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श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

चतुर्थोऽध्यायः - ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगः

caturtho 'dhyāyaḥ - jñāna karma sanyāsa yogaḥ

Chapter 4

Volume 3

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुण कर्म विभागशः ।

cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ ।

तस्य कर्तारं अपि मां विद्धि अकर्तारं अव्ययम् ॥ 4 - 13

tasya kartāraṁ api mām viddhi akartāraṁ avyayam ॥

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्म फले स्पृहा ।

na mām karmāṇi limpanti na me karma phale sprhā ।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिः न स बध्यते ॥ 4 - 14

iti mām yo'bhijānāti karmabhiḥ na sa badhyate ॥

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म, पूर्वं रपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

evam jñātvā kṛtam karma, pūrvai rapi mumukṣubhiḥ ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं, पूर्वं: पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ 4 - 15

kuru karmaivata smāttvaṁ, pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam ॥

As we may recall, Sri Krishna said earlier:

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तान् तथैव भजाम्यहं ।

ye yathā mām prapadyante tān tathaiva bhajāmyaham ।

मम वर्त्म अनुवर्तन्ते, मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

mama vartma anuvartante, manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ ॥

In whatever manner, in whatever form, with whatever motive, to whatever extent people worship ME – the परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, I bless them exactly in the same manner, and precisely to the same extent.

Further, people, whatever be their kind, whatever be their goals in life from time to time, in whatever way they worship me, the परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, to achieve their goals, all of them, so long as they follow the path of धर्म *dharma* - the path of duty, propriety



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and gratitude, they are really living a life of मम वर्त्म *mama vartma* - meaning मम धर्म *mama dharma* - my धर्म *dharma* - the परमेश्वर धर्म *parameshvar dharma* - the way of life ordained by ME the परमेश्वर *parameshvar*, for the welfare and progress of the entire human society, which means, the परमेश्वर धर्म *parameshvar dharma* in its entirety, is assured of progress towards श्रेयस् *śreyas* - the परम पुरुषार्थ *parama puruṣārtha* - the Highest Goal of Life - total fulfillment in life, naturally.

Now, what is this मम वर्त्म *mama vartma* - the परमेश्वर धर्म *parameshvar dharma* - the natural order of life that भगवान् *bhagavān* refers to here? That मम वर्त्म *mama vartma* - the परमेश्वर धर्म *parameshvar dharma* is the universal वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharma*, the वर्णाश्रम धर्म *varṇāśrama dharma*, the सनातन धर्म *sanātana dharma* - in the integrated social organization and community life of the ancient Vedic society. Referring to this वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharma*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं, गुण कर्म विभागशः ।

cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam, guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ ।

तस्य कर्तारं अपि मां, विद्धि अकर्तारं अव्ययम् ॥ 4 - 13

tasya kartāraṁ api mām, vidhhi akartāraṁ avyayam ॥

In this verse, Sri Krishna refers to the four fold कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāga* - natural occupational divisions, in the integrated community life of the ancient Vedic society, which is popularly known in the present day world as the four major caste divisions in the Hindu Society.

References to caste divisions in the Vedas and the Upanishads are widely misunderstood, and often, very effectively exploited by various groups and organizations for their own ends. Consequently, the existence of caste divisions in Hindu Society is often looked upon either defensively or resentfully, even by the well-meaning intelligentsia of the modern Hindu Society.

There is absolutely no reason, either to be defensive, or to be resentful about the concept of वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharma* - caste divisions in the organization of community life in human society, because, it is both natural and universally valid for all times, if only it is properly understood and properly practiced in its entirety, totally in accordance with धर्म *dharma*.



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Having said that, it must be pointed out clearly and emphatically, that references to वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharmā* - caste divisions in our Vedas and the Upanishads, do not, in any way, justify or condone the improprieties, injustices, malpractices and sectarian loyalties which have crept widely and deeply into all levels of our social fabric under the name of caste divisions and sub-caste divisions.

Whatever spiritual and social degradations and their consequences in worldly life that we see in our society today, arise directly from ignorance and indifference to our scriptures and their teachings, such ignorance and indifference being cultivated, knowingly or unknowingly by generations of Hindu population in spite of the many isolated appearances of महात्माs *mahātmās*, ईश्वर भक्तs *īśvar bhaktas*, distinguished आचार्यs *ācāryas*, गुरुs *gurus* and teachers from time to time.

Why is this so? What is it that one can do - one must do, to arrest the continuing degradations in our society as a whole? This question should be a matter for serious thought for every educated Hindu who cares.

In any case, in terms of भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā*, it is important for us to understand and appreciate the true nature and significance of वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharmā* in the light of Upanishadic knowledge, to educate ourselves spiritually, and at the same time to dedicate, and rededicate ourselves to the service of our society, and indeed the entire humanity, including oneself. Let us now see briefly what भगवान् *bhagavān* says here:

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुण कर्म विभागशः ।

cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ ।

चातुर्वर्ण्यं *cāturvarṇyam* - There are four वर्णs *varṇas* -four broad groups of people in human society. These groups are not man-made. They are, Sri Krishna says,

मया सृष्टं *mayā sṛṣṭam* - created by ME, the परमेश्वर *parameśvar* - which means the existence of these four वर्णs *varṇas* is natural to human society.

As we all know, in the ancient Vedic society, and so it is today, at least by name in the Hindu society, these four वर्णs *varṇas* go by the names ब्राह्मणाs *brāhmaṇās*, क्षत्रियs *kṣatriyas*, वैश्यs *vaiśyas* and शूद्रs *śūdras*. What is the basis for the existence of these four वर्णs *varṇas* in human society? भगवान् *bhagavān* says:



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गुण कर्म विभागः: *guṇa karma vibhāgaśah* - Each वर्ण *varṇa* - each group is a विभाग *vibhāga* (भाग *bhāga* means division, विभाग *vibhāga* means a natural division, not man made division). Each वर्ण *varṇa* is a natural division. What kind of division? There are two factors governing this natural division. They are गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāg* and कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāg*.

गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāg* is division based on one's स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇas* - natural mental disposition, quality of one's mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, and कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāg* is the division based on one's duty in the society. In Vedic society, these were duties carried out by each family from generation to generation, by choice, but nobody is bound to any कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāg*.

One is born in a particular family by virtue of one's गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa* at the time of birth. After birth, the स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa* of the person continues to change and the person naturally takes up such duties in the society to which one is qualified by virtue of one's गुण *guṇas* from time to time. Whatever be the person's occupation from time to time, the entire human society functionally operates under the four वर्ण *varṇas*, whether or not these वर्ण *varṇas* are called by any particular name, in any particular society.

Sri Krishna talks about गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāg* and कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāg* in detail in chapters 14 and 18 respectively, which we will see later. Let us now consider the four वर्ण *varṇas* from the point of view of गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* - one's mental disposition, governed by one's स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa*. The स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa* of a person is a mixture of सत्व गुण *satva guṇa*, रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*.

- ✓ सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* - accounts for a person's natural ability to think properly, discriminate, judge and acquire knowledge of all kinds, both objective knowledge and spiritual knowledge.
- ✓ रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* - accounts for a person's ability to act with vigor, leadership, heroism and generosity.
- ✓ तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* - accounts for a person's ability to remain inert, ignorant and insensitive.



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Every person has naturally all these three गुणs *guṇas* to different extents. The precise texture of one's स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa* changes continuously, due to the ever-changing गुण-गुण *guṇa-guṇa* interactions. Depending on the relative predominance of each one of these three गुणs *guṇas* in one's mental make-up, four broad groups of people are possible in human society.

In the first group are people in whom सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* is predominant and it is strongly complemented by रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*; तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* in them is relatively weak and powerless. The people who have this combination of गुणs *guṇas* are said to have ब्राह्मण गुण *brāhmaṇa guṇa*.

In the second group are people in whom रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* is predominant and it is strongly complemented by सत्व गुण *satva guṇa*. Again, तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* in them is relatively weak and powerless. The people who have this combination of गुणs *guṇas* are said to have क्षत्रिय गुण *kṣatriya guṇa*.

In the third group are people in whom, again रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* is predominant, but it is strongly complemented by तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* in them is relatively weak and powerless. The people who have this combination of गुणs *guṇas* are said to have वैश्य गुण *vaiśya guṇa*.

In the fourth group are people in whom तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, is predominant and it is strongly complemented by रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*. Again सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* in them is relatively weak and powerless. The people who have this combination of गुणs *guṇas* are said to have शूद्र गुण *śūdra guṇa*.

Since सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, are mutually opposed to each other, there cannot be a group of people in whom सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, complement each other. Thus there are, and there can only be, four groups of people - four वर्ण गुणs *varṇa guṇas*, based on combinations of सत्व *satva*, रजस् *rajas* and तमस् गुणs *tamas guṇa*, and within each group, there can be, and there are, infinite shades and variations.



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Let us now consider the four वर्णस *varṇas* from the point of view of कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāga* - natural division of duties in the Vedic society. Corresponding to each गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, there is also a कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāga*, natural division of duties in the society.

The ब्राह्मण गुण *brāhmaṇa guṇa* is particularly needed and appropriate for कर्मस *karmas* which demand strict mental and physical discipline, total commitment to सत्यं *satyaṁ* and धर्म *dharma* in daily life, together with the diligent pursuit of both objective knowledge and ब्रह्मविद्या *brahma vidyā* knowledge, and serving society in teaching and practice of such knowledge in the society. Those who are fit for such and related कर्मस *karmas*, and who carry on such duties properly and effectively in the society, are called ब्राह्मणास *brāhmaṇās*.

The क्षत्रिय गुण *kṣatriya guṇa* is particularly needed and appropriate for कर्मस *karmas* which demand heroism, vigor, firmness, military prowess, leadership in public life, maintenance of law and order, and protection of the weak and the disadvantaged in the society. Those people who are fit for such and related कर्मस *karmas* and who carry on such duties properly and effectively in the society are called क्षत्रियस *kṣatriyas*.

The वैश्य गुण *vaiśya guṇa* is particularly needed and appropriate for producing wealth and material prosperity for the society through agriculture, industry, trade and commerce. Those people who are fit for such and related कर्मस *karmas*, and who carry on such duties properly and effectively in the society are called वैश्यस *vaiśyas*.

The शूद्र गुण *śūdra guṇa* is particularly needed and appropriate for कर्मस *karmas* demanding physical labor and also for कर्मस *karmas* involved in all kinds of support services in every occupational group. Those people who are fit for such and related कर्मस *karmas*, and who carry on such duties properly and effectively in the society are called शूद्रस *śūdras*.

When the गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* among people is properly aligned with the कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāga* in the society, धर्म *dharma* prevails in the society and the society as a whole prospers. When this alignment breaks, the society as a whole also



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disintegrates, giving rise to all kinds of अधर्म *adharmā* - social improprieties and degradations.

We must understand that with respect to कर्म *karma* - duties in the society, there is nothing superior or inferior. All duties, the ब्राह्मण कर्म *brāhmaṇa karma*, the क्षत्रिय कर्म *kṣatriya karma*, the वैश्य कर्म *vaiśya karma* and the शूद्र कर्म *śūdra karma* - all are equally important for the harmony, progress and the welfare of the society as a whole. Every कर्म *karma* well done in accordance with धर्म *dharma* is a manifestation of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Popular notions on the perceived superiority or inferiority with respect to the above duties in the society arise only from ignorance, arrogance, and a false sense of exclusiveness. In every occupational group there are always people having predominantly ब्राह्मण गुण *brāhmaṇa guṇa*, क्षत्रिय गुण *kṣatriya guṇa*, वैश्य गुण *vaiśya guṇa* or शूद्र गुण *śūdra guṇa*. That being the case, there is never any exclusiveness, either with respect to गुण *guṇa* or कर्म *karma*.

Whatever be one's mental make-up from time to time, and whatever be one's choice of duties in the society, every person is a mixture of ब्राह्मण गुण *brāhmaṇa guṇa*, क्षत्रिय गुण *kṣatriya guṇa*, वैश्य गुण *vaiśya guṇa* and शूद्र गुण *śūdra guṇa*, each combination of गुण *guṇas* manifesting itself in different ways at different times, in every one of one's actions in daily life. By following धर्म *dharma* in everyday life, every one can progress towards greater and greater proportion of सत्व गुण *satva guṇa* in one's mental make-up, and ultimately transcend all the गुण *guṇas*, transcend माया *māyā*, and gain श्रेयस् *śreyas*, and BE ONESELF, the all-inclusive universal self that one really is.

That is the वर्ण धर्म *varṇa dharma* - the मम धर्म *mama dharma* - the परमेश्वर धर्म *parameśvar dharma* - the सनातन धर्म *sanātana dharma* that Sri Krishna talks about in the first line of the verse, namely

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुण कर्म विभागशः ।
cāturvarṇyaṃ mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa karma vibhāgaśaḥ ।

In the next line भगवान् *bhagvān* says:



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तस्य कर्तारं मां विद्धि *tasya kartāraṁ mām viddhi* - Please understand that I, being परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, I am the कर्ता *karta* - I am the Doer, I am the creator of this चातुर्वर्ण्यं *cāturvarṇyaṁ*, these four वर्णसु *varṇas* - these four groups of people in human society. At the same time,

तस्य अकर्तारं अपि मां विद्धि *tasya akatāraṁ api mām viddhi* - I am also अकर्ता *akarta* - I am also NOT the Doer, NOT the creator of this चातुर्वर्ण्यं *cāturvarṇyaṁ* - these four वर्णसु *varṇas* in the human society, and

मां अव्ययं विद्धि *mām avyayam viddhi* - you must understand that I, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* remain actionless, changeless.

Now, what does that mean? How can भगवान् *bhagavān* say that "I am the कर्ता *karta* as well as the अकर्ता *akarta* for these four वर्णसु *varṇas* in human society". We must understand भगवान्'s *bhagavān's* statement here properly.

The existence of the four वर्णसु *varṇas* in human society is not the result of any कर्म *karma* done by भगवान् *bhagavān*. It is not the कर्म फल *karma phala* of any कर्म *karma* done by भगवान् *bhagavān*. भगवान् *bhagavān* ever remains कर्म *karma*-free.

Then how did the four वर्णसु *varṇas* come into existence?

The four वर्णसु *varṇas* arise directly from the very nature of माया *māyā* - the inherent, infinite power of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which माया *māyā* is constituted of the three गुणसु *guṇas* - सत्त्व *satva*, रजस् *rajas* and तमस् *tamas* गुणसु *guṇas*. These three गुणसु *guṇas* and their mutual interactions manifest themselves perceptibly as the four वर्णसु *varṇas* in human society. Thus the immediate कर्ता *kartā* for the four वर्णसु *varṇas* is the माया *māyā* of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* itself. परमेश्वर *parameśvar* ever remains अकर्ता *akartā*.

But then, माया *māyā* has no existence independent of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, while परमेश्वर *parameśvar* exists independent of माया *māyā*, and that makes परमेश्वर *parameśvar* the ultimate source of all that exists in this creation - ईशावास्यं इदं सर्वं *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*.



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Therefore when भगवान् *bhagavān* says "चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं *cāturvarṇya mayā sṛṣṭam*" these four वर्णसु *varṇas* are created by me, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, what is pointed out here is a लक्षण *lakṣaṇa* of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which means the natural existence of the four वर्णसु *varṇas* in the human society is a ईश्वर विभूति *īśvara vabhūti* - is a perceptible glory of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* - as indeed, this entire creation is. This glory of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is to be realized and enjoyed.

That is how ईश्वर *īśvara* is both कर्ता *kartā* as well as अकर्ता *akartā* for the four वर्णसु *varṇas* in the human society.

भगवान् *bhagvān* tells Arjuna - Arjuna, if my statement that I am both the कर्ता as well as the अकर्ता *akartā* for the four वर्णसु *varṇas* in human society appears contradictory to you, this apparent contradiction will vanish naturally when you become mature enough to recognize and gain total identity with परमेश्वर *parameśvar* within yourself. Until that time, all that you have to understand is the true nature of कर्मसु *karmas* with reference to Myself – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति, न मे कर्म फले स्पृहा ।

na mām karmāṇi limpanti, na me karma phale sprhā ।

इति मां योऽभिज्ञानाति, कर्मभिः न स बध्यते ॥

4 - 14

iti mām yo'bhijñānāti, karmabhiḥ na sa badhyate ॥

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति *na mām karmāṇi limpanti* - The सृष्टि कर्मसु *sṛṣṭi karmas* - the कर्मसु *karmas* in this creation, do not touch me at all. They do not taint Me in any way, because there is no notion of Doership in Me.

न मे कर्म फले स्पृहा *na me karma phale sprhā* - consequently, there is no desire in Me for the fruits of सृष्टि कर्मसु *sṛṣṭi karmas*.

I am the Law of all Laws, governing all action in this creation. There is no कर्म *karma* involved on my part. Just as ब्रह्मन् *brahman* - the परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is अनादि *anādi*, beginningless, the माया *māyā* associated with ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is also अनादि *anādi*, beginningless. All जीवसु *jīvas* arise from माया *māyā*. Therefore the जीवसु *jīvas* are also अनादि *anādi* - beginningless. Every जीव *jīva* is endowed with a free will.



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Whatever कर्म *karma* a जीव *jīva* does, for that कर्म *karma*, a कर्म फल *karma phala*, a fruit of action occurs automatically. There is no action, or any partiality involved on my part as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* .

Therefore one's गुण *guṇa* is the result of one's own कर्म *karma*. In this गुण विभाग *guṇa vabhāg* – the nature of one's स्वभाव गुण *svabhāva guṇa* at birth, and its continuing changes, because of the succession of one's कर्मस *karmas* and कर्म फलस *karma phalas*, I remain untouched either by कर्मस *karmas* or the कर्म फलस *karma phalas*, so says Sri Krishna, as परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Therefore, we cannot, and we need not blame परमेश्वर *parameśvar* for our गुणस *guṇas* at any time. They are entirely our own making. We can, and we must, upgrade our गुणस *guṇas* by our own efforts, through कर्म योग *karma yoga*.

Now, if परमेश्वर *parameśvar* can say " Even though I am the कर्ता *kartā* of every happening in this creation, I am untouched by कर्म *karma* and कर्म फल *karma phala* which take place in this creation", then a जीव *jīva* also can say "even though I am the कर्ता *kartā* of all my कर्मस *karmas*, and the भोक्ता *bhokta* - the enjoyer of all my कर्म फलस *karma phalas*, I am also untouched by any of them", if only the जीव *jīva* realizes one's identity with परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself, if only the जीव-ईश्वर ऐक्यं *jīva-īśvara aikyaṁ* is realized by the जीव *jīva* – the individual person. Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

इति मां यः अभिजानाति *iti mām yaḥ abhijānāti* - The one who realizes identity with my true nature, the one who realizes जीव ईश्वर ऐक्यं *jīva īśvara aikyaṁ*
सः कर्मभिः न बध्यते *saḥ karmabhi na badhyate* – that person is not bound by actions. That person is as free as Myself – the परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Thus, what Sri Krishna can say about Himself, any जीव *jīva* - any person, can also say if only the जीव *jīva* realizes identity with परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself.

That is exactly what Sri Krishna said earlier.



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जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यं एवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tatvataḥ ।

त्यत्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म, नैति मां एति सोऽर्जुन ॥

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tyattvā dehaṁ punarjanma, naiti māṁ eti so'rjuna ॥

which we saw last time. Thus भगवान् *bhagavān* tells Arjuna:

Arjuna, this is not something new that I am telling you now. This fact has been known for a long, long time. Even before your present context today, people performed कर्म *karma* as कर्म योग *karma yoga*, and then subsequently gained आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ*, at which time they also recognized, each for oneself, what I am telling you now, namely,

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्म फले स्पृहा *na māṁ karmāṇi limpanti na me karma phale spr̥hā* - actions do not touch me, nor do I have any thirst for कर्म फल *karma phala*. My part is only to be a participant in this creation as ordained by परमेश्वर *parameśvar* - enjoying life in this world, totally dedicating all actions to परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Therefore, O! Arjuna:

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैः अपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

evam jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma pūrvaiḥ api mumukṣubhiḥ ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात् त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥

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kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam pūrvaiḥ pūrvatarāṁ kṛtam ॥

एवं ज्ञात्वा *evam jñātvā* - realizing the true nature of one's own self in this manner, namely, that on gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* one realizes

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति, न मे कर्म फले स्पृहा - इति -

na māṁ karmāṇi limpanti, na me karma phale spr̥hā - iti-

कृतं कर्म पूर्वैः अपि मुमुक्षुभिः *kṛtaṁ karma pūrvaiḥ api mumukṣubhiḥ* - all actions

to be done were done by the freedom seekers - मुमुक्षुभिः *mumukṣubhiḥ* - by the

people committed to the pursuit of मोक्ष *mokṣa*, even in olden times. Having correctly



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understood the nature of कर्म *karma*, as well as the Nature of परमेश्वर *paramēśvar*, people have been following कर्म योग *karma yoga* from ancient times, as the means for gaining श्रेयस् *śreyas*, मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

तस्मात् *tasmāt* - therefore, you can also do likewise, namely

कुरु कर्म त्वं, एव *kuru karma tvam, eva* - Do perform कर्म *karma*, do not try to run away from कर्म *karma*. You must perform whatever कर्म *karma* has come to you as your duty

पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतं *pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam* - just as the Freedom seekers have been doing from ancient times

कर्म योग *karma yoga* is a time tested and proven means for gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* - self-knowledge - Self-realization. As it was pointed out earlier, कर्म योग *karma yoga* is for अन्तःकरण शुद्धि *antaḥ karaṇa śuddhi* - purification of your mind and बुद्धि before gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam*. And after gaining आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānam*, कर्म योग *karma yoga*, is for the welfare of the world, in harmony with all existence. Therefore, कुरु कर्म *kuru karma* - perform कर्म *karma* as कर्म योग *karma yoga* at all times.

The Raja Rishis who ruled the kingdom before you, and the Freedom seekers throughout the ages have been doing कर्तव्यं कर्म *kartavyam karma* - all actions to be done, as कर्म योग *karma yoga*. Therefore, the कर्म योग *karma yoga* that I have been teaching you today, is not anything new. You are a well-born and a well-brought-up क्षत्रिय *kṣatriya*, both by गुण *guṇa* and कर्म *karma*, and you seek श्रेयस् *śreyas* by virtue of your own maturity. कर्म योग *karma yoga* is precisely for you.

Therefore, कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात् त्वं *kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam* - please do perform कर्म *karma* as कर्म योग *karma yoga* and that will ultimately take you to the श्रेयस् *śreyas* - the परम पुरुषार्थ *parama puruṣārtha*, namely the मोक्ष *mokṣa* that you seek. So saying Sri Krishna returns back to the main theme of his teaching, namely कर्म योग *karma yoga*.

Having uplifted Arjuna to a higher plane of listening mood, and recognizing that Arjuna is still having difficulty in understanding the connection between कर्म *karma* and आत्म



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ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ*, Sri Krishna now proceeds to explain the true nature of कर्म *karma*, any कर्म *karma* whatsoever, as it relates to ब्रह्मन् *brahman* - आत्म ज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* - ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānaṁ* for a Freedom seeker. What Sri Krishna says about कर्म *karma* we will see next time.