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ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता

अष्टमोऽध्यायः - अक्षर ब्रह्म योगः

*aṣṭamo'dhyāyaḥ - akṣara brahma yogaḥ*

Chapter 8

Volume 3

कविं पुराणं अनुशासितारम् अणोः अणीयांसम् अनुस्मरेत् यः ।

*kaviṁ purāṇaṁ anuśāsītāraṁ - anoh aṇīyāṁsam anusmaret yaḥ ।*

सर्वस्य धातारम् अचिन्त्य रूपम् आदित्यवर्णम् तमसः परस्तात् ॥

8 - 9

*sarvasya dhātāraṁ acintya rūpaṁ - āditya varṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt ॥*

प्रयाणकाले मनसा अचलेन भक्त्या युक्तः योगबलेन चैव

*prayāṇakāle manasā acalena - bhaktyā yuktah yoga balena caiva*

भ्रुवोः मध्ये प्राणम् आवेश्य सम्यक् स तं परम् पुरुषम् उपैति दिव्यं ॥

8 - 10

*bhruvoh madhye prāṇaṁ āveśya samyak sa taṁ param puruṣaṁ upaiti divyaṁ ॥*

यत् अक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यत् यतयो वीतरागाः ।

*yat akṣaraṁ vedavidō vadanti viśanti yadyatayo vītarāgāḥ ।*

यत् इच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यम् चरन्ति तत् ते पदम् संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥

8 - 11

*yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti tat te padaṁ saṅgrahaṇa pravakṣye ॥*

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

*sarva dvārāṇi saṁyamya mano hr̥di nirudhya ca ।*

मूर्ध्नि आधाय आत्मनः प्राणम् आस्थितो योगधारणां ॥

8 - 12

*mūrdhni ādhāya atmanaḥ prāṇaṁ āsthito yoga dhāraṇaṁ ॥*

ॐ इति एकाक्षरम् ब्रह्म व्याहरन् मां अनुस्मरन् ।

*om ityi ekākṣaraṁ brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran ।*

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहम् स याति परमां गतिम् ॥

8 - 13

*yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham sa yāti paramām gatim ॥*

As we may recall, in the preceding two verses, Sri Krishna said: Any ईश्वर भक्त *īśvar bhakta* – any Devotee of परमेश्वर *parameśvar* can uplift oneself to become a ज्ञानी *jñānī*, and recognize and enjoy identity with परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself, as ONESELF Itself, in one's own life-time, and also for ever thereafter. The Means for such



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self-upliftment is:

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन, परमेश्वरम् अनुचिन्तयन्, मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः सन्,  
*abhyāsa yoga yuktena, parameśvaram anucintayan, mayyarpita mano buddhih san,*

सर्वेषु कालेषु मां अनुरमरणं कुर्वन्, स्वधर्मं कुर्वन् च,  
भक्तः परमं पुरुषं याति ॥

*sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anuramaṛaṇam kurvan, svadharmam kurvan ca, bhaktaḥ paramam puruṣam yāti ॥*

Cultivating भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* through constant practice of कर्म योग *karma yoga*, ध्यान योग *dhyāna yoga* and बुद्धि योग *buddhi yoga*, contemplating on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma*, सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyam jñānam anantaṁ brahma*, तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं *tat viṣṇoḥ paramam padam* etc., offering one's Mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* totally to परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in thought, word and deed, with the mental disposition of पूर्ण ईश्वर शरणागति *pūrṇa īśvara śaraṇāgati* at all times, and, at the same time performing one's immediate worldly duties as well as one can, at all times, with the attitude of कर्म योग *karma yoga*, यज्ञ कर्म *yajña karma* and प्रसाद बुद्धि *buddhi*, one can uplift oneself to the State of a ज्ञानी *jñānī* – a Self-Realized person, in one's own life time, and experience, realize, and enjoy total identity with That परम पुरुष *parama puruṣa* – The पुरुषोत्तम *puruṣottama* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, abiding in one's own self as Oneself Itself, now while living, and forever thereafter.

Continuing that message, Sri Krishna now describes That परम पुरुष *parama puruṣa* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, through 8 Upanishad pointer-words to facilitate ईश्वर अनुस्मरणं *īśvar anusmaraṇam*, ईश्वर अनुचिन्तनं *īśvar anucintanam*, contemplation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

कविं पुराणं अनुशासितारम् अणोः अणीयांसम् अनुस्मरेत् यः ।

*kaviṁ purāṇam anuśāsītāram anoh aṇīyāṁsam anusmaret yaḥ ।*

सर्वस्य धातारम् अचिन्त्य रूपम् आदित्यवर्णम् तमसः परस्तात् ॥

8 – 9

*sarvasya dhātāram acintya rūpam āditya varṇam tamaśaḥ parastāt ॥*



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The ईश्वर भक्त *īśvar bhakta* – the Devotee of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, who repeatedly contemplates on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, as indicated by these pointer-words, ultimately reaches That परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. That is the Message here.

Now, let us try to understand what exactly Sri Krishna says:

यः अनुस्मरेत् *yaḥ anusmaret* – The one who constantly engages oneself in ईश्वर अनुस्मरणं *īśvar anusmaraṇam* – contemplation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. ईश्वर अनुस्मरणं *īśvar anusmaraṇam* is not necessarily the same as ईश्वर स्मरणं *īśvar smaraṇam*. ईश्वर स्मरणं *īśvar smaraṇam* is just ईश्वर चिन्तनं *īśvar cintanam* – Meditation on ईश्वर *īśvar*, thinking about परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in some Form and Name. ईश्वर अनुस्मरणं *īśvar anusmaraṇam* is ईश्वर अनुचिन्तनं *īśvara anucintanam* – which is Meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* consistent with one's Knowledge of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, gained from Upanishads. Such Meditation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is contemplation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which is really निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam* – absorption and assimilation of ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānam* gained from the Upanishads.

निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam* is always after श्रवणं *śravaṇam* and मननं *mananam*. श्रवणं *śravaṇam* is listening and understanding the words of the Upanishads, and मननं *mananam* is reflection on the content of those words, and gaining a clarity of knowledge on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* beyond doubt. After such श्रवणं *śravaṇam* and मननं *mananam*, comes निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam* – absorption and assimilation of the clearly understood knowledge on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Such निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam* is अनुस्मरणं *anusmaraṇam* or अनुचिन्तनं *anucintanam*.

There is a difference between meditation and contemplation. In meditation, there is usually a distance between the meditator and The ONE meditated upon. That distance vanishes in contemplation. You are what you meditate on – that is contemplation. Therefore, in निदिध्यासनं *nididhyāsanam*, the ईश्वर भक्त *īśvar bhakta* progressively becomes the very embodiment of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Thus Self-Realization, which means recognition of oneself as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself, is a matter of knowledge, and it is not simply an object of thought.



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Simply because I think I am परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, I do not become परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. Likewise, simply because I think I am not परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, I do not become separate from परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. That the **one** All-pervading परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is the innermost Self of oneself and, indeed, the innermost Self of all beings in this creation, is a Fact of Nature which needs to be understood, experienced and recognized, and that is Self-realization. Such Self-realization is possible only through श्रवणं *śravaṇam*, मननं *mananam* and निदिध्यासनं *nīdīdhyāsanam*, which involves कर्म योग *karma yoga*, ध्यान योग *dhyāna yoga* and बुद्धि योग *buddhi yoga* together, which means भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* way of life.

Therefore, यः अनुस्मरेत् *yaḥ anusmaret* means the one who is continuously engaged in भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* at all times. Such a person - परमं पुरुषं याति *paramaṁ puruṣam yāti*, reaches परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, (please note the present tense here), experiences and recognizes his or her identity with परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, gains Self-realization, while still living in this very life.

As an aid to the process of निदिध्यासनं *nīdīdhyāsanam* – contemplation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, Sri Krishna provides here 8 pointers, all of which converge to the same **one** परम पुरुष *param puruṣa* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, to be realized, to be reached by knowledge. These pointers are the लक्षण *lakṣaṇa* – the distinguishing marks of परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, which one can recognize through contemplation on परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, being in भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*.

कविं *kaviṁ* – Ordinarily, कवि *kavi* means a poet. In the Upanishads, कवि *kavi* means क्रान्तदर्शी *krāntadaraśī* – one who is able to see the entire past, present and future in all details, which means सर्वज्ञः *sarvajñaḥ* – **one** who is Omniscient.

पुराणं *purāṇam* – चिरंतनं *cīraṁtanam*, सनातनं *sanātanam*, पुरा अपि न चं *purā apinavaṁ* – eternal, always new as ever before, never subject to change

अनुशासितारम् *anuśāsītāram* means सर्वस्य जगतः प्रशासितारम् *sarvasya jagataḥ praśāsītāram* – The **one** who is the Ordainer of the entire creation, The **one** who is The Law Maker, The Law Wielder and The Law Itself governing the entire universe.

अणोः अणीयांसं *aṇoḥ aṇīyāṁsam*



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सूक्ष्मात् अपि सूक्ष्मतरं *sūkṣmāt api sūkṣmataram* – The **one** who is the more subtle than the most subtle one can think of, which means The **one** who pervades all forms, being Itself free from all forms. Being so, परमेश्वर *parameśvar* has no dimensions. परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is अणोः अणीयान् महतो महीयान् *aṇoḥ aṇīyān mahato mahiyān* (कठ *kaṭha* 2 – 20) – more subtle than the most subtle and at the same time bigger than the biggest. It is Limitless and Infinite in all planes and in all directions.

सर्वस्य धातारं *sarvasya dhātāram*

कर्मफलजातस्य सर्वस्य धातारं विधातार *karma phala jātasya sarvasya dhātāram vidhātāram* – The **one** who gives the appropriate कर्मफल *karma phala* – fruit of action to all people to all beings born of कर्म *karma*.

अचिन्त्य रूपं *acintya rūpam* – The **one** whose form is inconceivable, either by words or by the mind – why?

सर्वात्मक स्वभावात् *sarvātmaka svabhāvāt* – Being the Self of everything there is. What one cannot conceive by the mind can also be non-existent. It is not so with respect to आत्मा *ātmā*. आत्मा *ātmā* is NOT शून्यं *śūnyam*. आत्मा *ātmā* has a नित्य स्वरूप *nitya svarūp* – It has a definite स्वरूप *svarūp* namely सत् चित् आनन्द स्वरूप *sat cit ānand svarūp*. In fact, आत्मा *ātmā* is the only **one** which has a definite स्वरूप *svarūp* which never changes. Every object in this creation is subject to change in time and hence has no definite स्वरूप *svarūp* – a Form of its own. Even though आत्मा *ātmā* is available all the time, as It is, It is available only for recognition by knowledge – by one's बुद्धि *buddhi*. It is not available for objectification.

आदित्य वर्णं *āditya varṇam* – means आदित्य वर्णं इव *āditya varṇam iva*. आदित्य *āditya* is Sun and वर्णं *varṇam* is प्रकाशः *prakāśaḥ*. Like the Sun, which is Self-effulgent, so is आत्मा *ātmā* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*

आदित्यस्य इव नित्य चैतन्य प्रकाशः *ādityasya iva nitya caitanya prakāśaḥ* – Just like the Sun lights up the entire world, आत्मा *ātmā* illumines the entire creation by Its Eternal Awareness, All-Consciousness. But, while the Sun is opposed to darkness, आत्म *ātma* चैतन्यं *caitanya* – Self-awareness, is not opposed to ignorance of Self-knowledge. भगवान् *bhagavān* makes that clear by saying:

तमसः परस्तात् *tamasah parastāt* – **one** who is above ignorance, **one** who is not



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opposed to ignorance but transcends all ignorance. आत्मा *ātmā* is not opposed to ignorance of the Nature of आत्मा *ātmā*. आत्मा *ātmā* being Pure Awareness, illumines both Knowledge and ignorance about anything including oneself.

यः अनुस्मरेत् *yaḥ anusmaret* - The one who contemplates on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* at all times, in the above manner, the one who contemplates on आत्मा *ātmā* - the innermost Self of oneself and of every being, in the above manner at all times.

सः परमं पुरुषं याति *saḥ paramaṁ puruṣaṁ yāti* (from the previous verse) - that person reaches, experiences, recognizes, and realizes परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself, as **oneself** Itself, and indeed as the **self** of every self in this creation.

Up till now, भगवान् *bhagvān* has been talking about ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas* whose commitment is only to gain ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānaṁ* and nothing else, for such ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas*, as explained above, भक्तियोग *bhakti yoga* is the means for reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar* in oneself. Now, भगवान् *bhagavān* goes on to talk about others whose mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, by virtue of their पूर्व जन्म *pūrva janma* (past life) associations, are naturally set into the practice of various योगाभ्यास *yogābhyāsas* - physical and mental exercises, such as प्राणायाम *prāṇāyāma*, आसन *āsana*, समाधि *samādhi*, etc. The ultimate objective of such exercises also is to reach परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Such योग *yoga* exercises, if done properly, give योगबलं *yoga balaṁ*, which is चित्त स्थैर्य *citta sthairyam* - tranquility and firmness of mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* to the individual, which is beneficial in itself. But the योग *yoga* exercises by themselves do not give any ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvar jñānaṁ*, which is necessary for reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, for recognizing परमेश्वर *parameśvar*.

Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* says in the next verse that those who are committed to the various योग *yoga* exercises, can also reach परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, if only they combine their योगबलं *yogabalam* - the strength of योग *yoga* exercises, together with भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*. भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

प्रयाणकाले मनसा अचलेन भक्त्या युक्तः योगबलेन चैव ।





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*prayānakāle manasā acalena - bhaktyā yuktaḥ yogabalena caiva*

भ्रुवोः मध्ये प्राणम् आवेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषं उपैति दिव्यं ॥

8 – 10

*bhruvoḥ madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak - sa taṁ param puruṣam upaiti divyaṁ ॥*

For a person whose अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa* – mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* has remained committed to योग *yoga* exercises throughout most of one's life, his manner of leaving the physical body at the time of death is also a kind of योग *yoga* exercise. Therefore, for such a person, भगवान् *bhagavān* says

प्रयाणकाले *prayānakāle* – At the time of departure from one's physical body, which means at the time of death

योगबलेन *yogabalena* – by virtue of his योगबल *yogabala*, चित्तस्थैर्यं *citta sthairyaṁ* – the tranquility and firmness of अन्तःकरण *antaḥ karaṇa*

भ्रुवोः मध्ये प्राणं आवेश्य सम्यक् *bhruvoḥ madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak* – drawing and placing one's प्राण *prāṇa* – vital air, between the eye-brows, not breathing anymore, but being alert and conscious at the same time (which is his योग *yoga* exercise at this time)

अचलेन मनसा *acalena manasā* – with the mind remaining steady and undisturbed

भक्त्या युक्तः एव *bhaktyā yuktaḥ eva* – only by contemplating on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* through भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga*, which means through ईश्वर अनुस्मरणं *īśvar anusmaraṇam*, अनुचिन्तनं *anucintanaṁ* – being aware of one's identity as परमेश्वर *Itself*, as अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaraṁ brahma*, as सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma*, as तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं *tat viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam*.

सः तं दिव्यं पुरुषं उपैति *saḥ taṁ divyaṁ puruṣam upaiti* – That person reaches That Divine परम पुरुष *parama puruṣa* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* after death (As one thinks at the time of death, so one becomes after death). That means, even those ईश्वर भक्तस *īśvar bhaktas* who have chosen to commit themselves to various forms of योग *yoga* exercises as their Means for reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, can do so only if they have simultaneously cultivated Upanishad Knowledge on परमेश्वर *parameśvar* together with भक्ति योग *bhakti yoga* way of life.



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Next, Sri Krishna talks about ईश्वर भक्तः *īśvar bhaktas* who are committed to various Vedic rituals for their ultimate goal of reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar*. For such people, Sri Krishna prescribes ॐ कार उपासन *omkār upāsana* – contemplation on ॐ शब्द *om śabda* – The Sound OM, as the means for reaching परमेश्वर *parameśvar* at the time of departure from one's body, because of their life-long association with ॐ शब्द *om śabda* in all Vedic rituals.

As we may recall, Sri Krishna has already said "सर्व वेदेषु अहं प्रणवः *sarva vedeṣu ahaṁ praṇavaḥ* (7 – 8) – I am the प्रणव मन्त्र ॐ *praṇava mantra om* in all the Vedas", which means ॐ *om* is शब्द रूप प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन् *śabda rūpa pratyakṣa brahman* – The Sound OM is direct manifestation of ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, the immediately recognizable form of अक्षरं ब्रह्मन् *akṣaram brahman* – सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma* – तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं *tat viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* already in oneself as प्रत्यग आत्मा *pratyaga ātmā* – one's innermost Self I, which is evident for all those who have cultivated Upanishad knowledge on ब्रह्मन् *brahman*.

This is how Sri Krishna introduces ॐ कार उपासन *omkār upāsana* for those who are deeply committed to Vedic rituals.

यत् अक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यत् यतयो वीतरागाः ।

*yat akṣaram vedavidō vadanti viśanti yat yatayo vītarāgāḥ ।*

यत् इच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत् ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥

8 – 11

*yat icchanto brahmacaryam caranti tat te padaṁ saṅgrहेṇa pravakṣye ॥*

यत् अक्षरं वेदविदः वदन्ति *yat akṣaram vedavidāḥ vadanti* – That अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma* about which वेदविदः *vedavidāḥ* – the knowers of the Vedas, those who understand, appreciate and recognize the meaning of the Vedas, talk about.

यत् अक्षरं यतयः वीतरागाः विशन्ति *yat akṣaram yatayaḥ vītarāgāḥ vaśanti* – That अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma* into which people liberated from द्वन्द्व मोह *dvandva moha* by their own efforts

(वीतरागाः *vītarāgāḥ*) - enter and become ONE with

यत् अक्षरं इच्छन्तः ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति *yat akṣaram icchantāḥ brahmacaryam caranti* – That अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma*, for gaining knowledge of which, people





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study the Upanishads with the help of Knowledgeable Teachers

तत् पदं *tat padam* – The means of reaching That अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma* at the time of departure from one's physical body

ते संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये *te saṅgrahena pravakṣye* – I will tell you now briefly. This is how one who is deeply committed to Vedic ritual can reach अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma* – The परमेश्वर *parameśvar*, following one's death.

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।

*sarva dvārāṇi saṅyamya mano hṛdi nirudhya ca ।*

मूर्ध्नि आधाय आत्मनः प्राणं आस्थितो योगधारणां ॥

8 - 12

*mūrdhni ādhāya atmanah praṇam āsthito yoga dhāraṇam ॥*

ॐ इति एकाक्षरम् ब्रह्म व्याहरन् मां अनुस्मरन् ।

*om ityi ekākṣaram brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran ।*

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥

8 - 13

*yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham sa yāti paramām gatim ॥*

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य *sarvadvārāṇi saṅyamya* – Having closed all the gates through which the knowledge of the external world enters into one's mind and बुद्धि *buddhi*, which means, keeping one's sense organs, mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* totally under control away from the sense objects and sense experiences of the external world, which again means

आवृत्त चक्षुः *āvṛtta cakṣuḥ* – as the कठोपनिषत् *kāthopaniṣat* says ( कठ *kāṭha* 4 – 1) by turning all of one's sense organs and the mind and also all actions governed by them, inward towards one's बुद्धि *buddhi*, trying to reach The Absolute Reality of one's own SELF

मनः हृदि निरुध्य च *manah hṛdi nirudhya ca* – withdrawing the mind into one's Divine Heart Space, which means engaging the mind in ईश्वर ध्यानं *īśvar dhyānam* wherein परमेश्वर *parameśvar* is visualized as अंगुष्ठमात्र हृत् पुण्डरीकं *aṅguṣṭha mātra hṛta puṇḍarīkaṁ* – as Thumb size Full Bloom Lotus Flower already in one's heart space, revealing आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I, as आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *ānanda svarūpa brahman*. This mode of ईश्वर ध्यानं *īśvar dhyānam* reveals आत्मा *ātmā* – The Self I as सत्य स्वरूप *satya svarūp*, ज्ञान स्वरूप *jñāna svarūp*, आनन्द स्वरूप ब्रह्मन् *ānanda svarūp brahman* – as परमेश्वर *parameśvar* Itself, already in



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oneself as ONESELF Itself ( कठ *kaṭha* 4 – 12/13)

मूर्ध्नि आधाय आत्मनः प्राणं *mūrdhni ādhāya ātmanaḥ prāṇam* – bringing one's प्राण *prāṇa* – vital air, to the head through the नाडि *nāḍi* connecting the Divine Heart Space and the head.

आस्थितः योगधारणां *āsthitaḥ yoga dhāraṇām* – holding the breath in the head, without exhaling, and at the same time *om*

ॐ इति एकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन् *om iti ekākṣaram brahma vyāharan* – chanting orally or mentally The ONE – all-inclusive – ॐ शब्द *om śabda* – The Sound ॐ *om* – The Word ॐ *om* – recognizing ॐ *om* as शब्द रूप प्रत्यक्ष ब्रह्मन् *śabda rūpa pratyakṣa brahman* – the Direct manifestation of ब्रह्मन् *brahman* in the form of Sound ॐ *om* – The word ॐ *om*.

मां अनुस्मरेत् *mām anusmareta* – contemplating on ME, The परमेश्वर *parameśvar* as आत्मा *ātmā* – The SELF “I” in oneself – as ONESELF Itself

यः प्रयाति त्यजन् देहं *yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ* – the one who departs from one's physical body, the one who gives up one's physical body

सः याति परमां गतिं *saḥ yāti paramām gatiṁ* – that person reaches The Supreme गति *gati*– The Supreme Destination, or the road leading to The Supreme Destination. The word गति *gati* is a revealing word here.

गम्यते इति गतिः *gamyate iti gatiḥ* – The word गति *gati* is like the word योग *yoga*. The ultimate destination is called गति *gati*. The road leading to that ultimate destination is also called गति *gati*.

The गति *gati* for the person leaving his physical body depends on the nature of his ॐ कार उपासन *omkār upāsana*. If his उपासन *upāsana* on ॐ *om* is contemplation on ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself as अक्षरं ब्रह्म *akṣaram brahma*, as सत्यं ज्ञानं अनन्तं ब्रह्म *satyaṁ jñānaṁ anantaṁ brahma*, as तत् विष्णोः परमं पदं *tat viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ* – the person reaches ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, becomes One with ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, directly, straight away. On the other hand, if his उपासन *upāsana* on ॐ *om* is meditation on a symbol for ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, which is not identical with ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, he reaches only the road leading to ब्रह्मन् *brahman*, namely ब्रह्म लोक *brahma lok* ( कठ *kaṭha* 6 – 16)



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ब्रह्मलोक *brahma lok* is still within संसार *saṁsāra*. He may stay in ब्रह्म लोक *brahma lok* for a long time, and get further educated and enlightened, until he recognizes that ॐ *om* is ब्रह्मन् *brahman* itself. Afterwards, he may continue to remain in ब्रह्म लोक *brahma lok*, or anywhere else in संसार *saṁsāra*, and, finally reach ब्रह्मन् *brahman* at the end of the cycle of creation. This गति *gati*, this path to reach ब्रह्मन् *brahman* is called क्रम मुक्ति *krama mukti*.

Thus both जीवन मुक्ति *jivana mukti* and क्रम मुक्ति *krama mukti* are possible through ॐ कार उपासन *omkār upāsana* at the time one departs from one's physical body. That is what is pointed out in the above two verses.

Let us stop here for today. Before we conclude, let us be clear about something. Matters concerning "Death or after death" is not the subject matter of भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā*. Sri Krishna is talking about such matters in this chapter simply because Arjuna has brought up that topic, and the only way to uplift his mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* totally from that topic is to give him a complete answer, which is what Sri Krishna is doing in this chapter.

Death happens when it happens, and there is nothing one can do about it at that time. And there is nothing to worry about it now.

भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā* is really concerned only with life and fullness of life, what one should know about life now, and what one should do to gain that fullness of life now, in terms of absolute happiness, absolute freedom, and absolute immortality in this very life itself, while one is living with all good health, body, mind and intellect. Sri Krishna resumes His Discourse on this real topic of भगवत् गीता *bhagavat gītā* in the next chapter. Until then, let us simply listen, with full attention, to what Sri Krishna says in the rest of this chapter, to complete his response to Arjuna's 7<sup>th</sup> question.

We will continue next time.