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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

षष्ठोऽध्यायः - ध्यानयोगः

ṣaṣṭho'dhyāyaḥ - dhyāna yogaḥ

Chapter 6

Volume 1

यं ब्रह्मा वरुणेन्द्र रुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवैः ।

yaṁ brahmā varuṇendra rudra marutaḥ stunvanti divyaiḥ stavaiḥ ।

वेदैः सांगपदक्रमोपनिषदैः गायन्ति यं सामगाः ॥

vedaiḥ sāṅga pada kramopanīṣadaiḥ gāyanti yaṁ sāmagāḥ ॥

ध्यानावस्थित तद्गतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनः ।

dhyānāvasthita tadgatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yoginaḥ ।

यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणाः देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥

yasyāntaṁ na viduḥ surā suragaṇāḥ devāya tasmai namaḥ ॥

हरिः ॐ

harīh om

श्री भगवानुवाच

śrī bhagavān uvāca

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्रिर्न चाक्रियः ॥

6 - 1

sa saṁnyāsī ca yogī ca na nirgrīrṇa chākriyaḥ ॥

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुः योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।

yaṁ saṁnyāsamiti prāhuḥ yogaṁ taṁ viddhi pāṇḍava ।

न हि असंन्यस्तसंकल्पः योगी भवति कश्चन ॥

6 - 2

na hi asaṁnyasta saṁkalpaḥ yogī bhavati kaścana ॥

As we may recall, in the beginning of Chapter 5, Arjuna asks Sri Krishna a simple question "Krishna, you commend both कर्मयोग *karma yoga* and कर्मसंन्यास *karma sanyāsa* at the same time. Now please tell me for sure which one is better for me."



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

The basis for Arjuna's question is obvious. In the context of the accepted norms of Vedic society, a life of कर्मयोग *karma yoga* involves continuous engagement in the worldly activities of daily life, and a life of कर्मसंन्यास *karma sanyāsa* involves progressive withdrawal from all such activities in favour of a more and more intense contemplative life. This being common knowledge, Arjuna's question is, what kind of life would be more appropriate for him, in his present circumstances, to achieve his goal of श्रेयस् *śreyas* or मोक्ष *mokṣa* - Total freedom from every kind of sorrow and distress.

Sri Krishna's answer is direct and brief. He says "Arjuna, both कर्मयोग *karma yoga* and कर्मसंन्यास *karma sanyāsa* are indeed helpful for gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*, but in your particular case, in the state of maturity you are in, right now, for you, कर्मयोग *karma yoga* is far better than कर्मसंन्यास *karma sanyāsa*." Having said that, Sri Krishna does not dwell on Arjuna's question any further at this time. But he uses the opportunity to bring some enlightenment to Arjuna on the subject of संन्यास *sanyāsa* itself, because that is what Arjuna needs in order to gain मोक्ष *mokṣa* that he seeks.

Sri Krishna tells Arjuna "For gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa* what you really need is संन्यास *sanyāsa*, and that is far more than कर्मसंन्यास *karma sanyāsa*. Real संन्यास *sanyāsa* is सर्वकर्म संन्यास *sarva kama sanyāsa* which is possible only through ज्ञानकर्म संन्यास *jñāna karma sanyāsa*". Expanding on this message, Sri Krishna then gives a full discourse on संन्यास *sanyāsa* in terms of ज्ञानकर्म संन्यास *jñāna karma sanyāsa* through ध्यानयोग *dhyāna yoga*.

In the concluding verses of Chapter 5. Sri Krishna gives Arjuna a simple recipe for ध्यानयोग *dhyāna yoga*. He tells Arjuna " Now and then spend a few minutes reflecting on, and absorbing the content of this ध्यानश्लोक *dhyāna śloka* -

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरं ।

bhoktaraṁ yaज्ञā tapasāṁ sarva loka maheśvaraṁ ।

सुहृदं सर्व भूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥

5 - 29

suhṛdaṁ sarva bhūtānāṁ jñātvā māṁ śānti mṛcchati ॥

We saw this ध्यानश्लोक *dhyāna śloka*, in some detail last time. Thus ended Chapter 5.



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

Now, what is Arjuna's response to all that Sri Krishna has been talking about in this last chapter on **संन्यास योग sanyāsa yoga**? Arjuna is still listening. That is his only response. Arjuna, at this moment is quite different from what he was at the beginning of Chapter 2. He has not yet solved his problems, but he has a better command over himself. As Sri Krishna has been giving him this **ध्यानश्लोक dhyānaśloka**:

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां, सर्वलोकमहेश्वरं ।

bhoktaram yañña tapasām, sarva loka maheśvaram ।

सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां, ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥

suhṛdam sarva bhūtānām, jñātvā mām śānti mṛcchati ॥

Arjuna is already in **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga**. When one is in **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga**, one does not talk, one just listens to **परमेश्वर parameśvar**. Arjuna is already in **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga**. How?

- ✓ Sri Krishna is in front of Arjuna
- ✓ Arjuna's eyes are seeing Sri Krishna
- ✓ Arjuna's ears are hearing the voice of Sri Krishna
- ✓ Arjuna's mind is listening to the words of Sri Krishna
- ✓ And Arjuna's **बुद्धि buddhi** is trying to absorb the content of the words of Sri Krishna

And that is **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga**.

- ✓ If your eyes are seeing **परमेश्वर parameśvar** and **परमेश्वर parameśvar** only
- ✓ If your ears are hearing the voice of **परमेश्वर parameśvar** and the voice of **परमेश्वर parameśvar** only
- ✓ If your mind is listening to the words of **परमेश्वर parameśvar** and the words of **परमेश्वर parameśvar** only, and
- ✓ if your **बुद्धि buddhi** is totally engrossed in absorbing the content of the words of **परमेश्वर parameśvar**, then
you are indeed in **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga**. Arjuna is now in **ध्यानयोग dhyāna yoga** in such terms.

While Arjuna is still listening, Sri Krishna returns back to Arjuna's original question regarding **कर्मयोग karma yoga** and **कर्मसंन्यास karma sanyāsa** and says:



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

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

श्री भगवानुवाच

śrī bhagavān uvāca

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च, न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥

6 - 1

sa saṁnyāsī ca yogī ca, na niragnirna cākriyaḥ ॥

Arjuna is still inclined to become a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* in the popular sense of the term. When you find yourself in difficult circumstances, becoming a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* in the popular sense of the term appears to be an easy way out. That is how many people take to the life style of **संन्यास** *sanyāsa*. They struggle long years through disciplines of various kinds to live a life of meaningful contemplation. Some succeed in this process and many do not. That is how our society is even today.

In Arjuna's circumstances, the thought of becoming a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* is particularly appealing to him, and Sri Krishna knows it. Therefore, **भगवान्** *bhagavān* tells Arjuna, "Arjuna, if you really want to be a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī*, be a **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī*, because, **कर्मयोग** *karma yoga* is indeed **कर्मसंन्यास** *karma sanyāsa*". So saying Sri Krishna explains **कर्मयोग** *karma yoga* again.

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं *anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ* - Being not dependent on the fruits of actions

कार्यं कर्म करोति यः *kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ* - the one who does **कर्म** *karma* that must be done as a matter of duty

सः संन्यासी च योगी च *saḥ saṁnyāsī ca yogī ca* - that person is both a **कर्मसंन्यासी** *karma sanyāsī* as well as a **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī*

न निरग्निः न च अक्रियः *na niragni na ca akriyaḥ* - not the one who has given up all rituals, nor the one who has given up one's worldly and social obligations by sheer will.

That is the simple meaning of this first verse.

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं *anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ*

आश्रितः *anāśritaḥ* - means one who has taken recourse to some object external to oneself, one who depends on something external to oneself, for one's happiness,



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

security, etc. Therefore अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं *anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ* means कर्मफलं न आश्रितः *karma phalaṁ na āśritaḥ* - the one who has not taken recourse to the results of कर्म *karma*, the one who is free from the longing or craving for the results of actions.

Whether one expects or not, every कर्म *karma* has a कर्मफल *karma phala*. When that is the case, how can one normally perform an action without having a result in view? Only in the sense of duty alone, such कर्म *karma* is possible. A dutiful action also provides its own result, but you do your duty just because it has to be done, and that is all. Therefore,

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं *anāśritaḥ karma phalaṁ* means being not dependent on, or not craving for, the fruits of action.

कार्यं कर्म करोति यः *kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ* - the one who does कर्म *karma*, not any कर्म *karma* but कार्यं कर्म *kāryaṁ karma* - the कर्म *karma* that must be done as a matter of duty in terms of propriety and gratitude, the one who does that कार्यं कर्म *kāryaṁ karma* without having any sense of dependence on fruits of that action.

कार्यं कर्म *kāryaṁ karma* means कर्तव्यं कर्म *kartavyaṁ karma*, the कर्म *karma* that must be done. What is that कर्म *karma*? For a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī*, this body-mind-intellect assembly is meant for doing only two kinds of कर्म *karma*, namely यज्ञकर्म *yajñakarma* and तपस् कर्म *tapas karma* - भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां *bhoktaraṁ yajña tapasāṁ* as we saw last time.

यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma* is any कर्म *karma* that is done as worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. That कर्म *karma* is simply an expression of gratitude.

Everything in this creation is a miracle. The fact that all of us are assembled here at this moment is a miracle. This miracle gives us an opportunity to uplift ourselves, both individually and collectively. We do पूजाs *pūjās*, भजनs *bhajans*, Havans, etc. All this is यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma*, just to say "Thank you" to भगवान् *bhagavān*, so that we do not forget or misuse our opportunity to uplift ourselves.

Whether we say "Thank You" or not, the sun will still shine, and the rain will still rain. But by saying "Thank You" to भगवान् *bhagavān*, we appreciate the entire creation, we appreciate the Devatas, we appreciate all our ancestors, we realize our identity with all



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

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

of them, and at the same time, we, each one of us, realize our own unique and meaningful place in this creation, each as an active participant in this creation. That is why यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* is so extremely important to our spiritual progress, and that is why the Vedas remind us:

देवपितृकार्याभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यं ॥

deva pitṛ kāryābhyāṁ na pramaditavyaṁ ॥

Never forget, never neglect, the कर्मs *karmas* to be done with respect to Devatas and ancestors. That is यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma*.

तपस् कर्मs *tapas karmas* are धर्मकर्मs *dharma karmas*, the कर्मs *karmas* that one must do as a matter of duty to oneself, one's family, community, society, country and the world at large. As कर्मयोग *karma yoga*, such duties are fulfilling in themselves. When one diligently follows the three Vedic commands

सत्यं वद, धर्मं चर, स्वाध्यायात् मा प्रमदः

satyaṁ vada, dharmāṁ cara, svādhyāyāt mā pramadaḥ

What one's duties are in one's own unique circumstances become clear naturally and spontaneously. Thus the one who does such यज्ञकर्म *yajña karma* and तपस् कर्म *tapas karma* for their own sake, such a person is संन्यासी च योगी च *sanyāsī ca yogī ca* - both a संन्यासी *sanyāsī* as well as a योगी *yogī*.

Now we are talking about संन्यास *sanyāsa* and योग *yoga* as commonly understood in Vedic society. न्यास *nyāsa* means त्याग *tyāga* deliberately making a sacrifice of some kind as a matter of discipline. That is called त्याग *tyāga* or न्यास *nyāsa*.

संयक् न्यास *saṁnyak nyāsa* is संन्यास *sanyāsa*, which means that such a sacrifice is no longer a matter of discipline, but it is natural to the person. Such natural disposition is संन्यास *sanyāsa* - renunciation, which means giving up something naturally. The person does not miss it at all. That is called संन्यास *sanyāsa*. The one who has the disposition of संन्यास *sanyāsa* is a संन्यासी *saṁnyāsī*.

योगी *yogī* means the one who has चित्तसमाधानं *citta samādhanam* - tranquility of mind, peace of mind - again, naturally. By simply doing one's duty with no expectation whatsoever, the योगी *yogī* gains चित्तसमाधानं *citta samādhanam*, peace of mind



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

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

naturally.

Simply because you do your duties diligently does not make you a योगी *yogī*. If you do your duties, it simply means that you are a law-abiding citizen, which you ought to be in the kingdom of परमेश्वर *paramēśvara*. But if you do your duties अनाश्रितः *anāśritaḥ*, without seeking the fruits of your actions, then you are a योगी *yogī*, which means that you are well on your way to total fulfillment in life.

न निरग्निः, न च अक्रियः *na niragni, na ca akriyaḥ*

निरग्निः *niragnih* - means the one who has given up doing the Vedic rituals

अक्रियः *akriyaḥ* - means the one who has given up one's obligatory duties by sheer will. Such people, संन्यासी न, योगी न *sanyāsī na, yogī na*, they are neither संन्यासी *sanyāsīs* nor योगी *yogīs*.

What is said here is this. Giving up ritual or abandoning one's obligatory duties do not constitute renunciation. On the other hand, the one who is in the fullness of action and who is fulfilled by such action itself, that person is indeed not only a संन्यासी *sanyāsīs*, but also a योगी *yogī*.

A कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* does कर्म *karma*, that is obvious. If संन्यास *sanyāsa* means giving up something, how does a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* become a संन्यासी *sanyāsīs*? What is it that a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* gives up so that he may also be called a संन्यासी *sanyāsīs*? The answer is, a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* naturally gives up कर्मफल *karma phala* in thought, word and deed. Such giving up is संन्यास *sanyāsa* - renunciation. Therefore a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* is also a संन्यासी *sanyāsīs*. Sri Krishna gives this answer in the next verse.

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुः योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।

yaṁ sanyāsamiti prāhuḥ yogam taṁ viddhi pāṇḍava ।

न हि असन्यास्त संकल्पो, योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ 6 - 2

na hi asanyāsta saṅkalpo, yogī bhavati kaścana ॥

यं संन्यासं इति प्राहुः *yaṁ sanyāsaṁ iti prāhuḥ* - That which is called संन्यास *sanyāsa* in our scriptures

योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव *yogam taṁ viddhi pāṇḍava* - O! Arjuna, please understand



ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

that that **संन्यास** *sanyāsa* is really identical with **कर्मयोग** *karma yoga*

A **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī* does **कर्म** *karma*, and a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* also does **कर्म** *karma*, even though the actual **कर्म**s *karmas* themselves are of a different nature. A **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī* is engaged in worldly activities, and such activities are of the kind **प्रवृत्ति कर्म** *pravṛtti karma*, such activities are of an ever increasing nature. On the other hand, the activities of a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* are of the nature of **निवृत्ति कर्म**s *nivṛtti karmas*, withdrawal from external activities in favor of more intense mental activity and contemplative life. What kind of **कर्म** *karma* is appropriate for a person at a given time depends entirely on the state of maturity of the person at that time.

The real difference between **कर्मयोग** *karma yoga* and **संन्यास** *sanyāsa* is not with respect to **कर्म** *karma* itself, whatever be its nature. The real difference is with respect to **संकल्प** *saṅkalpa* behind the **कर्म** *karma*, the thought behind the **कर्म** *karma*.

We must understand the word **संकल्प** *saṅkalpa* properly. **संकल्प** *saṅkalpa* refers to the thought that sprouts into your mind, prompting you to action, seeking its fruits. That thought is **संकल्प** *saṅkalpa*, which is always subject to change. You may entertain a thought at this moment and you may also be able to release yourself from that thought the next moment, provided that the thought has not yet gotten rooted in your mind, as a desire for something outside of yourself.

Both the **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī* and the **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* renounce something. The difference between them lies in what they renounce. A **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī* renounces **कर्मफल** *karma phala* - the fruit of action. Therefore a **कर्मयोगी** *karma yogī* is a **कर्मफल संन्यासी** *karma phala sanyāsī*. On the other hand, a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* renounces the very thought of action itself. He renounces the very **संकल्प** *saṅkalpa* of **कर्म** *karma*. Therefore a **संन्यासी** *sanyāsī* is a **कर्मसंकल्प संन्यासी** *karma saṅkalpa sanyāsī*. When one renounces even the thought of an action, there is no question about the fruit of action, it stands renounced automatically.

When **कर्मयोग** *karma yoga* and **संन्यास** *sanyāsa* merge in each other, all actions and results of actions belong only to **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*, and the individual is only an instrument serving the will of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar* **for the welfare of all beings.**



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

Thus the more one becomes a संकल्प संन्यासी *saṅkalpa sanyāsī*, the more one matures into a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī*. Without संकल्प संन्यास *saṅkalpa sanyāsa*, maturity in कर्मयोग *karma yoga* is not possible - so says Sri Krishna.

न हि असंन्यस्त संकल्पः योगी भवति कश्चन
na hī asaṅnyasta saṅkalpaḥ yogī bhavati kaścana

हि *hī* - Indeed, certainly

असंन्यस्त संकल्पः *asaṅnyasta saṅkalpaḥ* - without the renunciation of कर्म संकल्प *karma saṅkalpa*, without the renunciation of the very thought of being the doer of an action

न योगी भवति कश्चन *na yogī bhavati kaścana* - nobody really matures in कर्मयोग *karma yoga*, nobody becomes a natural कर्मयोगी *karma yogī*

Sri Krishna tells here something very important: One does not mature in कर्मयोग *karma yoga* simply by being a कर्मफल संन्यासी *karma phala sanyāsī* - simply by giving up desire for fruits of actions. One matures in कर्मयोग *karma yoga* only when one gives up the very संकल्प *saṅkalpa* of a कर्म *karma*, the very thought of being the doer of a कर्म *karma*.

Therefore, in the sequence of events, first one must be a कर्मयोगी *karma yogī* in the sense of कर्मफल संन्यास *karma phala sanyāsa* and then one must mature into कर्मयोग *karma yoga* in the sense of कर्मसंकल्प संन्यास *karma saṅkalpa sanyāsa*. It is this later maturity in कर्मयोग *karma yoga*, in the sense of कर्म संकल्प संन्यास *karma saṅkalpa sanyāsa* which is called संन्यास *sanyāsa* in our scriptures, and such संन्यास *sanyāsa* is possible only through कर्मयोग *karma yoga* and ध्यानयोग *dhyāna yoga*, inseparably together.

Thus Sri Krishna combines कर्मयोग *karma yoga* and संन्यास *sanyāsa* in a beautiful way, through ध्यानयोग *dhyāna yoga*, which is the subject matter of this chapter. Now the discourse on ध्यानयोग *dhyāna yoga* begins, which we will see next time.