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श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

अष्टादशोऽध्यायः - मोक्षसंन्यासयोगः

aṣṭadaśo 'dhyāyaḥ - mokṣa saṁnyāsa yogaḥ

Chapter 18

Volume 6

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावं अव्ययं ईक्षते

sarvabhūteṣu yenaikam bhāvaṁ avyayaṁ īkṣate

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकं ॥ 18 - 20

avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu tat jñānaṁ viddhi sāttvikaṁ ॥

पृथक्त्वेन तु यत् ज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् ।

pṛthaktvena tu yat jñānaṁ nānābhāvān pṛthak vidhān ।

वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं ॥ 18 - 21

vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu tat jñānaṁ viddhi rajasaṁ ॥

यत्तु कृत्स्नवत् एकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तं अहैतुकम् ।

yattu kṛtsnavat ekasmin kārye saktaṁ ahaitukam ।

अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च तत् तामसं उदाहृतम् ॥ 18 - 22

atattvārthavat alpaṁ ca tat tāmasaṁ udāhṛtam ॥

नियतं सङ्गरहितं अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

niyataṁ saṅgarahitaṁ arāgadveṣataḥ kṛtam ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत् यत् सात्त्विकं उच्यते ॥ 18 - 23

aphalaprepsunā karma yat yat sāttvikaṁ ucyate ॥

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।

yattu kamepsunā karma sāhaṁkāreṇa vā punaḥ ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तत् राजसं उदाहृतं ॥ 18 - 24

kriyate bahulāyāsaṁ tat rājasaṁ udāhṛtaṁ ॥

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसां अनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।

anubandhaṁ kṣayaṁ hiṁsāṁ anapekṣya ca pauruṣam ।



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मोहात् आरभ्यते कर्म यत् तत् तामसं उच्यते ॥ 18 - 25

mohāt ārabhyate karma yat tat tāmasaṁ ucyate ॥

Sri Krishna has been talking about different aspects of कर्म *karma*. Anything that one does is कर्म *karma*. कर्म *karma*, whatever be its form and name, is born entirely of माया *māyā*, the सत्त्व *sattva*, रजस् *rajas* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇas*, which are the constituents of माया *māyā* - The Inherent Power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Sri Krishna is now talking about कर्म *karma* in terms of their माया गुण *māyā guṇas*.

What impels a person to do any particular कर्म *karma* in the first place? भगवान् *bhagavān* says that there are three factors involved, namely ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*, ज्ञेयं *jñeyaṁ* and परिज्ञाता *parijñātā*. ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* here means some prior knowledge, ordinary objective knowledge about the कर्म *karma* itself. Based on the above knowledge, what is desired to be accomplished by the कर्म *karma* is ज्ञेयं *jñeyaṁ*. परिज्ञाता *parijñātā* is the person who has the will to do the कर्म *karma* on the basis of the above ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* and ज्ञेयं *jñeyaṁ*. Thus ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*, ज्ञेयं *jñeyaṁ* and परिज्ञाता *parijñātā*, together impel a person, prompt a person, to do a particular कर्म *karma*.

Being thus impelled to do the कर्म *karma*, one then performs the कर्म *karma*. In the performance of the कर्म *karma* itself, there are three factors involved. They are करणं *karaṇaṁ*, कर्म *karma* and कर्ता *kartā*. करणं *karaṇaṁ* refers to the instruments needed to perform the कर्म *karma*, the most important instrument being one's अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* - mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, especially one's बुद्धि *buddhi*. कर्म *karma* refers to the attitudes, motives, etc., governing the performance of the कर्म *karma*; and कर्ता *kartā* refers to the personal qualities of the person who does the कर्म *karma*. When करणं *karaṇaṁ*, कर्म *karma* and कर्ता *kartā* are there together, then the performance of the कर्म *karma* takes place.

When one has ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* - some prior knowledge about the कर्म *karma*, ज्ञेयं *jñeyaṁ* - what is desired to be accomplished by the कर्म *karma* is decided by one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, then the परिज्ञाता *parijñātā* - the one who has ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*, ज्ञेयं



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jñeyam and the will to do the कर्म *karma*, becomes the कर्ता *kartā* - the doer of the कर्म *karma*. Therefore, परिज्ञाता *parijñātā* is the कर्ता *kartā* - doer of कर्म *karma*.

Therefore, in the matter of impelling a person to do a कर्म *karma*, and subsequently in the performance of the कर्म *karma* itself, there are essentially four factors involved, and they are: ज्ञानं *jñānam*, करणं *karaṇam*, कर्म *karma* and कर्ता *kartā*, all of which are born of सत्त्व *sattva*, रजस् *rajas*, and तमस् गुणः *tamas guṇas* of माया *māyā*. Consequently, each one of the above four factors is of three kinds, based on differences in one's prevailing गुणः *guṇas* - personal qualities, which means, with respect to ज्ञानं *jñānam*, there are three kinds, namely सात्त्विकं ज्ञानं *sāttvik jñānam*, रजस् ज्ञानं *rajas jñānam* and तमस् ज्ञानं *tamas jñānam*. Similarly, with respect to करणं *karaṇam*, कर्म *karma* and कर्ता *kartā*, there are three kinds in each.

भगवान् *bhagavān* first talks about the three kinds of ज्ञानं *jñānam*. Describing सात्त्विकं ज्ञानं *sāttvik jñānam*, भगवान् *bhagavān*:

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावं अव्ययं ईक्षते

sarvabhūteṣu yenaikam bhāvaṁ avyayaṁ īkṣate

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकं ॥ 18 – 20

avibhaktam vibhakteṣu tat jñānam viddhi sāttvikam ॥

That ज्ञानं *jñānam* - That Knowledge by which a person is able to see, is able to recognize clearly, directly and immediately

एकं अव्ययं भावं *ekam avyayaṁ bhāvaṁ* - ONE Changeless Supreme Being, which means, ONE आत्मा वस्तु *ātmā vastu*, ONE सत्यं-ज्ञानं-अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyam-jñānam-anantaṁ brahma*, ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in every being in this creation, manifest or unmanifest, animate or inanimate, big or small, in every being in this creation, and one is able to recognize That एकं अव्ययं भावं *ekam avyayaṁ bhāvaṁ* - That ONE changeless Supreme Being, That ONE आत्मा *ātmā* *vastu* - remaining undivided among all that appears divided in this creation, That knowledge, That ज्ञानं *jñānam* is सात्त्विकं ज्ञानं *sāttvika jñānam* - born of सत्त्व गुण *sattva guṇa*.



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In other words, That ज्ञानं *jñānam* - That Knowledge by which a person is able to recognize and appreciate, clearly, directly and immediately that ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वम् *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam* - The ONE परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, changeless and Undivided, is indeed everything, everywhere, at all times, That Knowledge, That ज्ञानं *jñānam* is सात्त्विक ज्ञानं *sāttvika jñānam*, ज्ञानं *jñānam* born of सत्त्व गुण *sattva guṇa*. That means,

- even while seeing, recognizing, understanding and appreciating everything in this world of changes and differences, everything in this world of varieties forms, names, attributes, actions, differences and divisions
- even while seeing and discovering new forms, new names, new attributes, new actions, new differences and new divisions, every day in this world of changes
- even while appreciating that all these changes, differences, and divisions are indeed true as long as they exist, and they are not illusory,
- even while recognizing all that, when a person is able to recognize also that there is one truth behind all truths - सत्यस्य सत्यं *satyasya satyam* - and That TRUTH is The ONE Absolute Reality behind and beyond all that exist in this entire world of changes, differences and divisions
- That ONE TRUTH, ONE Absolute Reality is Eternal, Changeless, Formless, Attributeless, Actionless, Divisionless, All-inclusive and All-pervading
- indeed all forms, all attributes, all actions, all changes, all differences and all divisions appearing in this transient world arise only from That ONE Absolute Reality alone, are sustained by That ONE Absolute Reality alone, and ultimately merge into That ONE Absolute Reality alone in every cycle of creation.

Consequently, existence as a whole, is an extraordinary and inseparable combination of क्षेत्र *kṣetra* and क्षेत्रज्ञ *kṣetrajña*, अपर *apara* and पर *para*, माया *māyā* and परमेश्वर *parameśvar* (means an extraordinary combination of all forms, all changes, all attributes, all actions, all differences and all divisions in this creation) on the one hand, AND, on the other hand, That ONE Eternal, Changeless, Formless, Attributeless, Actionless, Divisionless, All-inclusive, All-pervading Absolute Reality, both of which together constitute ONE whole TRUTH behind all truths.

That knowledge by which a person can recognize That ONE Unchanging Reality, That ONE Eternal Truth in all beings in this creation, That ज्ञानं *jñānam* is सात्त्विक ज्ञानं *sāttvika jñānam*. In contrast to such सात्त्विक ज्ञानं *sāttvika jñānam*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:



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पृथक्त्वेन तु यत् ज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् ।

pr̥thaktvena tu yat jñānaṁ nānābhāvān pṛthak vidhān |

वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं ॥

18 – 21

vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu tat jñānaṁ viddhi rājasam ||

भगवान् *bhagavān* now talks about राजस् ज्ञानं *rājas jñānaṁ*

तु यत् ज्ञानं वेत्ति *tu yat jñānaṁ vetti* - That ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* - That Knowledge by which one recognizes, only this much, namely

सर्वं भूतेषु पृथक्त्वेन वेत्ति *sarva bhūteṣu pṛthaktvena vetti* - one recognizes, understands and appreciates all beings in this creation, only in terms of their separateness from each other. Again

सर्वं भूतेषु नानाभावान् पृथक् विधान् *sarva bhūteṣu nānābhāvān pṛthak vidhān* - One recognizes, understands and appreciates all beings in this creation only in terms of their varieties in existence such as kinds, forms, names, attributes, actions, divisions etc., and in terms of their differences from each other

तत् ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसं *tat jñānaṁ viddhi rājasam* - that kind of knowledge must be understood as राजस ज्ञानं *rājasa jñānaṁ*.

That ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* - that kind of knowledge by which one can recognize, understand and appreciate all beings in this creation ONLY in terms of objective knowledge, that is, in terms of their separateness from each other - their varieties, differences and divisions from each other, such objective knowledge, that ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ* - that knowledge is राजस ज्ञानं *rājasa jñānaṁ* - knowledge born from राजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*.

Why राजस् ज्ञानं *rājas jñānaṁ*? It is राजस ज्ञानं *rājasa jñānaṁ* because, objective knowledge, however extensive it may be, by itself, is both incomplete and inadequate. It is incomplete with respect to totality of knowledge, and it is inadequate with respect to total fulfillment in life.

All knowledge that we generally accumulate through worldly experiences, education, training, research, development, etc., all such knowledge is objective knowledge, knowledge in the world of changes, differences, and divisions. One is ordinarily familiar with such knowledge, which is essentially knowledge of structural forms, not knowledge of total content. Every researcher of objective knowledge knows that every progress in such knowledge leads only to a deeper awareness of one's own ignorance. Thus, all objective knowledge is only a form of learned ignorance, because, such knowledge, by itself, is, and will always be, incomplete knowledge. The same is also true with respect to spiritual knowledge, by itself.



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Therefore, realization of totality of knowledge (पूर्ण ज्ञानं *pūrṇa jñānaṁ*) is possible only when both objective knowledge and spiritual knowledge are cultivated together, properly, steadily and steadfastly. Now about तामस ज्ञानं *tāmasa jñānaṁ*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

यत्तु कृत्स्नवत् एकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तं अहैतुकम् ।
yattu kṛtsnavat ekasmin kārye saktam ahaitukam ।
अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च तत् तामसं उदाहृतम् ॥ 18 – 22
atattvārthavat alpaṁ ca tat tāmasaṁ udāhṛtam ॥

कार्यं *kārya* is an effect arising from a cause, and कृत्स्नवत् सक्तं *kṛtsnavat saktam* is a commitment to something as if it is everything. It is total. Therefore, यत् ज्ञानं एकस्मिन् कार्ये कृत्स्नवत् सक्तं *yat jñānaṁ ekasmin kārye kṛtsnavat saktam* - That ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*, that knowledge which clings to one single effect, as if it is everything. That knowledge which is in the form of a fanatic attachment to a single object, or one single effect, or a single vision, or one single view, as if it is everything, it is total, it is complete

अहैतुकम् *ahaitukam* - with no real basis or reasoning behind such fanatic attachment
अतत्त्वार्थवत् अल्पं च *atattvārthavat alpaṁ ca* - which attachment is both essentially meaningless and also trivial, devoid of any real knowledge content
तत् ज्ञानं तामसं उदाहृतम् *tat jñānaṁ tāmasaṁ udāhṛtam* - That ज्ञानं *jñānaṁ*, that knowledge is called तामस ज्ञानं *tāmasa jñānaṁ* - knowledge born of ignorance - तमस गुण *tamasa guṇa*. In other words, that knowledge which is in the form of fanaticism of any kind, is तामस ज्ञानं *tāmasa jñānaṁ* - knowledge born of ignorance, which should naturally be avoided.

In society, we are familiar with various forms of fanaticism, both in religious life and secular life. Every form of fanaticism leads only to degradation, and ultimately, to destruction, because it is तामस ज्ञानं *tāmasa jñānaṁ* - knowledge born of ignorance.

In terms of one's endeavor to gain मोक्ष *mokṣa* - Absolute Liberation, there are at least two kinds of fanaticism which one must particularly avoid. One is to identify आत्मा *ātmā* - The Self I, with one's शरीर *śarīra* - physical body. Such identification would mean that there are as many आत्मा s *ātmās* as there are शरीर s *śarīras*, and when the शरीर



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śarīra dies, आत्मा *ātmā* also dies, which is not true, in terms of Upanishad knowledge on आत्मा *ātmā* - The Self I.

The second is the view that one should worship परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in only one particular form, and no other. The person who is fanatic about such view of ईश्वर उपासन *īśvara upāsana* - worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, has no real understanding and appreciation of either परमेश्वर *parameśvar* or worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Having thus pointed out what are सात्त्विक ज्ञानं *sāttvika jñānaṁ*, राजस ज्ञानं *rājasa jñānaṁ* and तामस ज्ञानं *tāmasa jñānaṁ*, Sri Krishna now talks about कर्म *karma*, which is again three-fold, namely सात्त्विक कर्म *sāttvika karma*, राजस कर्म *rājasa karma*, and तामस कर्म *tāmasa karma*. About सात्त्विक कर्म *sāttvika karma*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

नियतं सङ्गरहितं अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

niyatam saṅgarahitam arāgadveṣataḥ kṛtam ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत् यत् सात्त्विकं उच्यते ॥ 18 - 23

aphalaprepsunā karma yat yat sāttvikaṁ ucyate ॥

यत् नियतं कर्म *yat niyatam karma* - That कर्म *karma* which is a नियत कर्म *niyata karma*, कर्म *karma* mandated by परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, enjoined in the Vedas and the Upanishads, such as सत्यं वद धर्मम् चर स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः *satyam vada dharmam cara svādhyāyāt mā pramadaḥ*, यज्ञ कर्मस *yajña karmas*, दान कर्मस *dāna karmas*, तपस् कर्मस *tapas karmas*, etc., including all of one's obligatory duties, duties to oneself, one's family, one's profession, and duties to the public at large, all such कर्मस *karmas* are नियत कर्मस *niyata karmas*, कर्मस *karmas* mandated by परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. As we have already seen, for a कर्म योगी *karma yogī*, all कर्मस *karmas* which come to him by virtue of his circumstances in life, are only नियत कर्मस *niyata karmas*, ईश्वर कर्मस *īśvara karmas*. There is no other कर्म



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karma for a कर्म योगी *karma yogī*. With respect to such नियत कर्म *niyata karmas*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

सङ्गरहितं कृतम् कर्म *saṅgarahitaṁ kṛtam karma* - when the कर्म *karma* is done with no trace of

मम बुद्धि *mama buddhi* - egoistic notion, that "I am the doer of कर्म *karma*", which means the कर्म *karm* is done just because it is to be done - that is all about it - that is the attitude governing one's action. Further

अरागद्वेषतः कृतम् कर्म *arāgadveṣataḥ kṛtam karma* - when the कर्म *karma* is done without being impelled by one's forces of likes and dislikes

कृतम् कर्म *kṛtam karma* - further, when the कर्म *karma* is done without any binding desire, craving or expectation for gaining any कर्मफल *karma phala* - any fruit of action, such as पुण्य *puṇya*, health, wealth, power, etc., which means, when the कर्म *karma* is totally done with कर्म योग बुद्धि *karma yoga buddhi* and ईश्वर प्रसाद बुद्धि *īśvara prasāda buddhi*, then

तत् कर्म सात्त्विकं उच्यते *tat karma sāttvikaṁ ucyate* - That कर्म *karma* is called सात्त्विक कर्म *sāttvika karma* - कर्म *karma* born of सत्त्व गुण *sāttva guṇa*.

There is something very important to note here. Whether the कर्म *karma* is सात्त्विक कर्म *sāttvika karma* or not, does not depend on the कर्म *karma* itself. It depends on one's गुण *guṇa* governing the कर्म *karma*. In the matter of कर्म *karma* itself, there is nothing superior or inferior, but in the matter of one's गुण *guṇa*, there is indeed something superior and something inferior. सत्त्व गुण *sattva guṇa* is superior, तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* is inferior and राजस गुण *rājas guṇa* is somewhere in between.

Now about राजस कर्म *rājas karma*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।

yattu kamepsunā karma sāhaṅkāreṇa vā punaḥ ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तत् राजसं उदाहृतं ॥

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kriyate bahulāyāsaṁ tat rājasam udāhṛtam ॥



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पुनः punah - Again

यत् कर्म कामेप्सुना कर्म क्रियते yat karma kamepsunā karma kriyate - On the other hand

That कर्म karma, That नियतं कर्म niyatam karma or any कर्म karma which is done by one desiring, expecting or craving for some कर्मफल karma phala - fruit of action, and hence

साहंकारेण क्रियते कर्म sāhaṅkāreṇa kriyate karma - that कर्म karma which is done with अहंकार बुद्धि ahaṅkāra buddhi - with a sense of pride and arrogance in being the कर्ता kartā of the कर्म karma - doer of the action, which is expected to yield the desired result, and hence again

बहुलायासं क्रियते कर्म bahulāyāsaṁ kriyate karma - that कर्म karma which is done with lots of effort and emotion, energy, etc. because of one's intense desire and anxiety to gain the expected fruit of action

तत् कर्म राजसं उदाहृतं tat karma rājasam udāhṛtaṁ - that कर्म karma is called राजस कर्म rājasa karma, कर्म karma born of राजस गुण rājasa guṇa

That कर्म karma which is done by one desiring, expecting and craving for some कर्मफल karma phala - fruit of action, and hence done with lots of pride and arrogance in being the doer of the कर्म karma, which is expected to yield the desired कर्मफल karma phala, and because of such expectation, doing that कर्म karma with the intense effort and energy and emotion in one's anxiety to gain that कर्मफल karma phala - that कर्म karma is called राजस कर्म rājas karma - कर्म karma born of राजस गुण rājas guṇa.

Now about तामस् कर्म tāmas karma, भगवान् bhagavān says:

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसां अनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।

anubandham kṣayam himsām anapekṣya ca pauruṣam ।

मोहात् आरभ्यते कर्म यत् तत् तामसं उच्यते ॥ 18 - 25

mohāt ārabhyate karma yat tat tāmasaṁ ucyate ॥



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

यत् कर्म मोहात् आरभ्यते *yat karma mohāt ārabhyate* - That कर्म *karma* which is begun, which is initiated from मोह *moha* - delusory thinking, which means stupid, erroneous, misleading, self-deceiving and self-destroying thinking

अनपेक्ष्य *anapekṣya* - not taking into consideration

अनुबन्धं *anubandham* - the inevitable consequences of such कर्म *karma*

क्षयं *kṣayam* - the potential losses involved in such कर्म *karma* - losses such as those of resources, credibility, character, etc.

हिंसां *himsām* - how that कर्म *karma* might hurt others, and

पौरुषं *pauruṣam* - one's own personal ability and limitations to do the कर्म *karma*

यत् कर्म मोहात् आरभ्यते *yat karma mohāt ārabhyate* - That कर्म *karma* which is begun, which is initiated from such delusory thinking

तत् कर्म तामसं उच्यते *tat karma tāmasam ucyate* - That कर्म *karma* is called तामस कर्म *tāmas karma*, कर्म *karma* born of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*.

Such तामस कर्म *tāmas karma* must always be avoided.

भगवान् *bhagavān* next talks about कर्ता *kartā* - the doer of कर्म *karma*, which we will see next time.