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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

सप्तमोऽध्यायः - ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगः

saptamo'dhyāyaḥ - jñāna vijñāna yogaḥ

Chapter 7

Volume 5

बहूनां जन्मनां अन्ते, ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते ।

bahūnām janmanām ante - jñānavān mām prapadyate ।

वासुदेवः सर्वं इति, स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥

7-19

vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti - sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ ॥

कामैः तैः तैः हृतज्ञानः, प्रपद्यन्ते अन्यदेवताः ।

kāmaiḥ taiḥ taiḥ hr̥tajñānaḥ - prapadyante' anya devatāḥ ।

तं तं नियमं आस्थाय, प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥

7-20

taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya - prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā ॥

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः, श्रद्धया अर्चितुं इच्छति ।

yo yo yām yām tanuṁ bhaktaḥ - śraddha ārcitum icchati ।

तस्य तस्य अचलां श्रद्धां, तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥

7-21

tasya tasya acalām śraddhām - tāmeva vidadhāmyaham ॥

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तः, तस्य आराधनं ईहते ।

sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ - tasya ārādhanam ihate ।

लभते च ततः कामान्, मयैव विहितान् हि तान् ॥

7-22

labhate ca tataḥ kāmān - mayaiva vihitān hi tān ॥

As we saw last time, ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvar bhakti* in its mature state is एक भक्ति *eka bhakti*, अनन्य भक्ति *ananya bhakti*, परम प्रेम स्वरूप भक्ति *param prem svarūp bhakti*, पूर्ण ईश्वर भक्ति *pūrṇa īśvar bhakti* - uncontaminated, undistracted, absolute and total Love and Devotion for परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānam* in its mature state is ब्रह्मवित् ब्रह्मज्ञानं *brahmavit brahma jñānam* - Realized Knowledge of सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म ज्ञानं *satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ brahama jñānam*, पूर्ण अदः पूर्ण इदं ज्ञानं *pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṁ jñānam*, अपरोक्ष पुरुषोत्तम ज्ञानं *aparokṣa puruṣottama jñānam*.



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It is direct and immediate recognition of आत्मा *ātmā* – The ब्रह्मन् *brahman* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself as ONESELF Itself, and also the SELF of all existence in this creation and beyond this creation. Such सर्वात्मक ब्रह्मज्ञानं *sarvātmaka brahma jñānaṁ* is पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं *pūrṇa īśvara jñānaṁ*.

Such ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvar bhakti* and such ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānaṁ* are indeed identical, in the sense that only when there is पूर्ण ईश्वर भक्ति *pūrṇa īśvara bhakti*, पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं *pūrṇa īśvar jñānaṁ* is possible, and only when there is पूर्ण ईश्वर ज्ञानं *pūrṇa īśvar jñānaṁ*, पूर्ण ईश्वर भक्ति *pūrṇa īśvara bhakti* is possible. Wherever there is natural fusion of ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvar bhakti* and ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānaṁ*, as indicated above, there is natural ईश्वर शरणागति *īśvara śaraṇāgati* – which means total disappearance of अहंकार *ahaṁkāra* – ego, in oneself.

That State of ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvar bhakti*, ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānaṁ*, ईश्वर शरणागति *īśvara śaraṇāgati* is the Nature of भक्ति *bhakti* of a ज्ञानी *jñānī*. At That State of भक्ति *bhakti*, the ज्ञानी *jñānī* is ONE with परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which means there is no distinction between a ज्ञानी *jñānī* and परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, even though the ज्ञानी *jñānī* may still remain in the form and name of a human being while the प्रारब्ध कर्म's *praarabdha karmas* are getting exhausted through a कर्म योग *karma yoga* way of life. Now, when does an ईश्वर भक्त *īśvar bhakta* – a Devotee, reach the state of a ज्ञानी *jñānī* ? भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

बहूनां जन्मनां अन्ते ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते ।

bahūnām janmanām ante - jñānavān mām prapadyate ।

वासुदेवः सर्वं इति, स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥

7-19

vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti - sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ ॥

बहूनां जन्मनां अन्ते *bahūnām janmanām ante* – After passing through many जन्म's *janmas* – many life-times cultivating God-consciousness. It is only after going through a number of life-times, wherein one has cultivated one's भक्ति *bhakti* to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* through ज्ञानार्थ संस्कार आश्रय *jñānārtha saṁskāra āśraya*, meaning, through कर्म's *karmas*



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conductive to gaining ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* and ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānaṁ*, such as ईश्वर ध्यानं *īśvara dhyānaṁ*, ईश्वर कैङ्कर्यं *īśvar kainkaryam*, ईश्वर अर्पणं *īśvara arpaṇam*, ईश्वर भजनं *īśvara bhajanaṁ*, etc., all of which are conducive to cultivating ईश्वर भक्ति *īśvara bhakti* and ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānaṁ*.

Therefore, बहूनां जन्मनां अन्ते *bahūnāṁ janmanām ante* means, after passing through a series of life-times in which one has acquired the necessary physical and mental disposition to commit oneself to the pursuit of ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānaṁ* ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते *jñānavān mām prapadyate* – the ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* – the one who has परिपाक ईश्वर ज्ञानं *paripāka īśvara jñānaṁ* – the one who has a clear vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, free from doubts, vagueness and mental obstructions, such a ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* मां *jñānavān mām* (परमेश्वरं *parameśvaram*) प्रपद्यते *prapadyate* – seeks ME, approaches ME, and reaches ME – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* here is वासुदेव *vāsudeva* which is another name for Sri Krishna. Here the name वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is used in a literal sense. वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is ONE who is both वासु *vāsu* and देव *deva*. वासु *vāsu* means सर्वेषु भूतेषु वसति इति वासु *sarveṣu bhūteṣu vasati iti vāsu* – the ONE who abides in the heart of every being.

असौ देवः च वासुदेवः *asau devaḥ ca vāsudevaḥ* – That वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is स्वप्रकाशः *svaprakāśaḥ* – Self-effulgent. Thus, वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is प्रत्यग आत्मा *pratyaga ātmā* – The आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self which lights up, and unfolds the nature of oneself as well as others.

Ordinarily, a light lights up only objects. The स्वप्रकाश आत्मा *svaprakāśa ātmā*, The प्रत्यग आत्मा *pratyaga ātmā* – The वासुदेव *vāsudeva*, lights up, reveals, both the subject as well as the objects, the subject being ONESELF – The ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, and the object being all its माया *māyā*-powered मिथ्या *mithyā* manifestations in the cycle of creation.

The ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* who has a clear and unobstructed vision of such प्रत्यग आत्मा वासुदेव *pratyaga ātmā vāsudeva* मां प्रपद्यते *mām prapadyate* seeks, approaches and reaches ME, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.



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How does the ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* – reach परमेश्वर *parameśvar*? Reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar* means what? The ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* reaches परमेश्वर *parameśvar* by recognizing वासुदेवः सर्वं इति *vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti*. वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is Everything. वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is All. That प्रत्यग आत्मा वासुदेव *pratyaga ātmā vāsudeva* is पूर्ण अदः पूर्ण इदं *pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṁ*. That वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is the content of “I” and also anything and everything in this creation.

Thus, reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is recognizing The ONENESS in everything that exists; recognizing the सर्वात्म भाव *sarvātma bhāva* of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is The SELF of all that exists. The one who recognizes वासुदेव *vāsudeva* in that manner,

सः महात्मा *mahātmā* – That ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* is indeed a महात्मा *mahātmā*. A महात्मा *mahātmā* is one who recognizes आत्मा *ātmā* as ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, one who recognizes ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in oneself. Thus a ब्रह्मचित् *brahmavit* is a महात्मा *mahātmā*.

सः महात्मा सुदुर्लभः *saḥ mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ* – Such a महात्मा *mahātmā* is very rare to find. It is very difficult to find such a Self-Realized ज्ञानवान् *jñānavān* – such a महात्मा *mahātmā*.

Why is it so difficult for an ईश्वर भक्त *īśvara bhakta* to recognize वासुदेवः सर्वम् इति *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti* – वासुदेव *vāsudeva* is everything? The difficulty is not in the knowledge itself. The difficulty is in gaining अन्तःकरण शुद्धि *antaḥ karaṇa śuddhi* – in overcoming one's own internal forces of obstruction to gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*. Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

कामैः तैः तैः हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्ते अन्यदेवताः ।

kāmaiḥ taiḥ taiḥ hṛtajñānaḥ - prapadyante' anya devatāḥ |

तं तं नियमं आस्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥

7-20

taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya - prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā ||

तैः तैः कामैः *taiḥ taiḥ kāmaiḥ* – Each in one's own way, overpowered by the forces of one's own desires



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हृतज्ञानाः *hṛtajñānāḥ* – People have been robbed away of their power of discrimination. People lose their ability to discriminate between **आत्मा** *ātmā* and **अनात्मा** *anātmā* – Self and non-self. People are unable to recognize **आत्मा** *ātmā* as **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*. People are unable to reach **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar* in oneself. Therefore, people feel themselves remote from, separate from, **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*. People have no clear understanding of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*, nor do they understand what they really need. Consequently

प्रपद्यन्ते अन्य देवताः *prapadyante anya devatāḥ* – People approach and seek the Grace of other **देवता**s *devatās*, the **अधिष्ठान देवता**s *adhiṣṭhāna devatās*, seeking fulfillment of their desires.

The Presiding Deities responsible for different specific and limited aspects of Life and Nature are called **अधिष्ठान देवता**s *adhiṣṭhāna devatās*. They are countless in number, each endowed with limited powers over specific aspects of Life and Nature. The function of each **अधिष्ठान देवता** *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* is only to maintain The Eternal Order under The Law of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*. We may recall here the Vedic quotation from the Taittiriya Upanishad, which says:

भीषास्माद्वातः पवते । भीषोदेति सूर्यः ।

bhīṣāsmādvātaḥ pavate | bhīṣodeti sūryaḥ |

भीषास्मादग्निश्चेन्द्रश्च । मृत्युर्धावति पञ्चम इति । (तै -2-8)

bhīṣāsmādagnīścendraśca | mṛtyurdhāvati pañcama iti |

Because of the Fear of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*, which means under the Unchanging Laws of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*, the wind blows, the sun rises, Agni, Indra and all the other Devtas do their respective jobs unerringly. All natural changes in this creation are taking place spontaneously and unerringly, only according to the never-changing Laws of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*, which are Eternal. To disobey the eternal laws of Nature results in unwelcome consequences, and that is the **भीषा** *bhīṣā* – the Fear, the Upanishad talks about in the above Vedic quotation.

Thus all the **देवता**s *devatās* like **अग्नि** *agni*, **वायु** *vāyu*, **वरुण** *varuṇa*, **इन्द्र** *indra*, etc. and also the many other **देवता**s *devatās* we are familiar with, all of them are not independent of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*. All of them operate only under the lordship of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*. Those who do not understand the nature of **परमेश्वर** *parameśvar*



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parameśvar, look upon the देवताs as the ईश्वर *īśvara* to be worshipped to satisfy the needs of their धर्म *dharma*, अर्थ *artha*, काम *kāma* pursuits. Consequently,

प्रपद्यन्ते अन्य देवताः *prapadyante anya devatāḥ* – they approach, they worship other देवताs *devatās* seeking fulfillment of their desires. How do they worship them?

तं तं नियमं आस्थाय *taṁ taṁ niyamaṁ āsthāya* – आस्थाय *āsthāya* – following

तं तं नियमं *taṁ taṁ niyamaṁ* the stipulated prayers and rituals appropriate for the particular objects to be achieved.

There are prescribed forms of prayers, rituals etc. to approach and seek the Grace of specific देवताs *devatās* for gaining specific objects of their desire. One can gain the same objects of desire by worshipping with श्रद्धा *śraddhā* and भक्ति *bhakti*, any इष्ट देवता *iṣṭa devatā* in any Form and name. When that is the case, why does one choose a particular देवता *devatā* and a particular form of worship to get what one wants? That is because,

प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया *prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā* – people are impelled by their own innate tendencies and mental dispositions, established through their own previous संस्काराs *saṁskārās* – previous experiences of such worship either in this or in their past lives.

Thus, robbed of their विवेक बुद्धि *vivek buddhi* – power of आत्म-अनात्म *ātma-anātmā* discrimination – by the forces of their worldly desires, and driven by their particular mental dispositions, people propitiate different देवताs *devatās* through prescribed prayers, rituals etc. in their धर्म *dharma*, अर्थ *artha*, काम *kāma* pursuits. Being content with such pursuits, they do not seek ME – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* – says Sri Krishna.

In the next verse, Sri Krishna says, “in whatever form people worship, in that form, I bless them.”

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धया अर्चितुं इच्छति ।

yo yo yāṁ yāṁ tanuṁ bhaktaḥ - śraddhaya ārcitum icchatī ।

तस्य तस्य अचलां श्रद्धां, तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ 7-21

tasya tasya acalaam śraddhām - tāmeva vidadhāmyaham ॥

यः यः भक्तः *yaḥ yaḥ bhaktaḥ* – Whoever be the भक्त *bhakta* – the Devotee, whether one is in distress seeking help, or one is seeking fulfillment of one’s अर्थ-काम *artha-*



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kāma pursuits, or one is merely seeking clarity of mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* for gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*, whoever be the भक्त *bhakta* यां यां तनुं *yām yām tanuṁ* (तनुं *tanuṁ* means देवता रूपं *devatā rūpaṁ*) what ever be the देवता रूपं *devatā rūpaṁ* – the Form and Name of देवता *devatā* to which one is devoted, primarily or exclusively, श्रद्धया अर्चितुं इच्छति *śraddhayā arcitum icchati* – if the भक्त *bhakta* desires to worship That देवता *devatā* with श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – unqualified faith and devotion तस्य तस्य *tasya tasya*– for that भक्त *bhakta*, for each and every one of them, अहं विदधामि तां श्रद्धां एव *aham vadadhāma tām śraddhām eva* – I make that श्रद्धा *śraddhā* itself – that faith and devotion itself अचलां श्रद्धां *acalām śraddhām* – as unshakable faith and devotion – as unshakable श्रद्धा *śraddhā*. I make their श्रद्धा *śraddhā* more firm. The important thing here is श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – unqualified faith and devotion, not the form and name of the देवता *devatā* invoked in the worship.

Earlier, Sri Krishna said “श्रद्धायान् लभते ज्ञानं *śraddhāvān labhate jñānam* – the one who has श्रद्धा *śraddhā* gains ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*”. In this verse, Sri Krishna says: “whatever श्रद्धा *śraddhā* a भक्त *bhakta* has, I make that श्रद्धा *śraddhā* even more firm for him. How? By being the कर्म फल दाता *karma phala dātā* – by giving the result he seeks through his यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma* done with श्रद्धा *śraddhā*.

A does an appropriate यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma* with श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – unqualified faith and devotion through worship of a देवता *devatā* of his choice and he gets also the कर्म फल *karma phala* – the results he has been seeking. Thereby, his श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – his faith in himself, in his यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma*, and in the देवता *devatā* whose Grace he invokes, all get strengthened. How does that help in gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*?

With continued strengthening of one’s श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – faith and devotion in some देवता *devatā* of one’s own choice, one’s अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* ultimately matures into seeing all forms and all names, including oneself, in That देवता *devatā*, and, such vision of That देवता *devatā* is indeed Vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. That is why Sri Krishna says:



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तस्य तस्य अचलां श्रद्धां तां एव चिदधामि अहं *tasya tasya acalām śraddhām tāṁ eva vidadhāmi ahaṁ* – By being the कर्म फल दाता *karma phala dātā*, I strengthen the श्रद्धा *śraddhā* of everyone, whatever be the Form and Name of the देवता *devatā* one worships.

We must understand the connection between the देवता *devatā* and परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. No देवता *devatā* is separate from परमेश्वर *parameśvar* – but परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is more than the देवताs *devatās*. परमेश्वर *parameśvar* being ONE, every Form being His Form, every Name being His Name, in any Form and any name one worships, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is worshipped. This concept of Worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is ingrained in Vedic culture:

सर्व देव नमस्कारः श्रीकेशवं प्रति गच्छति ॥

sarva deva namaskāraḥ śrī keśavaṁ prati gacchati ॥

All worship of any देवता *devatā* goes towards श्री केशव *śrī keśavaṁ* – The वासुदेव *vāsudeva* – the परमेश्वरः *parameśvarah*. This is part of Basic Vedic Education. We usually remind ourselves this Basic Vedic Teaching during सन्ध्यावन्दनं *sandhyā vandanaṁ*, our daily prayers:

आकाशात् पतितं तोयं यथा गच्छति सागरम् ।

ākāśāt patitaṁ toyaṁ yathā gacchati sāgaram ।

सर्वदेव नमस्कारः श्री केशवं प्रति गच्छति ॥

sarva deva namaskāraḥ śrī keśavaṁ prati gacchati ॥

Just as every drop of rain ultimately reaches the ocean, every prayer to any देवता *devatā* ultimately reaches श्री केशव *śrī keśava* – The वासुदेव *vāsudeva* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is All-वासुदेवः *vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ*. One can worship परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in any form. Any देवता *devatā* – every देवता *devatā* – is only परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. As परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, there is no separation of one देवता *devatā* from any other देवता *devatā*. Then, what is देवता *devatā*? If one looks upon परमेश्वर *parameśvar* through a limited phenomenon in this creation, then परमेश्वर *parameśvar* becomes a देवता *devatā* – a Presiding Deity limited to that phenomenon, with corresponding limited powers.



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For example, SUN - सूर्य *sūrya* is a blessing in this creation. If one looks upon परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as सूर्य *sūrya* then परमेश्वर *parameśvar* becomes सूर्य देवता *sūrya devatā*. Since सूर्य *sūrya* – the SUN is not everything in this creation, by identifying परमेश्वर *parameśvar* with सूर्य देवता *sūrya devatā* one limits परमेश्वर *parameśvar* to a particular phenomenon only in this creation. On the other hand, if one wants to worship सूर्य देवता *sūrya devatā* as परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, then one invokes all Forms, all Names including oneself and all phenomenon, known and unknown, in सूर्य देवता *sūrya devatā*. Then the worship of सूर्य देवता *sūrya devatā* becomes the worship of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

In the absence of such vision of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, each देवता *devatā* becomes different from every other देवता *devatā*, and also remote from oneself, and there would seem to be countless देवताs *devatās*, each with specific and limited powers.

Continuing, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

स तथा श्रद्धया युक्तः, तस्य आराधनं ईहते ।

sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ tasya ārāadhanam ihate ।

लभते च ततः कामान्, मयैव विहितान् हि तान् ॥

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labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vihītān hi tān ॥

सः भक्तः *saḥ bhaktaḥ* - the devotee who worships some इष्ट देवता *iṣṭa devatā* as the Presiding Deity of some aspect of creation, the भक्त *bhakta* who worships such a देवता *devatā* seeking some objects of desire

तथा श्रद्धया युक्तः *tayā śraddhayā yuktaḥ* - supposing that भक्त *bhakta* is endowed with श्रद्धा *śraddha* - faith and devotion already strengthened by ME – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, though his previous संस्कारs *saṁskārs* - through his previous acts of devotion

तस्य आराधनं ईहते *tasya ārāadhanam ihate* - if such a भक्त *bhakta* continues to engage himself in the worship of his इष्ट देवता *iṣṭa devatā*, देवता *devatā* of this choice, appropriately in the pursuit of his desires

ततः कामान् लभते च हि *tataḥ kāmān labhate ca hi* - as a result of his worship, he certainly gains his objects of desire. That is the efficiency of prayer and worship.



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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

How does he gain them? Who gives him his objects of desire? भगवान् *bhagavān* says,

मया एव विहितान् तान् *mayā eva vihitān tān* (कामान् *kāmān*) - he gains those objects of desire as ordained by ME – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

People perform rituals, or offer prayers with श्रद्धा *śraddhā*, and certainly obtain the desired results, but such results are determined by परमेश्वर *parameśvar* only. Whatever be the देवता *devatā* worshipped, the कर्म फल दाता *karma phala dātā* - the ONE who gives the results is only परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. But people think that the results come from the देवता *devatā*, because they do not recognize परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Such thinking really does not matter for the time being. The prayer has given the result, and thereby their श्रद्धा *śraddhā* – faith and devotion becomes even more firm, more strong. Therefore, next time, the prayer will be better, the results also will be better, and their mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* will also get more mature, and their power of discrimination will progressively improve, and such improvement will contribute to their gaining clarity of understanding, leading ultimately to ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*. That is how a श्रद्धायान् लभते ज्ञानं *śraddhāvān labhate jñānam* – one who has श्रद्धा *śraddhā* ultimately gains ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānam*.

For, अविवेकिनः भक्ताः *avivekanah bhaktaḥ* - for those ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvara bhaktas* who are still immature, who do not yet have आत्म विवेक *ātma vivek* – an appreciation of the true nature of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, the worship of an अधिष्ठान देवता *adhiṣṭhāna devatā* – Presiding Deity for gaining one's objects of desire, is nothing more than

अन्तवत् साधन व्यापार *antavat sādhana vyāpār* - a worldly transaction involving a limited means to achieve a limited end.

Sri Krishna elaborates on this message in the next verse, which we will see next time.