer. If not, what is missing in this question?

Let us think about it and we will talk about it next time.