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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः - क्षेत्र-क्षेत्रज्ञ विभाग योगः

trayodaśo'dhyāyaḥ - kṣetra-kṣetrajña vibhāga yogaḥ

Chapter 13

Volume 8

अमानित्वं अदंभित्वं अहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।

amānitvaṁ adambhitvaṁ ahimsā kṣāntirārjavam ।

आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्म विनिग्रहः ॥

13-7

ācāryopāsanam śaucam sthairyamātma vinigrahaḥ ॥

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यम् अनहङ्कार एव च ।

indriyārtheṣu vairagyam anahāṅkar eva ca ।

जन्म मृत्यु जरा व्याधि दुःख दोषानुदर्शनम् ॥

13-8

janma mṛtyu jāra vyādha duḥkha doṣānudarśanam ॥

असक्तिः अनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

asaktiḥ anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ putradāragṛhādiṣu ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वं इष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥

13-9

nityam ca samacittatvaṁ iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu ॥

मयि च अनन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।

ma ca ananya yogena bhaktiravyabhicāriṇī ।

विविक्त देशसेवित्वं अरतिर्जन संसदि ॥

13-10

vivikta deśasevitvaṁ aratirjana saṁsadi ॥

अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थ दर्शनम् ।

adhyātma jñāna nityatvaṁ tatvajñānārtha darśanam ।

एतत् ज्ञानं इति प्रोक्तं अज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥

13-11

etat jñānam iti proktaṁ ajñānam yadato'nyathā ॥

Sri Krishna is in the process of pointing out here a set of 20 personal qualities as



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – as wisdom helpful for gaining purity of mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, necessary for making oneself fit for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. We have already talked briefly about the first 13 such personal qualities, namely

अमानित्वं अदम्भित्वं अहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
amānitvaṁ adambhitvaṁ ahimsā kṣāntirārjavam ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्म विनिग्रहः ॥
ācāryopāsanam śaucaṁ sthairyamātma vinigrahaḥ ॥

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यम् अनहङ्कार एव च ।
indriyārtheṣu vairagyam anahāṅkar eva ca ।
जन्म मृत्यु जरा व्याधि दुःख दोषानुदर्शनम् ॥
janma mṛtyu jāra vyādha duḥkha doṣānudarśanam ॥

and असक्तिः *asaktiḥ*. Let us now continue with the next one

14. अनभिष्वंगः पुत्र *anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ putra* – दार *dāra* – गृहादिषु *grhādiṣu* – Total absence of excessive care, love and affection for your dear ones, is ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help in your pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, says Sri Krishna.

Everybody has some dear ones, such as पुत्र *putra* – sons and daughters, दार *dāra* – wife or husband, गृहादिषु *grhādiṣu* – house, wealth of different kinds, relatives, friends, etc. All of them are different kinds of possessions, whom you care, and for whom you have love and affection, and also duties and responsibilities. Such care, love and affection is called स्वङ्गः *svaṅgaḥ* – all that is natural, proper and good. But, when that care, love and affection become excessive, it is अनभिष्वंगः *anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ*, and that is not a help to your pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, because, with excessive care, love and affection for your dear possessions, you get bound to those possessions, and hence your mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* are no longer free to pursue आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

Therefore, you must know where to draw the line between your natural care, love and affection and excessive care, love and affection with respect to your dear ones, whoever



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

or whatever they are. When your care, love and affection for your dear ones become an impediment to your pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, that is where you draw the line, and detach yourself from such kinds of care, love and affection.

We must understand that on such detachment, your care, love and affection for your dear ones do not become any less, but they are no longer sources of bondage to you, and your mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* are free to pursue ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*. Being सर्वात्मकत्वं *sarvātmakṭvaṁ* and सर्व कल्याण लक्षण सम्पन्नं *sarva kalyāṇa lakṣaṇa sampannaṁ*, The आत्मा *ātmā* being the Self of all beings, and ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* being the abode of all virtues and happiness, you are never really isolated from the well-being of your dear ones, and your contribution to their welfare and happiness is even far more because of your pursuit of ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, whether it is so recognized or not. Therefore, avoid excessive care, love and affection for anyone or any object in life.

15. नित्यं च समचित्तत्वं इष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु *nityaṁ ca samacittatvaṁ iṣṭaniṣṭopapattiṣu* – Always maintain a continuous state of evenness of mind, an equanimity of mind, whatever happens to you, whatever comes to you in life, whether it is इष्ट *iṣṭa* or अनिष्ट *aniṣṭa* – desirable or undesirable, pleasure or pain. That is नित्यं च समचित्तत्वं *nityaṁ ca samacittatvaṁ*.

Now, we must understand how one gets that continuous state of evenness of mind at all times, and how such state of mind becomes ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. It is कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi*, more particularly सर्व कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *sarva karmaphala tyāga buddhi* – an attitude of renunciation of the fruits of all of one's actions, which means offering the fruits of all of one's actions to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. It is only such कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *karma phala tyāga buddhi* that gives one evenness of mind at all times. Whatever you are, whatever happens to you, whatever comes to you every day of your life, all that is your कर्मफल *karma phala*. The mind always tends to react to every कर्मफल *karma phala*, but, when that कर्मफल *karma phala* is given up as कर्मफल त्याग *karma phala tyāga*, when that कर्मफल *karma phala* is totally returned to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as ईश्वर उपासनं *īśvara upāsanam* – as worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which means



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

when that कर्मफल *karma phala* is welcomed and accepted as ईश्वर प्रसादं *īśvara prasādam*, as the very manifestation of the grace of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, then there is nothing left for the mind to react.

From such कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *karmaphala tyāga buddhi* - ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि *īśvara prasād buddhi*, what comes is ONLY immediate peace of mind. Therefore, by continuous कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *karmaphala tyāga buddhi*, one gains continuous peace of mind, and that is continuous evenness of mind. That is how one gets a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times.

In the absence of such evenness of mind, such peace of mind, the mind tends to react to every कर्मफल *karma phala* that manifests itself every day of one's life. Since कर्म *karma* changes continuously, the कर्मफल *karma phala* also changes continuously, and if the mind also changes continuously with कर्मफल *karma phala*, the mind will be in a constant state of reaction, which means a constant state of agitation. A mind in a constant state of agitation is not conducive to the diligent pursuit of any knowledge. For the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* - Self-knowledge, an evenness of mind, devoid of agitations is absolutely necessary. That is how नित्यं सामचित्तत्वं *nityam sāmaccittatvam* - a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times becomes ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* - a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* - Self-knowledge.

Therefore, maintain a continuous state of evenness of mind at all times, including all kinds of pleasure or pain, by cultivating an attitude of कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *karma phala tyāga buddhi* - ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि *īśvara prasād buddhi* at all times, as a value in life.

16. मयि (परमेश्वरे) अनन्ययोगेन भक्ति अव्यभिचारिणी *mayi (parameśvare) ananya yogena bhakti avyabhicāriṇī* - The cultivation of सर्व कर्मफल त्याग बुद्धि *sarva karma phala tyāga buddhi* - ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि *īśvara prasād buddhi* at all times is possible only if one has अव्यभिचारिणी ईश्वर भक्ति *avyabhicāriṇī īśvara bhakti*, which means abiding, unflinching, undistracted and undistractable devotion to परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, gained through अनन्य योग ईश्वर भक्ति *ananya yoga īśvara bhakti*, which means firm, total and undivided devotion to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* already in oneself as आत्मा *ātmā* - The Self I in oneself.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

How does that kind of ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* – devotion to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* become ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge? Because, That परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, already in oneself as आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I in oneself, is the goal to be reached, constantly keeping that goal in mind, and being totally free and committed to reaching that goal is certainly a help in ultimately reaching that goal.

17. विविक्त देश सेवित्यं *vivikta deśa sevityam* – Cultivate a love for विविक्त देश *vivikta deśa*. विविक्त देश *vivikta deśa* is a place which is quiet, clean, pleasing and free from any cause for fear. Such a place may be an आश्रम, a hermitage in a forest setting, a river bank, a mountain top, a temple, a corner in one's own house, hut or apartment, or just oneself, which means one has to discover in oneself a love for being oneself, by oneself. That is a विविक्त देश सेवित्यं *vivikta deśa sevityam*. Such love is ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help for the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

Let us note here that भगवान् *bhagavān* is teaching विविक्त देश सेवित्यं *vivikta deśa sevityam* to Arjuna in a battlefield. Is a battlefield a विविक्त देश सेवित्यं *vivikta deśa sevityam* – a quiet and pleasing place, free from fear for one to contemplate on आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge? The answer is, if one can discover the place of quietude and freedom from fear in one's own अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, then it does not matter whether one is in a battlefield or in a busy market place. It is only the विविक्त देश सेवित्यं *vivikta deśa sevityam* of one's own mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* that really makes this शरीर *śarīra* – this physical body a क्षेत्र *kṣetra* – a holy place.

Therefore, discover peace and tranquility in yourself, and cultivate a love for being yourself, by yourself, as a value for the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

Does that mean one should avoid the company of people? No, not all people, but one should avoid the company of certain kinds of people. Who are they? भगवान् *bhagavān* says:



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

18. अरतिः जनसंसदि *aratiḥ janasaṁsadi* – Cultivate a natural distaste (अरतिः *aratiḥ*) for being in the midst of people seeking pleasures and entertainments of various kinds through improper activities (जनसंसदि *janasaṁsadi*). From the point of view of the pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge and cultivation of ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* – devotion to परमेश्वर already in oneself, such people are प्राकृत जनाः *prākṛta janāḥ*.

संस्कार शून्याः *saṁskar śūnyāḥ* – such people are devoid of culture and God-consciousness in their thinking and values, and their ways of life can be powerful enough to distract one from ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* – ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti*. For that reason, any environment which draws such people together must be entirely avoided.

Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* says - cultivate a natural distaste for degrading environments and the company of people associated with improper, immoral and unethical activities. Such अरतिः जनसंसदि *aratiḥ janasaṁsadi* is ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help for one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

While all the 18 personal qualities mentioned so far are necessary, they themselves are not sufficient to become ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam*. They become ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – a help in gaining Self-knowledge, only if they are also simultaneously combined with two other personal qualities, namely आत्मज्ञान नित्यत्वं *ātma jñāna nityatvam*, and तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं *tatva jñāna artha darśanam*.

19. अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam* is प्रत्यग आत्मज्ञान नित्यत्वं वेद *pratyaga ātma jñāna nityatvamveda* – Daily exposure to knowledge about one's own Innermost self, and that knowledge is ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. For us, such daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं *jñānam* – Self-knowledge comes only from वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापकं *veda adhyāpakam* – daily recitation of at least a few Veda Upanishad mantras, with proper understanding and appreciation, together with the daily practice of such Veda Upanishad knowledge so gained.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton, Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

This integrated process of वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापकं *veda adhyāpakam* is called स्वाध्याय प्रवचनं *svādhyāya pravacanam*, whose importance for one's peace, progress and happiness has been repeatedly emphasized in the Taittiriya Upanishad.

Because such स्वाध्याय प्रवचनं *svādhyāya pravacanam* is मोक्ष साधनं *mokṣa sādhanam* – a great help in one's pursuit of मोक्ष *mokṣa* – total fulfillment in life, which is the overriding purpose of all human existence, even if you are not interested in मोक्ष right now, as you mature, you will certainly become interested in it, and you will certainly need this knowledge for reaching your highest destination in life, whether or not that destination is clear to your mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* at this time.

If such स्वाध्याय प्रवचनं *svādhyāya pravacanam* is so important for every person, as a value in life, what can we do about it, being here where we are, at this time of our lives? Obviously, there are very many traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापकं *veda adhyāpakam* practiced by different groups of people, either individually or collectively. One method is what a few devotees are doing here at this temple every Sunday morning, reciting Rudram together with some related Veda mantras, in the traditional manner. It is indeed an extraordinary, exhilarating and uplifting experience even to listen to these Vedic sounds again and again, especially if you can understand and appreciate the content of these Veda mantras. There are also other traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापकं *veda adhyāpakam* involving Veda mantras with or without simultaneous Vedic rituals of some kind.

While all such traditional modes of वेद अध्ययनं *veda adhyayanam* and वेद अध्यापकं *veda adhyāpakam* do help in अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam* – in maintaining daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, they are not easily practicable for most of us here in the environment in which we live. But, what we can do easily and effectively is what we are doing here, right now, and indeed, every week at this time, namely, hear and listen to the scripture readings, and also the Veda Upadesa mantras which we recite towards the conclusion of our current Puja schedule. The content of these Veda mantras is now available for any one who seeks this knowledge. Let us continue to hear and listen to these Veda mantras, and also scripture readings again and again, with श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – unqualified faith in ourselves and in our own roots.



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā* is considered to be समस्त वेद अर्थ सार संग्रहं *samasta veda artha sāra saṅgraham* – the very essence of the teachings of all the Vedas and the Upanishads. The ईश *īśa*, केन *kena*, कठ *kāṭha*, तैत्तिरीय *taittirīya* and मुण्डक *muṇḍaka* Upanishads are among the most enlightening Vedic knowledge helpful for a fuller and deeper understanding and appreciation of the teachings of the भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā*. Thus the ब्रह्मविद्या scripture readings at this temple are totally focused on cultivation of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

For those among us who really wish to cultivate the personal quality of अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam* – daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* as ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – as a help in one's meaningful pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, the easiest starting point is to persuade oneself to listen, from oneself itself, the scripture readings we hear at this temple, on the भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā* and the Upanishads, on a continuing basis, limiting oneself to only ONE scripture reading per day, every day, always followed by a few minutes of reflection on its contents, in the context of one's own life, consistent with the message of the scripture readings being heard every day from oneself, by oneself.

One will soon discover such अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam* – daily exposure to आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* is indeed a great help, a ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam*, for one's meaningful pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. Finally

20. तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थदर्शनं *tattva jñāna arthadarśanam* – तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam* is आत्म तत्त्व ज्ञानं *ātma tattva jñānam* – the knowledge about the true nature of oneself as आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I, and that is ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *brahma jñānam*, gained with the help of all the 19 personal qualities mentioned above, starting from अमानित्वं *amānitvam*, अदम्भित्वं *adam̐bhitvam*, अहिंसा *ahimsā*, etc., up to अध्यात्म ज्ञान नित्यत्वं *adhyātma jñāna nityatvam*, which means gaining maturity in each one of these personal qualities, both individually and collectively, is the means for gaining अन्तःकरण शुद्धि *antaḥ karaṇa śauddhi* – purity of mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, necessary for



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

gaining तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam* - ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahma jñānam* - आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* - Self-knowledge.

तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ *tattva jñāna artha* is तत्त्व ज्ञान फल *tattva jñāna phala* - what you get out of such तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam* - Self-knowledge and That is मोक्ष *mokṣa* - total freedom from all kinds of अविद्या *avidyā*, काम *kāma*, कर्म बन्धन *karma bandhanas* - all bondages born of Self-ignorance. Therefore,

तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं *tattva jñāna artha darśanam* is मोक्ष दर्शनं *mokṣa darśanam* - seeing clearly That तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam* - Self-knowledge is not only for gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*, That तत्त्व ज्ञानं एव मोक्षं *tattva jñānam eva mokṣam*, The Self-knowledge Itself is मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

Thus, तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं *tattva jñāna artha darśanam* means seeing clearly that मोक्ष *mokṣa* - total freedom from all bondages, total freedom in life, absolute peace, joy, happiness is achievable by तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam*, and by तत्त्व ज्ञानं *tattva jñānam* only, by Self-knowledge only. That realization brings मोक्ष *mokṣa* into your sight.

That means, all 19 pre-required personal qualities mentioned above, together, bring मोक्ष *mokṣa* total fulfillment in life, into your direct vision, so that you are now able to see clearly that मोक्ष *mokṣa*, the overriding purpose of life is within the reach of your बुद्धि *buddhi*. That मोक्ष दर्शनं *mokṣa darśanam* - that vision of मोक्ष *mokṣa* is ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* - a help in actually gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*, just as, when the objective of your endeavor comes into view of your sight, you naturally go in for that objective, with renewed faith, confidence and enthusiasm. That is how तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं *tattva jñāna artha darśanam* or मोक्ष दर्शनं *mokṣa darśanam* becomes ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* - a help in one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* - Self-knowledge.

We must understand that अमानित्यं *amānitvam*, etc., all the 19 qualities mentioned above together result in तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थ दर्शनं *tattva jñāna artha darśanam*, which then becomes the 20th ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam*, helpful for gaining ब्रह्म ज्ञानं



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

brahma jñānam - आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. Having thus listed all the 20 pre-required personal qualities necessary for making one's mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* fit for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge, भगवान् *bhagavān* goes on to say:

एतत् ज्ञानं इति प्रोक्तं *etat jñānam iti proktam* – all these 20 personal qualities together constitute the one great ज्ञानं *jñānam*, meaning ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – the ONE great help for one's pursuit of आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. Further

यत् अतः अन्यथा *yat ataḥ anyathā* (तत् *tat*) अज्ञानं *ajñānam* – whatever is opposed to any or all of these 20 personal qualities is अज्ञानं *ajñānam* meaning, अज्ञान साधनं *ajñāna sādhanam* – help only in the perpetuation of अज्ञानं *ajñānam* – Self-ignorance and all its consequences.

Thus concludes Sri Krishna's short discourse on ज्ञानं *jñānam* as ज्ञान साधनं *jñāna sādhanam* – the personal qualities one must cultivate, and have in full measure in order to gain पूर्ण अन्तःकरण शुद्धि *pūrṇa antaḥ karaṇa śuddhi* – absolute purity of mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, necessary to make oneself fit for gaining Self-knowledge, which means gaining the ability to recognize आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* already in oneself, by oneself, as oneself Itself.

In the next six enlightening verses Sri Krishna tells how one can recognize That आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* already in oneself, which we will see next time.