

GITA CLASS - CHAPTER 2, PART 15

Remembering the Guru Parampara, we begin our discussion on the Bhagavad Gita, Shankara Bhashya, Chapter 2, Verse 45. Here we are discussing Karma Yoga. A big part of that is this shloka.

**Traiguṇyoviṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna
Nirdvandvo nityasattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān. 2.45.**

All of the important facets of Karma Yoga are condensed into this verse. The parts that come after this will be the explanation of this. We discussed yesterday about the word, ‘nirdvandaḥ,’ being free from the pairs of opposites. Some people may think, ‘the shloka only says the word ‘nirdvandaḥ.’ Then is this long explanation necessary? However, this explanation is contained in the Mahābhārata, in several sections. These ideas are also lying within the other Gitas of the Mahābhārata. Here, we are just condensing that and explaining. This is a condensing, not an explanation. That is what we should understand.

We are not giving a lot of commentary. Instead, we are summarizing. This means that we are only saying a little. We aren’t saying a lot. This subject is discussed in detail in the scriptures. Some people doubted whether the things I said yesterday are true, and from what scripture they come from. They asked, ‘in what scripture is this said?’ I can name the scripture, but you should be ready to go and read that. Then I will say. If I say, you should be ready to look in that scripture. You will thus have to be very prepared. We are discussing about karma.

I’m not saying these things to make anyone afraid. This is the truth. To discuss more about karma, the scriptures of Mīmāṃsa are most important. In the Pūrva Mīmāṃsa, karma is discussed in several ways. These scriptures are all mutually connected. Therefore, when one scripture is discussed, it should be connected to all scriptures. Here, in the bhashya, the Purva Pakṣa, or the opposing questioner, may represent another śāstra. But there may not be any mention of the name of the scripture. However, this is only for clarifying Shankara’s śāstra.

How did Shankara write the bhashya? The Purva Paksha represents the interpretation of the scripture by those opposing the Advaita Philosophy. All of the opposing questions are raised by the side that places all importance on the Karma Khanda of the Vedas. That is it. That is the primary matter in Advaita. The most important matter is contained in the ideas of the oneness of the Atman, and the changing nature of the world. This is 'brahman satya jagan mithyā.' That is the primary subject. Shankara only brings to light the questions that oppose this idea. Therefore, one has to consider other scriptures as well, such as in Mīmāṃsa.

This is because the Vedas are accepted as a pramāṇa, a scriptural authority. There are many people who oppose that. There may be many conflicts as to whether the Vedas are an authority by themselves, or through the authority of something else . There may be long discussions on these.

Thus, for establishing a siddhanta, a philosophy, the writer has to depend on other systems of philosophy. So, only by knowing about different śāstras will it be possible to know clearly about one śāstra. Look at Advaita. If we must understand the ideas said by Shankara in the śāstric way, we must be familiar with other śāstras.

There is a commentary of the Purva mimamsa, -Mīmāṃsa Sūtras, by Shabara Swami. There is a commentary on this by Kumarila bhattan. These books are available even now. You'll have to excuse me, for it's only available in Sanskrit. There are 3 parts, 'shloka vartikam, tantra vartikam, and yuktika.' This scripture was then continued to be commentated on by famous Acharyas like Prabhakara. This is a huge universe. Then, we may doubt, is it necessary to study all of these śāstras? To attain liberation is it necessary that one must study all these scriptures? No. It is only possible to perform a quick pradakṣinam around these scriptures. And whatever is important in our eyes should be noted down in our mind. A single life-span isn't enough to contemplate deeply on all of these śāstras. Thus, if we must study Uthara Mīmāṃsa, or Advaita we will also have to study Vedic grammar. This is itself a śāstra. There are the Vyākḥāraṇa Sūtras, as well as the commentary to that. There is the Mahābhāṣyā, by Paṭanjali. Maha means BIG. It is big in size and depth as well. If we must understand the meaning of the grammar Sūtras, we will need the bhāṣyā. If we

have to understand the bhāṣyā, we will need the commentary of that. 'Kayetam' has written the commentary on the bhāṣyā, called 'Pradīpam.' If that must be understood, the commentary of that will be needed.

Then, there is the vartikam, the commentary of the bhāṣhya. The order is 'sutra, bhāṣyā, vartikam.' Then there are other kinds of commentaries on the Sutras. All of the subjects we are discussing are contained within that. However, just through studying Grammar, we won't get the knowledge of all subjects. Like this, in Vedanta, Tarka Shāstra, the science of logic, is a corresponding śāstra. There are scriptures written by acharyas that discuss the subjects here in full explanation. Even the scriptures of Buddhism are represented in the works of Shankara in the form of the Purva Paksha. For, Advaita, the most important acharya in connecting Advaita with the Vedic karmas, is Sureshācharya. It may be because he was originally a follower of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas. Therefore, his commentaries of Shankara's bhāṣyas connect more with Vedic karma.

Then there is Padmapadacharya. He also discusses these matters. A normal person cannot study all of these scriptures, and understand all of their meanings. That is not possible in today's time. That is why Shankara wrote the Prakāraṇa granthas, small works which explain the essence of the Vedanta. These are like child books. It isn't easy for an ordinary person to study all of the śāstras and understand their meaning. That is also not necessary. That is why other Shankaracharyas composed very light scriptures, that explain the essence of these śāstras. These are books like Tattva Bodha, Atma Bodha, Pratyākṣānubhūti, etc. From these, we can understand the sāra, the essence of the Vedanta śāstras. That is why it is said, 'ananta śāstram bahu veitavyam.' The scriptures are endless, and there is much to be known. 'Svalpaś cha kāla bahuvaś cha vighnāḥ.' Time is short, and obstacles are many.'

So all of these are the śāstras of the Vedas. If we are to go, find these śāstras, and study to understand them, it will be difficult. Then that is only possible through pūrva saṁskāra, the impressions from previous lives. If there is the saṁskara from previous lives, it may be possible for us to do some. Otherwise, to be able to enter into all of these śāstras, having the suitable circumstances, is very difficult. Like that, actually doing the search is the best. If

anyone has the interest for that, I will help. I am not trying to dissapoint you. Go an examine all of this. It says in Advaita itself that it isn't possible to understand all of the subjects in these scriptures in one lifetime. We won't be able to even read all of them.

The vartika for the Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upaniṣad is enormous. For us to read the Bhāṣya by Shankaracharya, we will need the commentary by Shankara's disciple, Anandagiri. This is published today. We will have to read that. How difficult is that. Even to read and understand commentaries on the Brahma Sutras, one lifetime isn't enough. It may take more than a day, just to say the names of these books. That is how vast this spiritual śāstra is. Then for us to enter into that, it is only possible through the strength of pūrva samskara, the impressions from previous births. Those with this may go and investigate, how big it is. Within these Mimamsa Sutras, all of these subjects are within.

Here, this is the section we are discussing, 'nirdvandvaḥ.' This is the summary. Shankara explained this as, 'sukhaduḥkha hetu sapratipakṣau padārthau dvandvaśabdavāchau,' this is the meaning of 'dvandvaḥ,' then, 'tataḥ nirgataḥ nirdvandvo bhava.' Here it says that the dvandvas are the objects that are mutually canceling, and give the experiences of pleasure and pain. From those, 'nirgataḥ,' stay away, 'nirdvandvaḥ,' be free from these pairs of opposites. That is the samatvam, the evenness of the mind. That is the state of freedom from the pairs of opposites. Here, the samatvam of the mind, means to free the mind from the happiness and sorrow, and the desire and anger, caused by victory and defeat, gain and loss, etc. That is what we discussed the other day.

The primary things in the mind are kāma and krodha, desire and anger. How can we make the mind free from these? One way is not to allow the spontaneous modifications to continue, and grow. The other way is to destroy those modifications which are already in our mind. If both of these are done, then the mind will be peaceful. This is because all of these are the transformations of the mind. We have discussed this already in great detail. We took the example of a desire-sankalpa. How can we prevent that from entering the mind? How can we keep that sankalpa in a small form? How can we destroy it? Like this, there is krodha, anger. Krodha is a big subject.

That is equal to Kāma, desire. It is a powerful emotion in the mind. There is a cause-effect relationship between desire and anger. Krishna will say in this chapter, 'Kāmāt krodhābhijāyate.' This will be discussed in detail. It says that anger manifests from desire. When the desire is unfulfilled, it becomes a cause for anger. It is very difficult to win over anger. What is instructed for defeating anger, by the śāstras, and acharyas? Primarily, for defeating krodha, patience is instructed. It says that one can defeat anger through kṣama, patience.

Anger is normally caused by enemies. Whoever we consider as an enemy, we will have some anger towards them. This means that whatever object that we consider as being unfavorable to us, we will have krodha. There will be krodha in whatever object one sees as being unfavorable to oneself. Once that attitude comes to the mind, of the object being unfavorable, this krodha enters the mind without any permission. This krodha enters the mind in the same way as desire, kāma. Only once it fades away will one understand, 'I became controlled by anger.' That is its nature.

That is also a powerful emotion. It is sometimes not under the control of the Jiva. It is powerful emotion that stands as an obstacle to a spiritual seeker. Then, through kṣama, patience, it is said that anger can be controlled. Normally, when someone bothers us, we have the attitude that they are unfavorable to us. This can be towards a person or object. There, in the mind, forgive. Through forgiveness, and patience, avoid the oppositional attitude of the mind.

When our mind thinks, 'this person is really disturbing me,' that may be true. We have the feeling, 'this person is a pain.' Then the attitude of an enemy comes into the mind. That is the beginning. We think, 'this is an enemy.' Then how must one act towards an enemy? The Dharma Shāstras and Niti Shāstras all say that one should oppose and destroy the enemy. That is what is said. That is the way the Dharma Shāstras speak. However, that is not true in the śāstras of spirituality. There, it says that one doesn't have the right to oppose and destroy. Here, one has to examine his svadharma, inherent duty. What is svadharma? It is only possible to act according to that.

In the light of one's inherent duty, that action is not one's svadharma. It is not one's svadharma to destroy the enemy. Instead, it is to forgive. How can we forgive someone who is constantly disturbing us? Even there, this is the primary

thing. This is where some awareness about this is necessary. We said in the previous day. How does a person see this? This is because a person disturbing us can be in two ways. In one, it will be with a cause, and in the other, there won't be any cause. These are the two ways a person can disturb us. Why does that happen?

In the light of the Dharma and Niti Shāstras, the solution is to hit and attack the person. However, if we think in the light of the Shāstra of Spirituality, what is said? If a person must disturb with or without a cause, there must have been a cause from the past. We must have done the same thing to that person before. However, now it is reversed. We must have hurt someone in the past. This continued endlessly. It is like the owl and crow. They are enemies from endless time. Like that, this disturbance is not the beginning. It is only a continuation of the past.

A spiritual seeker doesn't desire to continue this cycle. He strives to end it here. It must be finished. It's not possible to say when this began. Both people were connected before in different times, and this is repeating again. It must be ended here.' We normally say, 'Even if I am forgiving with the person, he isn't forgiving with me. So, I lose my patience.' However, if it is like this, it will continue endlessly. Both people will continue like this.

Then, if a person desires to finish this, a spiritual seeker, what does he do? He doesn't react. He doesn't react in the same way that the enemy does. This is 'apratikārapūrvkaṁ.' Without having revenge. This means that if he is hit, he won't react by hitting back in the same way. If he returns the blow, it won't end. That how it is normally. If this must be finished, he must consider what his svadharma is. Then he refrains from taking revenge. We ask, 'if he doesn't react, won't the disturbance only increase?' We will think this. 'Won't it just get worse?' Here, where is the importance given? Here, importance is given to one's level of spirituality. If the disturbance increases, what will one do? One important thing that is said, is to flee from such circumstances which create disturbance for oneself. That is number one. This is to move away from those circumstances. Avoid those situations.

Whoever it is that is disturbing you, don't react. You can not react only if you go near them, isn't it? That is a good method. If we have anger towards him

we will go to give him one beating and get two in return. The first thing is to avoid the circumstances, to move away from such situations.

Suppose two people scuffle in the presence of a Mahatma. One of them hurts the other. Because he is being hurt, he hurts the other in response. We are talking about anger here, right? Can we do that? No. Why? Because that isn't one's svadharma.

This is because if we hurt a person, we don't have the right to punish him for a wrong deed. A police officer can grab a suspicious person and put him in jail, but he doesn't have the right to punish him. If he must be punished, he must go to the judge. He will be placed before the judge and punished. Like that, we don't have the right to give punishment. Who has this? The Guru does. So, grab ahold of him and bring him before the Guru. That is svadharma. This means that one doesn't seek revenge, one doesn't react.

If someone appears to hurt us for no reason, we can know for sure that there is a cause behind it. If we say that someone hurts us for no reason, it just means that we don't know the reason. We have hurt many people in our previous lives. Therefore, in this life, someone hurts us. Without having the attitude of an enemy, if the action was wrong, the one to punish is God. This is what we should think. Don't punish by yourself.

This doesn't mean we should pray to the Lord, 'Lord, give him a good headache.' 'May God give him what he deserves.' That is not needed. This is a law. Understand that law. If we punish, what happens is that we destroy an opportunity for the Guru or God to punish. That's not needed. We can take this as a spiritual practice. Don't punish. God is there to punish, who knows the laws of karma and the fruits of karma. Thinking that God Himself will give punishment, remain silent. In every aspect, in mind, body, and speech, maintain silence. Then this disturbance is avoided. Tranquility will come. Surely, a person who is like this, a sadhaka, won't be hurt anymore by the other. The other may continue to disturb him for some time, but it ends there.

This is because this is a law. If a person in the society becomes a slave to such emotions, it is like a contagious disease. It will spread to all around. The minds of others will be modified in the same way. Why does that happen? Ultimately, what does our śāstras say? The antaḥkararṇa, the inner instrument,

or the mind, is not two. There is only one mind. There are not 2 minds. Then it is naturally possible that what is experienced in one can be experienced in another. When a person feels that we are an enemy, we will then have the feeling that they are our enemy. Instead, if a person has the attitude of friendship with us, the feeling of friendship comes to our mind towards them. That is why this is discussed extensively in the Yoga Shāstras, and in other scriptures. This is in the Gita, also.

‘Practice the bhāva of friendliness.’ If that isn’t possible, what does Yoga say? ‘If that doesn’t work, have the attitude of being disinterested. Pay no mind. Then it’s enough to have the feeling of friendliness only to friends. Have the attitude of being disinterested to one’s enemies. This bhāva, ‘udāsina,’ means to not even see the other as an enemy. This doesn’t mean to see the enemy as an enemy. All of this is not at all related to the Dharma or Niti Shāstras. This is purely in the field of spiritual practice. The subject of a war is a different level. That is not this. We shouldn’t unnecessarily connect these together. This is purely an individual practice.

This is the internal sadhana of the individual. That is the relevance of the phrase, ‘apratikāram,’ not reacting, not taking revenge. How will this state of nirdvandvaḥ, being free from the pairs of opposites come? Then how can one deal with anger? That is what we are thinking of. So, we can think like this. If it isn’t possible to have a friendly attitude with one’s enemy, develop the attitude of ‘udāsina,’ being disinterested. That is what Sage Paṭanjali says. This attitude doesn’t consider the enemy as an enemy. Nor does it consider them as a friend. There is no such person. In this way, the sadhak removes the idea of the person.

When that happens, the inner instrument becomes peaceful. All of this comes in the level of Karma Yoga that we are discussing. Even for a Karma Yogi, he will have both friends and enemies. Even a Jnani will have both friends and enemies. Then, is there any need to speak about the case of a sadhak? Everyone, up till the Incarnations of God, have enemies. Therefore, a sadhak will have these. He can remove the attitude of ‘enemy’ within the mind. However, the external enemy will remain. Why? It is because he was acquired earlier. Therefore, it’s not possible to remove that. Till death, he will remain as an enemy. However, the mental attitude, the mano bhāvam, can be changed.

We said before, that in the condition of the Karma Yogi, peace and equipoise are needed in the mind. That is only possible if the attitude of 'enemy' is removed from the mind. Without removing this feeling of 'enemy,' the mind won't have any equipoise. Even though we aren't living in the midst of society, how many friends and enemies live with us? We know this. Even though some won't say this outside, this is the truth. We have many friends and enemies. We live together with them. This is our spiritual life.

This can be seen constantly in society. That is necessary for the mind. If there is no enemy, the mind will sometimes create an enemy. We will imagine, 'he is my enemy.' In truth, that person may not be an enemy. This imagination will go to anyone. This is a trick played by the mind. Then, from this, we discussed how to deal with this. One, is to have the feeling of friendship, maitri, towards the enemy, to avoid anger. Two, is to have the attitude of disinterestedness towards the enemy. This is for whoever we consider to be an enemy. They may not necessarily be an enemy in reality. It may be an imagining. Whatever it may be, when the attitude of 'enemy' comes to the mind, it is possible to remove that attitude from the mind through either the attitude of maitri, friendliness, or udāsina, disinterestedness. Once the mind has become free from this 'enemy' attitude, then surely, the mind of the enemy will also change. This because the mind is only one. When one part transforms, it is possible for the side to also change.

Thus, the external disturbance will decrease. That is how the matter of enemies is dealt with in spiritual practice. Otherwise, it is not about opposing the enemy, or defeating the enemy. That isn't possible, because it isn't one's svadharma. This means that it isn't the svadharma of a brahmachari or sanyassi. We will suddenly think, 'and what about Arjuna?' The svadharma of Arjuna is different. That is the dharma of a kṣatriya. What is that? We should understand this in particular, because we are discussing in reference to the classes and life-stages.

What are we living in? That is the life-stage, of brahmachari, etc. Here, we are discussing about the dharmas of the life-stages. This isn't about the classes, or varṇas. This is because the enemy of a king is an attacker. For the protection of the people, he will have to oppose the attacker. That is another subject. Here,

it is not like that. Here, we are speaking about the dharmas of the life-stages. There, in the individual's life, the person destroys and removes the attitude of 'enemy' from the mind. This is through several different means. One way is to think, about the laws of karma. 'This is my prarabdha, coming in the form of an enemy.' Wherever you go, it will come along.

When we came from the home to the ashram, we came alone. However, even if we leave the home, we take our karma with us. Because we take along with us our karma, there will be both friends and enemies also. Wherever you go, they will be along with you. They will surround you, friends and foes. That's not possible to avoid. Then, what is needed? Is it the dharma of the life-stages, or the dharma of the classes that is needed? If it is the dharma of the life-stages, then this attitude must be renounced.

To say that we reject the attitude of 'enemy,' if we are speaking in the level of spiritual sadhana, this also means to reject the attitude of 'friend.' Sometimes, a friend may become an enemy. There also, we will have to develop the attitude of disinterestedness. A friend can change into an enemy. Therefore, accept 'udāsinata,' disinterestedness. Mentally, don't pay attention to that person.

Then, another thing is Atma bhāvana, self-reflection. A person who has this reflection on the true nature of the Self, thinks, 'there is nobody separate from me. I have no friend, nor enemy.' Through practicing the attitude of evenmindedness, one can avoid the attitudes of 'friend' and 'enemy.' It is only possible to accept someone as a friend or enemy, if they are separate from oneself. For a person who performs Karma Yoga, while practicing identification with the Self, he doesn't see anyone as separate from himself. In that way, also, the 'enemy' attitude can be avoided.

Then there is another attitude. This is another knowledge. What is that? We desire enemies. That is a good path. Pray, 'Please may I have enemies.' What's good about that? This is because the merit and sin of a person will be mixed together. There are several methods explained for exhausting sin. One is to exhaust sin through experience. Another is to destroy it through repentance, through worship of God, through the Grace of God, etc. Like this, the destruction of papa, sin, can be in different ways. Like this, an enemy is someone who destroys sin.

Who is an enemy? It is someone who curses us, An enemy never appreciates us. What does the enemy do through insulting us? Through cursing us, it destroys the sin of the sadhak. Merit cannot be touched by the insult, but the papa will be destroyed through it. It is destroyed through the merit of the person insulting us. One should think, 'May I have such an enemy!' In truth, the enemy does a favor. He continuously destroys our sins. Even after coming to the ashram, our enemies come along with us. It may be to destroy these sins.

So, what does it mean when we have the attitude of 'enemy' towards someone? One thing is that this does good to us, because it destroys our sins. The other thing is that the other person destroys his merit through his 'enemy' attitude. Therefore, that is a different principle. What is said about a Jnani? It is said that when someone curses a Jnani, the Jnani accepts their sin. Then we may doubt whether the Jnani has sin or not? The answer to that is prarabdha. That continues in the form of prarabdha. There will be papa, sin in the Jnani. That is how the body is sustained. That isn't an obstacle to Jnana, the Knowledge of the Jnani. All other forms of papa will be destroyed.

However, the Jnani accepts that form of papa. This doesn't refer to sins like killing a Brahmin, etc. This is a different kind of papa. That is accepted by the Jnani. That doesn't do any harm to a Jnani. It doesn't do any good either. However, if it is accepted by the Jnani, the other person will gain papa. That is said. Sometimes we may see someone suffering who has troubled some mahatmas in their past. We hear people say 'he has troubled a mahatma and the mahatma cursed him; that is why he is suffering'. Actually, the Jnani never curses. The Jnani doesn't ever desire that any harm should come to any creature. Instead, the Mahatma who curses accepts the sin himself, through the curse.

We feel that those whom Mahatmas curse are in a sad state. However, without that happening, it may have been a lineage of births of that sad state. What is all of that? It is the accepting of that sin. Otherwise, Mahatmas will never curse anyone.

That is one thing. What happens to ordinary people? When a person curses or insults another, that person destroys the other's sin. He also destroys his own merit by himself. When we think about all of this, we won't have the attitude of 'enemy' towards another person. Thinking, 'this isn't needed in my

spiritual practice. This isn't necessary,' we can have a peaceful mind, even when others disturb us. Therefore, understand the Divine law of karma. Lord Krishna says in the Mahābhārata, 'gahano karmaṇo gatiḥ.' The workings of karma are immensely deep.' This means that we have no grasp over the past or future.

Still, we experience the present moment, through the fruits of karma. So, knowing that all of this are the fruits of karma, cultivate the attitude of maitri, friendliness, or the bhāva of samatvam, evenmindedness, or udāsinatā, disinterestedness. Having accepted these, the mind will gain patience. We say, 'be patient, be patient.' How do we be patient? What is patience? It is when these bhāvas become firm in the mind that this patience, or kṣama, is gained. Then, even if another person disturbs us, we won't give way to anger in the mind. Either the bhāva of friendliness will come in the mind, or the bhāva of disinterestedness, or Atma bhāva, the identification with the Atman.

Otherwise, one can surrender all sorrows to the Lord. This is the attitude, 'all of this is God's decision, God's Will.' Having this decision in the mind, this 'revenge' attitude can be avoided. Through surrendering everything to God, one avoids the reactive attitude of the mind. All of these are means. Thus, through these means, wherever there is a situation when anger may arise, through the unfulfillment of desires, the mind won't give way to anger. Then for whatever reason, when anger is produced either from samskaras of previous lives, or from any other cause, this anger doesn't continue to produce more anger. There, it becomes tranquil. The anger becomes weakened by itself.

So, either one can destroy it after it appears, or one may prevent it from continuing in the mind. In that way, the mind reaches the state of evenness, samatvam. This evenness of mind is a matter a Karma Yogi must put into practice, in relation to desire and anger. There are numerous means for this. We have discussed some of these, and some have not been discussed. In the future talks, we will continue to discuss these.

Thus, there is one thing we must understand. Only a person with peace and equilibrium of mind can be a Karma Yogi. Without defeating desire and anger, this isn't possible. Therefore, one may accept any of these means for that. For helping that, Lord Krishna says next, 'nityasattvastaḥ.' This word is explained, 'sadā sattvaguṇāśrito bhava.' Here the Lord says to be constantly in

the sattva condition, sattvastha. This means one who is sthita, situated in sattva, sattvastha. How is this? Nityam, constantly.

A person can be situated in the sattva guṇa. Now, our mind is thinking about spiritual matters. The mind becomes closely identified with that. This is where the sattva guṇa is constantly being modified in the mind. If the mind is in this subject, it will be modified in the sattva guṇa continuously. What is the sign of that? The mind will be peaceful. There will be no emotions in the mind of desire and anger. One will be tranquil. This peace of mind will be continuously experienced. Why?

It is because the modification of the mind is śānti, peace. That is the object in which the mind is staying. Here, it says to sustain this constantly. That is to be nitya sattvastha.' How can we do that? That is where the difficulty comes. This is because after hearing the satsang, we go to the world. What comes there is the dealings of the pairs of opposites. When the mind goes to those experiences, it becomes modified by the pairs of opposites, the dvandvas. Then one doesn't think about peace, tranquility, or the Atman. One thinks about the objects. Then how will it be possible to gain this sattva bhāva there?

The bhāva of sattva guṇa is of two kinds. We have discussed this before. One is the sattva bhāva which is awake. What helps us in different places is the sattva bhāva that is sleeping within us. That is called sattva samskāra. It is the sattva samskāra that a person gains that helps him to sustain that sattva bhāva in the worldly experiences. Through satsang, etc., we gain two things. One is the temporary sattva bhāva that we experience there. This is the experience of peace, equilibrium, contentment, etc. This is the contentment, or santoṣam, spoken of in the Yoga Sutras. It says, 'santoṣād anuttama sukha lābham.' From contentment, comes the attainment of highest happiness.' This santoṣam is not the kind of happiness we speak about. That is the stable transformation of the sattva guṇa.

This condition where contentment is constantly manifested in the mind is one thing. However, even if this modification ends, it leaves behind a sattva samskara, the impression of sattva guṇa. That is what is good about this. Listen with one-pointedness about the Atma Tattva, the true reality of the Self. Then remember that, think about God. When this happens, the mind gains a sattva

samskāra. These temporary modifications will be destroyed in the mind. This is true for Bhakti Yoga, or Jñāna Yoga. But what is it that we gain through these practices? It is a very powerful sattva samskāra. That samskāra won't be destroyed.

As this experience grows more and more, this samskara will gain more power. It is that samskāra which makes a person be situated in the sattva guṇa, even in the worldly experiences. If a person without this kind of samskara goes to the worldly experiences, to the field of actions, then this sattva guṇa won't be seen. According to the nature of the situations, his mind will be continuously modified in rajasic or tamasic bhāvas. The nature of worldly experiences is generally that of rajas. So, in whatever realm of action, when he acts accordingly, the bhāva of the mind will be in that, the bhāvas of rajas and tamas.

However, if a person, through spiritual practices, gains a strong samskara of sattva, it will be different. Here, the spiritual practices refer to satsang, meditation, japa, prayer, pūja, everything. Through these sadhanas, he continuously cultivates the sattva samskara. There is a śāstra, a science behind that, the śāstra of the Sāṃkhyas. They say, 'the guṇas transform, and change constantly between the predominance of either sattva, rajas, or tamas. In whatever way we make them transform, that is how they will transform.' Therefore, if we gather a strong samskara of sattva, that samskara will be sustained even in the field of worldly experience. Even in the field of worldly experience, he will be in sattva. Here, I am referring to the sattva bhāva that is spontaneous. Otherwise, I'm not referring to what other people say about this.

Suppose we perform an action. We show proper conduct externally to other people. That is a good thing. However, that is not any proof that there is the sattva guṇa within that person. That is not the indication of sattva. A person speaks and behaves very sweetly. That isn't the sign of sattva. This is because a person who is behaving sweetly in one moment may behave angrily in the next moment. A person who behaves peacefully, may lose his peace in the next moment. Instead, what is the sign of a sattvic person? One is peaceful in the field of worldly experience. If whatever worldly experience it is, he is in peace. He will have peace of mind. That is the sign of sattva.

In whatever situation it is, he won't lose discrimination. He will act with discrimination always. That is the mark of sattva. One's discrimination isn't lost. In the Gita, it says, 'apramatta.' Thus, a person becomes immersed in the worldly experiences, while keeping his discrimination and peace of mind. That is the mark of sattva guṇa. In that way, the Karma Yogi relies on the sattva guṇa in all times, and acts.

We all normally say, 'there is so much tension in the mind.' This 'tension' has become a 'fashion' today. If people say they don't have this, it is bad. If we are in tension only then others will think that we are doing something. Then there is hypertension. That is how it goes. In truth, that doesn't happen in the mind of a Karma Yogi. This is if his karma is performed in Yoga. It says, 'samatvam yoga uchyate.' Yoga is evenness of mind. Then, only the sattva guṇa is possible. Because there is the sattva guṇa, there must be viveka, discrimination. Therefore, even while in the worldly experiences, dealing with and thinking of objects, this saṃskāra gained will keep the mind modified in the sattva guṇa.

The Yoga Shāstras say that the cause for this transformation of the guṇas is saṃskāra. If there is a sattvic saṃskāra in the mind, then the mind will be modified only in sattva during the worldly experiences. That is what is said here, 'sattvagunāśrito bhava.' Be dependant on the quality of sattva. At that time, there is no need to strive consciously to have peace, tranquility, or discrimination. They remain in the inner instrument spontaneously. That is the nature of the antaḥkāraṇa, the inner instrument. That is because it is composed of the three guṇas. If we must understand in full explanation, you should go and examine the Yoga Sūtras of Pāṇjali, with the Bhāṣya by Veda Vyāsa. Otherwise, you will ask me later, 'what book does this come from?' Go and examine there. And then, go and look at the commentaries written on that. If anyone would like to go look at the commentary of that, it is called, 'Bhāsvati.' Go and look at that. These matters are explained there in detail.

Next in the shloka comes, 'niryogaḥśemaḥ.' This idea is repeated in different places in the Gita. Krishna says later, 'yogaḥśemam vahāmyahaṃ.' 'I will secure what you need, and protect what you possess.' We have analyzed this before. 'Yogaḥśemam,' in truth, is the work of God. The Jiva, due to Ignorance,

takes this upon himself. No matter how many experiences, he never gains real awareness about this yogakṣema. 'Yoga' means 'arjanam,' to secure, and 'kṣema' means 'samrakṣanam,' to protect. That is how this is commentated. This isn't only Shankaracharya. This is how it is commentated by all other famous acharyas, such as Ramanujacharya.

'Secure and protect' – these two aren't under the control of the Jiva. Here, some people will become confused. In today's world of action, knowingly or unknowingly, all creatures become immersed in karma. The aim of all of this karma is to gain, and to protect. If it is said that these two aren't necessary to society, there would be laziness in society. An ordinary person will think, 'this is against the progress of man, by destroying man's enthusiasm.' It said to not secure, and to not protect. Then all of our plans, projects, etc., become useless, because we won't get anyone to work.' These dangerous idea will then spread to the people. Som people say this without any sincerity, 'we need not gain or protect.' However, what is the principle of this?

The summary of this is; gain and protection are never under the control of the Jiva. Instead, this is under the control of God. Therefore, the Jiva need not be disturbed about that. It is enough if man performs karma. When it says, 'don't desire the fruit,' it doesn't mean that we can perform an action without an intention. If we perform action, it is only possible to do so by thinking of the fruit of the action. To perform an action, without thinking about the fruit, means that either one is mad, or completely devoid of intelligence. A person with discrimination performs action only after considering the fruit. What is the meaning of saying to act without thinking about the fruit? This means to not be disturbed about the fruit. 'Will it be favorable, or unfavorable?' This means to be without this mental worry.

This doesn't mean to be without any knowledge about the fruit. It is only possible to act if one has knowledge about the fruit. Thus, the performer of the action needs a resolute conviction about the result. We said before, 'vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ,' resolute conviction. He must know, 'by performing this action, this result will be attained.' When we cook food, we do it with a conviction that the result will be the food. The Gita doesn't mean to cook food without thinking that it will become food. That is a law of karma. It is not a law

of the Jiva's. If man acts, it will produce a result. It is not the knowledge of the result of a karma but the anxiety over the result which disturbs one's peace of mind. .

Otherwise, a person becomes distressed about the fruit, and anxious. For distinguishing between these two attitudes, this is said. Be without 'yoga' or 'kṣema,' gain and protection. This is said here. This means that the laws created by God are what create the result of karma. It is not that a result is produced just from performing an action. Why? If there must be a result, that action must be completed. The factors of time and place must be favorable. There must not be any obstacles in that action. Thus, there are numerous factors that control the fruit of action. These aren't under the control of the Jiva.

If obstacles arise, or if one is unable to complete the action, or if time and place are not favorable, these will all prevent the result. It isn't possible to be sure about the result of certain factors of an action. There is a primary result, as well as numerous secondary results. These matters can not be grasped by the intellect of man. Therefore, there is no need for one to be anxious or worried about the fruits of karma. Act. However good you act, that is how good the result will be. Thus, for 'yoga and kṣema,' act without thinking about yoga and kṣema,. God Himself will perform these. Therefore, there is no point in us thinking about these.

And what about when it talks about renouncing the fruit of karma? There also, it is the same thing. There what is aimed at is the detachment of the mind .This is because it isn't possible to renounce the result. In the material level, one cannot renounce the fruit. That is because that is part of the laws of karma. The karma itself will bring its fruit. If the cooking is done properly, it will naturally produce food. The person who performs this has no freedom over this. If the action is performed correctly, then it must become food. Then, if that is eaten correctly, it will produce happiness, contentment, etc. That must happen. It's not possible for anyone to change this rule. Then 'renounce the fruit,' doesn't mean to cook, and then waste the food. Having eaten it, one cannot avoid the contentment from eating. That contentment cannot be avoided, because it happens of itself, in the mind. Then, 'renounce!' what does this mean? There, we will discuss the detachment of the mind to actions in the coming parts. What

is detachment, niraṅgata? This means to not have any anxiety about the fruit of action, to not be disturbed about it, etc. Thus, 'yogaḥṣemaṃ vaḥāmyaḥaṃ.' We can think about this. When we cook food, it produces a result. When we hear this, 'yogaḥṣemaṃ vaḥāmyaḥaṃ,' we may think, 'God protects and secures. Then, I need not do anything. Our job is to act only. We don't have to protect the food.' That is how it would be interpreted. That is not something that we must experience. People generally say this; 'let God look after everything; I'm not working.'

That's not it. God is taking care of securing and protecting, 'yoga and ṣema.' The fruit of our cooking- that is food and the satisfaction when we eat the food. That is where God takes care of 'yoga and ṣema.' This is because there may be any kind of obstacles to this. If any factor of the action goes wrong, this won't happen. There won't be cooked food, nor the satisfaction. Thus, in truth, the cooked food, and the satisfaction are the actions of God. He who created the food, and the satisfaction is God. I didn't create it. Be without the self-respect, 'I created this.' Thinking, 'God created this,' surrender your ability to God. 'It wasn't my ability to produced this. This happened according to the law of God.' Thinking thus, don't have pride in one's ability in the action.

Pride isn't natural. We create this. 'Because of my ability, this happened.' 'I gained this through my ability.' Don't think this. Surely, it was our ability that was used in the action. However, it is God who gave that ability. Don't forget that. It is God's ability came out through me. This result came to me from God.' Knowing this, don't have pride in oneself. Give the credit for all good qualities to God. Like that, become 'niryogaḥṣema.' That is the meaning.

Renounce the feeling of doership. Out of ignorance, the Jiva takes the responsibility of doership of actions in the universe, which are produced from the laws of God. Here, it says that God is He who performs yoga and ṣema, securing what is needed, and protected what one possesses. Thus, the word 'niryogaḥṣema,' means to not take on the responsibility that God already has. That will never discourage one away from action. That doesn't prevent one from thinking about the action or its fruit. No matter action it is, we have to think about it. For every action, we will have a 'plan, project, etc.' To say that that isn't possible, comes only from stupidity. To perform an action without thinking

about it is stupidity. That is not what the Gita teaches. Those who say this are fools. There is no point in teaching a fool. They will simply act.

Sometimes the result will be favorable, sometimes unfavorable. That has no relation at all with KarmaYoga. Karma Yoga says to have the correct knowledge about the karma and its result. Having known this, the Yogi considers any kind of gain as not his. This is because he has awareness of God and the divine laws of karma. This 'yoga' and kṣema' comes naturally from these laws of karma. He recognizes this.

An ignorant person performs karma. After gaining discrimination, he also performs karma. After gaining this discrimination, there are 2 things. We said before, one is the renunciation of pride, and the other is surrender to God. These are the two. These two samskaras become firmly rooted in the Karma Yogi, through the performance of karma. Therefore, we discussed earlier, that without awareness of God, Karma Yoga is impossible. If pride must be renounced, there must be something strong to grab onto. It is only possible to renounce pride by holding on tightly to God. Therefore, this awareness of God must become firm. This is the renunciation of pride. That is where the importance of bhakti comes.

This is bhakti alongside viveka, discrimination. That is where true renunciation of karma comes. We will continue to discuss this in the coming sections. Thus, Sri Krishna says, 'niryogakṣema bhava.' Be free of securing and protecting, yoga and kṣema. Then, it says, 'ātmavān.' Shankara explains this word. 'apramattaś cha bhava.' 'ātmavān,' be a master of the self.' 'Apramattaś cha bhava,' be vigilant.' Then, 'eṣa tava upadeśaḥ svadharmam anutiṣṭataḥ.' 'Eṣa,' this, 'tava,' for you, 'upadeśaḥ,' instruction, 'svadharmam,' inherent duty, 'anutiṣṭataḥ,' perform. This is, 'this is the instruction for you who are to discharge your duty.

This is important. Krishna says, 'this instruction is for you, in order to perform your svadharma.' This is for you, who are discharging your dharma of a kṣatriya. Remember this. So it said, 'ātmavān apramattaḥ.' Apramattaḥ means to let allow a pramatta, a mistake to occur. Pramatta means a fall. Shankara will say later about how the mind becomes controlled by the external objects. This causes the fall from Yoga. Pramatta means to let the mind wander away from the

qualities said here by the Lord, 'to be beyond the pairs of opposites, to be beyond acquisition and welfare, and beyond the three gunas.' This happens in the field of worldly experiences. Therefore, train the mind to be firmly rooted in these qualities.

A doubt may come. 'To not have a mistake is such a hard thing.' That is only possible for a Jnani. What is practice? It is along with mistakes. Practice is only necessary for someone who is prone to fall. Getting back up after falling down is practice, abhyasa. What does a person who practices do? If he falls down, he doesn't simply lie there. He gets back up. This means that he falls again and again. Then what does it mean to be apramatta, free of mistakes? What does this mean?

What is the indication of apramatta? It is that one doesn't justify such falls. That is the most dangerous matter. For a Karma Yogi, he may have a fall in any one of these practices. There may come a break in his practice of being free of the pairs of opposites. He may become a slave to desire and anger. The sattvic quality may become overpowered by the rajasic and tamasic qualities within the mind. Sometimes, the feeling of 'I and mine,' may come in the mind. He may become anxious to act for his acquisition and protection. What are all of these? These are all falls. A person who is a pramattan, doesn't recognize these when they occur. Otherwise, he doesn't see them ahead of time. Never mind this, one may not recognize it as a fall even afterwards. This is a pramatta, a fall. That cannot happen to a Karma Yogi. He recognizes all of these.

If he recognizes them, only then he can get up. He makes firm these practices, like the state beyond the pairs of opposites, the state of constant sattva, the state free from acquisition and protection, etc. How does he make these firm. Apramatta means the wakefulness of the mind. To be always wakeful, is to be apramatta. Through that apramattatvam, he gives more firmness to these practices, through each fall. In whatever moment the mind falls from the practice, in the next moment, he recognizes it. Then he doesn't allow that to continue. Then it stops there. He doesn't allow the discrimination which he had gained through spiritual practice to be destroyed for even a moment. That is the state of apramatta.

All of these qualities are needed for that state of apramatta. All of these aid in this. Like that, practice this. Recognize the falls. Falls will occur. As long as one is in the human body, mistakes will occur. Why? It is because this body, mind, etc., are all of the nature of the three gunas. Naturally, tamasic and rajasic bhāvas will come to those. No one is able to be saved from that. Therefore, in some parts of the scriptures it says, 'everyone with a body is in bondage.' This is said in Advaita as well. When we hear this, we may become startled. Those that say this, say, 'there is no one liberated on this earth.' Some say like this. There is such a way of thinking in Advaita. This is indicating the firm bond between the Jiva and the body, mind, etc. That is why this is said. It is not that this is opposed to the Advaita philosophy. There is such a view. This means that that bond will always have its influence. Then, for a sadhak, surely, falls will occur.

There is a logic of the Mimamsas. Wherever there is a refutation of something, that something must exist. Otherwise the refutation becomes useless. Then what is the meaning of being 'apramatta,' free of mistakes? It means that mistakes may happen. We can see this in the Mahābhārata war. Even if all of this is said to Arjuna, we can see that he becomes controlled by anger in parts of the war. Despite all of this instruction, we can see that he loses his evenness of mind in parts. However, that is what is called, 'pramatta,' mistakes. That can happen to anybody.

Someone may ask, 'how can this happen?' This is how we find many justifications. Suppose a person has a fall. He will think, 'Oh, I had a fall,' and look at others. 'It happens to them also. He will think, 'is there anyone who is free of these mistakes? We should not think like that. Why? These mistakes can happen to anyone. But just because it may happen to anybody, we should not think to laydown where we had fallen.

This is like saying that even though a mistake can occur in the Guru, it cannot occur to the disciple. We said before, 'tejīyasām na doṣāya.' They don't do anything bad for themselves. They do this for the disciple. 'Dharma vyatikramo dṛṣṭaḥ īśvaranām cha sahasram.' This is said in the Mahābhārata. In īśvara puruṣas, those who have realized God, one can see a 1000 actions that transgress dharma.' From this, the Gita says, 'yad yadācharati śreṣṭhaḥ tad tadevetaro janāḥ.' Whatever a great person does, others will follow.' But if there

any mistakes seen in the Guru, The sadhak shouldn't see those as an authority to act similarly.

What is the meaning of 'yat yadācharati śreṣṭhāḥ.' 'Whatever a great person does, others will follow?' This means for the disciple to only accept what is dharmic in the Guru. And not all that the guru does like, walking like the guru, standing like the guru, spitting like the guru.. This doesn't mean to make everything an example. The reason to say this, is that some Great mahatmas, have performed actions that are unable to understand through the intellect. These can be found in the Purāṇas. Some of us read these to console ourselves, to give us peace of mind. We think, 'if they did that, then there's no problem with me.' I am insignificant.'

However, our intellect cannot reach the actions of the Guru, or even of the Rishis. However, 'tejīyasām na doṣāya.' When we discuss mistakes, that is what immediately comes to the mind. 'If they did that, then I can also.' Don't ever think that. Those are not things that bind them. Accept whatever dharmic actions they perform as an example. The others are actions that cannot be explained. They are alaukika, unworldly. These are the actions of Lord Sri Krishna. Those are alaukika actions, therefore they are not actions that we can imbibe in our life externally.

Whatever dharmic actions that they performed, 'tad tadevetaro janāḥ.' That can be accepted by ordinary people. Otherwise, there will be trouble. Some people have thought, 'the Lord did this, so I can too.' They imitate externally and act. That is a danger. That is like saying, 'I am the Lord, Sri Krishna.' No, that's not it. Without understanding the real principle, they perform wrong actions in the society, and then say, 'the Lord did this.' We have already discussed how to deal with them. That is not what is meant.

The meaning of 'apramatta' doesn't mean that mistakes will never occur. Instead, once they occur, don't fail to recognize them or justify them. Therefore, we should never use the actions of Mahatmas to justify our wrong actions. Thus, Shankara said, 'eṣa tava upadeśaḥ,' this is the instruction for you, 'svadharmam anuṣṭhātāḥ,' who are performing your inherent duty.

These are all deep, internal matters that must be paid attention for a sadhak in Karma Yoga. These are said here in the form of sutras. We have

explained this in relation to other parts of the Gita in detail. We are discussing the essence of this.

Traiguṇyoviṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna
Nirdvandvo nityasattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān. 2.45.

Yāvān arthe updapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake
Tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ. 2.46.

AUM AMRITESHVARYAI NAMAH

Remembering the Guru Parampara, we begin our discussion on the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Shankara Bhashya, verse 46.

Yāvān arthe udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake
Tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ. 2.46.

‘For a knower of Brahman who has realized the ultimate Truth, there is as much profit from all the Vedas as there is profit from a reservoir in a flood of water.’ We can look at Shankara’s preface. It says, ‘If the countless fruits of actions laid down by all the Vedas are not to be gathered by the agent, why should those actions be performed at all as offerings to God? Listen to the answer.’

This is, ‘sarveṣu vedokteṣu karmasu yānyuktānyanantāni phalāni tāni nāpekṣyante chet, kimarthaṁ tāni īśvarāyetyanuṣṭīyante iti.’ So, Shankara says, ‘in all of the karmas spoken of in the Vedas, ‘sarveṣu vedokteṣu karmasu.’ The Vedas have spoken of numerous karmas. About these, ‘yāni uktāni anantāni phalāni.’ The Vedas speak about an endless amount of fruits, the results of actions. These are results such as attaining heaven, etc. Those results, ‘tāni na apekṣyante chet,’ if they shouldn’t be accepted, then why should they be performed as an offering to God? ‘Kimarthaṁ,’ why, ‘tāni īśvarāya iti anuṣṭīyante.’ Why should these be performed? What is the purpose of these?

In other words, if the results of karmas spoken of in the Vedas are unnecessary, then why must we perform these karmas as an offering to God? This is a question. Why do we have to perform these karmas without desire for their fruits? Here, where it is discussing karma, again it refers primarily to karmas of the Vedas. That is why Shankara says, ‘sarveṣu vedokteṣu,’ all of the karmas in the Vedas. As far as Shankaracharya is concerned, that is primary. Then, ‘listen to the answer to this question.’ ‘Iti,’ thus, ‘uchyate,’ is said, ‘śṛṇu,’ listen!

Then, Shankara commentates on the words of the shloka. Shankara says, ‘Just as in the world, various purposes like bathing and drinking are served by the reservoirs of water like a well, a tank and so forth, and they are all, in the same measure, served by a widespread flood, so too is the case as regards the

purpose of the Vedas. This is said as, ‘yathā loke kūpatadhāgādyanekasmin udapāni paricchinodake yāvān yāvat parimāṇaḥ snānapānādih arthaḥ phalaṁ prayojanaṁ saḥ sarvaḥ arthaḥ sarvataḥ saṁplutodake tāvan eva saṁpadyate.’

So, ‘yathā loke,’ in this world, ‘kūpatadhāgādi anekasmin udapāni.’ We normally obtain water from a well, a lake, or a pond. From these small bodies of water, we obtain water, ‘paricchinodake.’ These bodies of water are small. So, from these sources of water, like a well, lake, etc., yāvān yāvat parimāṇaḥ snānapānādih arthaḥ phalaṁ prayojanaṁ.’ What is the use of the water from these? What is the usefulness gained from small bodies of water? These are bathing, snāna, and drinking, etc. Here, the word ‘arthaṁ,’ means ‘utility.’ From small bodies of water, we gain a small amount of usefulness. Some use the water to bathe, or to drink.

All of these, ‘sa sarvaḥ arthaḥ,’ ‘sarvataḥ saṁplutodake tāvan eva saṁpadyate.’ So, all of the use we gain from these small sources of water, ‘sarvataḥ saṁplutodake,’ where there is a flood everywhere, ‘tāvan eva saṁpadyate,’ those uses are contained within that huge source of water. This is said through a simile. Whatever utility is gained through these small sources of water is contained in the bigger source of water. All of these utilities can be gained from this one source of water. This means if the source is very small, it can be used only for drinking, but not for any other uses like farming. This has a limitation. According to size of the source of water, it will have limitations for its utility.

At the same time, in a huge source of water, all utilities, such as for farming, water supply, etc., will be contained. All of these are contained in the huge source of water. Here, through an example, it is showing that the very small utilities we derive from a small object are contained within a bigger object. ‘Tatra antarbhavati iti arthaḥ.’ This means that the utilities contained in the small sources of water, such as a well, lake, etc., are all contained within the huge source of water.

Then, Shankara says, ‘So too is the case as regards the purpose of the Vedas. Here, ‘Vedas’ means the actions enjoined by them. The fruits of such actions are all included in the fruit of the realization of Truth won by an all-renouncing mendicant, a Brāhmana.’ This is said as, ‘Evaṁ tāvan tāvat

parimāṇaḥ eva saṁpadyate sarveṣu vedeṣu vedokteṣu karmasu yaḥ arthaḥ yat karmaphalaṁ saḥ arthaḥ brāhmaṇasya saṁnyāsinaḥ paramārthatattvaṁ vijānato.’

Here, why is this simile given? It said that the small utilities derived from a small source of water can be derived from huge source of water. Why was this said? This is explained. The karmas spoken of in the Vedas, ‘sarveṣu vedeṣu vedokeṣu karmasu,’ the fruits of those karmas that are spoken of, ‘yaḥ arthaḥ yat karmaphalaṁ,’ ‘saḥ arthaḥ,’ that results of karma, ‘brāhmaṇasya saṁnyāsinaḥ paramārthatattvaṁ vijānitaḥ.’ For a Brāhmaṇa, who knows the Reality, the principle of the supreme Truth.’ Here, the word ‘brāhmaṇa’ means a ‘sanyassi,’ a renunciate. The word ‘sanyassi’ means ‘karma tyāgi,’ one who renounces the fruits of karma.

The word ‘brāhmaṇa’ can also mean a temple priest, or a person who performs karma. To avoid that interpretation, Shankara says, ‘brāhmaṇasya saṁnyāsinaḥ.’ This means a Jnani, who renounces the fruits of all karmas, and who knows the Supreme Truth. For him, ‘yaḥ arthaḥ,’ that utility, ‘vijñānaphalaṁ,’ the fruit of the Wisdom of the jnani. What is the fruit of the Jnani’s vijñāna, his wisdom? It is moksha, Liberation. In that fruit, all of these fruits of karma are contained within. What is that? It says,

‘sarvataḥ saṁplutodakasthānīyaṁ,’ equal to a huge source of water that overflows everywhere, ‘tasmin,’ in that, ‘tāvān eva saṁpadyate tatra eva antarbhavati iti arthaḥ.’ So, the Vedas speak of numerous fruits of karma, from the performance of sacrifices. If each one of these is taken, they are each contained with the fruit of the Jnani’s Wisdom, which is Liberation. That is the meaning of what was said. As a pramāṇa, or authority to this, Shankara quotes to Chandogya Upanishad. It says, ~ ‘sarvaṁ tad abhisameti yat kinchit prajāḥ sādhu kurvanti yastadveda’iti śruteḥ.’ So, ‘sarvam tad abhisameti.’ Everything is contained within That. What is? ‘Yat kinchit prajāḥ sādhu kurvanti,’ whatever good deeds are performed by people, the fruit of all of these, ‘yas tad veda yatsa veda.’ In the worship of Brahman is contained the fruits of the good deeds of all people.’ Within the fruit gained through the worship of Brahman, which is Knowledge of That, is contained all the fruits of karma performed by people.

When other karmas are compared to that, these karmas appear to be very limited. The fruit of worshipping Brahman, which is Wisdom, is unlimited. That is what is said in this quotation. Therefore, the fruit of karma is very insignificant, while the fruit of sanyassa is unlimited. That is moksha. Then there is another quote. ‘Sarvaṁ karmākhilam’ iti cha vakṣyati.’ All of the fruits of karma are indicated here. All of these are concluded in the fruit of Jnana, Self knowledge. The fruits of all karmas are for the attainment of Jnana, the fruit of Jnana.

There was a question before. What was it? If a person doesn’t desire the fruit from any karma, then why must he perform those karmas as an offering to God? The answer is said here. The external fruit of karma is very insignificant. The performance of karma as an offering to God is for the attainment of Jnana, knowledge. When compared with the fruit of Jnana, the fruits of karma are very insignificant. Therefore, one should perform karma without desiring their fruits, as an offering to the Lord, and for His Grace. That is what is said.

Then it says, ‘tasmāt. Therefore, ‘before acquiring the fitness for practicing the discipline of Knowledge, those who are called upon to work, must do such works as promote limited ends, like those served by well, tanks, and so forth.’ This is said as, ‘prāk jñānaniṣṭādhikāraprāpteḥ karmaṇyadhikṛtena kūpatadhāgādhyarthasthānīyam api karma kartavyam.’

So, ‘prāk jñānaniṣṭādhikāra prāpteḥ,’ before a person gains the suitability for the practice of Jñāna Niṣṭā, before gaining the maturity for Jñāna Niṣṭā, what happens? ‘Karmaṇi adhikṛtena,’ he is an adhikari, a fit practitioner for Karma. What does he do? ‘Kūpatadhāgādhi sthānīyam,’ equal to the utility of a well, or tank, are these karmas. Still, ‘karma kartavyam.’ He must perform karma. He has no choice but to perform karma. Here, this idea is shown through a simile. Now look at the shloka.

‘Udapāne yāvān arthaḥ,’ the utility derived from a small source of water, ‘tāvān sarvataḥ saṁplutodake,’ all of these utilities can be gained from a huge source of water. Here, the word ‘udapāne,’ means a very tiny source of water. Thus, the numerous utilities one derives from different small sources of water, can be gained from an expansive, big source of water. This means that a person

may use one small source of water for bathing, another for drinking, and another for farming. These are all very small sources of water.

Like this, one performs very small karmas for numerous and different results. One performs one karma for cattle, another for sons, another for heaven, etc. Like that, one performs numerous karmas for separate fruits. For numerous utilities, one approaches separate sources of water. These are all very tiny sources of water.

All of these utilities can be obtained through a single huge source of water. If that is very vast, one can use the water to bathe, or to drink, or for farming, etc. Like that, 'vijānataḥ brāhmaṇasya,' for Sanyassi, who is a Jnani. This is the meaning given by Shankara, to indicate one who renounces karma and is established in Jñāna Niṣṭā. Therefore, the word 'brāhmaṇasya,' doesn't indicate a Vedic priest. For the jnani, 'sarveṣu vedeṣu tāvān,' the utility in all of the Vedas is contained within the fruit of Jnana. 'Vijānitasya brāhmaṇasya,' for the Jnani, who a sanyassi, 'sarveṣu vedeṣu tāvān,' that which is spoken of in all the Vedas. Here, Vedas refers to the Karma Khanda. All of the fruits of the karmas of the Vedas, are contained within that Jnana. Here, there are two things said. A Jnani, who is a sanyassi, does need to rely on karma. Before attaining that state, he has to depend of karma. This shows the specialty of the fitness for Jnana and Karma.

Yāvān arthe udapāne sarvataḥ saṁplutodake
Tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ. 2.46.

Karmaṇyevādhikārate mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mā karmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṁgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.

Shankara says, 'As for you, Arjuna.' This is 'tava cha.' In the previous shloka, Lord Krishna spoke about the case of Jnani who is a Sanyassi. He said that such a Jnani doesn't have to rely on any of these karmas. But what about you? The shloka says, 'To work alone you have the right, and never to the fruits. Don't be impelled by the fruits of works, and don't be tempted to withdraw from works.'

Shankara commentates on the words of the shloka. He says, 'you have the right only to perform work and not to undertake the discipline of knowledge.' This is, 'karmaṇyeva adhikāraḥ na jñānaniṣṭāyām te tava. So, it said, 'te,' for you, 'karmaṇyeva adhikāraḥ.' Your suitability is only in karma. The word 'eva,' means 'only.' Therefore, this means that there is no other suitability for you. 'Na jñānaniṣṭāyām.' You have no suitability for the discipline of Knowledge. Here, Jñāna Niṣṭā refers to the discipline of Knowledge, along with the renunciation of all karmas. You don't have the suitability for that. That is the meaning.

Here, the Lord says, 'Arjuna, it is not right for you to renounce karma.' This is said to awaken Arjuna. 'Your suitability is in karma.' What is meant by the word, 'adhikāram?' This means fitness, suitability. That is adhikāram. 'You have the suitability for performing karma. Adhikāra means suitability. What is meant here by suitability? If this is explained according to the system of varṇas and āśramas, Arjuna is a kṣatriya. The svadharma of a kṣatriya is war. That is attained now. You have the suitability to perform in that. Instead, you don't have the suitability for the discipline of Knowledge in sanyassa, along with renunciation of karmas.

And what about if we explain according to the guṇas? Arjuna has a predominance of the rajasic guṇa. This doesn't mean that Arjuna doesn't have the sattva guṇa. However, the rajasic guṇa is primary in Arjuna. That suitability of a person with a predominance of rajas is in karma alone. That is the person's suitability. Otherwise, it is not in Jñāna Niṣṭā. When this is said, there is another thing. Shankara says, 'While doing works, do not think you have the right to claim their fruits.' This is, 'tatra cha,' there also, 'karma kurvataḥ mā phaleṣu adhikāraḥ astu.' This is the explanation of the second phrase, 'mā phaleṣu kadāchana.' When we speak about the suitability for performing karma, it says, 'karma kurvataḥ mā phaleṣu adhikāraḥ astu.' You don't have the right to the fruit.'

The cause of a person's suitability is freedom. A person who performs karma has freedom within that karma. However, he has no freedom in the fruit. That is the meaning. Adhikāra' here means 'suitability.' That which creates this suitability is primarily freedom. This is said according to the Karma Yogi. This isn't about a mere performer of karma. For a Karma Yogi, he has freedom

within the karma. This means that he has control over the karma. However, for the fruit, it is different. We discussed this matter in the classes of the Brahma Sutras. It says there that karma is 'kartṛ tantra.' That which depends on the performer is karma. That is primary.

A person can perform the karma, or choose not to. He can do it directly, or indirectly. He can complete it, or leave it incomplete. The performer of karma has this kind of freedom. The performer of karma is called the 'kartā.' That is a specialty of karma. However, he has no freedom in the fruit. That karma creates various kinds of results. A single karma produces numerous results. In the producing of these numerous results, the performer has no freedom. Why? This is because the performer will sometimes be ignorant of the relationship between the karma and its result. Even if he knows that the karma will produce a result, there are so many circumstances in one karma. Therefore, sometimes, it isn't possible to be certain of the fruit that will be produced by the karma. Thus, a person has freedom in the karma, but not in its fruit.

Why? There is a law that connects the karma and its result. That law is not created by the Jiva. The Jiva doesn't produce it. Karma is the creation of the Jiva. The Jiva does that. This is what the Jiva does through the mind, body, and speech. However, the Jiva does not create the fruit of karma, or the relationship between the karma and its result, or the law that connects the karma and its result. These are the creations of God. Therefore, the freedom of a person is only in the karma.

For example, an example used by scientists often is cooking. The person who cooks has the freedom to cook the food. What does he do? He fills the pot with water, lights the stove, places the pot on the stove, heats the water, and cooks the rice, everything. A person can do or not do these according to his or her own preference or knowledge. A person has freedom in that. The power and intelligence for doing that is within that Jiva. However, after preparing the food, there is a process where the result comes as eatable food. It is not the cooker who performs that process. Instead, he merely performs the karma. He only heats the raw rice. That becomes food. In this, he has no freedom at all. There are laws that regulate how the raw rice becomes eatable rice. How does that happen? In such matters, in these laws, the Jiva has no freedom at all.

What do we say? This happens naturally. If you do this much, the raw rice will become food. There are two ways that a karma gives a result. One is the laukika result, or worldly result, and the other is the unworldly result, or alaukika result. What we see is the laukika result. We cook the raw rice, and this makes food. This is a laukika result. Even in laukika karmas, there will be alaukika results. However, in alaukika karmas, there is only alaukika results.

The example of a laukika, or worldly karma, is cooking. The example of an alaukika, or unworldly karma, are karmas such as a yagna, or sacrifice. Why is this called alaukika, unworldly? It is because these kinds of karmas exist only from the Vedas. Besides the Vedas, there is no other means to know about these karmas. The fruit of these karmas is not obtained in this world. There are different fruits, such as heaven. This isn't obtained here. Therefore, that is an alaukika karma. Thus, karmas are divided into two categories, in reference to the Vedas.

What is the specialty of laukika karmas? Their fruit is obtained directly, through the senses. Even the laws governing the fruits of karma aren't under our control. The results of these karmas are direct. Those karmas will produce a result. For example, the cooking will produce food. That result may come favorably, or it may come unfavorably. Having cooked, the result that we expect is in the form of food. However, it is not that the result will always be in the form of food. That may go wrong and be wrecked. It may not be eatable. Any other kind of defect may occur.

Sometimes, one cooks, but it doesn't produce food, because one is unable to finish the karma. Obstacles may come. This can happen in several ways. Whatever it is, the result of the karma, no matter what karma it is, will be directly experienced through the senses. This means that the result becomes directly experienced by the performer in that lifetime. However, alaukika, or unworldly karmas aren't like that. All of the fruits that are described for these aren't directly experienced. The Karma Kanda speaks about fruits of karma such as cattle, sons, etc. There is a special sacrifice for producing rain. However, even those kind of karmas don't produce results that are directly experienced. Why is this? One performs a yagna and it rains. However, the performer of the yagna is unable to determine whether it rained through the performance of the yagna.

Otherwise, it may be ordinary rain. It isn't possible to be certain about that. Sometimes, after having performed the sacrifice, it may rain. An ordinary intellect cannot determine the relationship between the sacrifice and rainfall.

However, the Vedas are accepted as a *pramāṇā*, an authority. They say, 'if this sacrifice is performed, there will be rain.' Therefore, a person can believe that the rain is the fruit of the *yagna*. It isn't possible to be certain about the relationship between *alaukika karma* and its result. Nor is it possible to be certain about the fruit of the *karma*. That is the difference between the two types of *karma*. We will discuss the relevance of these two kinds of *karma* in relation to *Karma Yoga*.

So, despite the fact that there are two different kinds of *karma*, there is a law. A person only has the suitableness, the freedom in the *karma*. That is what is referred to with the word, '*adhikāra*.' One doesn't have freedom over the fruit.' That is the meaning. Here, it is saying the primary principle that a *Karma Yogi* must understand in the performance of *karma*. Later, it says that the *Yogi* must have evenness of mind in the experiences of the opposing pairs of happiness and sorrow, fame and dishonor, etc. This is, '*samatvam yoga uchyate*.' If that *samatvam*, or evenness must be maintained in the performance of *karma*, the *Yogi* must understand the principle of *karma*.

If a person performs *karma* without understanding the principle of *karma*, there won't be any *yoga* seen in that *karma*. Only if the principle of *karma* is understood can the *karma* become *Karma Yoga*. That is why it says later, '*buddhiyukto jahātīha*.' This means, 'perform *karma*, united in *buddhi*, knowledge.' This means to understand the principle, the *tattvam* of *karma*. Only if *karma* is performed with this will it become *Karma Yoga*. Here, this is most primary in the principle of *karma*. In other words, how can a person gain this evenness of mind? One of the most primary means to this is said here, that a person has freedom over the *karma* alone, and not over its result. It is this knowledge. The performer of *karma* doesn't control the result. That is controlled by the law of *karma*, which is unknown to the *Jiva*.

No matter what kind of result it is, whether the primary result, or the secondary results, the law of *karma* created by God controls it. Lord Krishna says elsewhere in the *Mahābhārata*, '*gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*.' After saying

everything, this is said. The gati of karma, means all of the ways in which karma can act, in all the ways in which karma produces results. From performing this karma, what results are produced? The result of karma I am experiencing is cause from which karma? The intellect cannot grasp any of these matters. These laws of karma are unknown to us. Therefore, one should understand the principle of karma, and then perform karma. 'Karmanyeva adhikārah,' you only have the freedom to act. 'Mā phaleṣu kadāchana,' you don't freedom over the fruit.

Then how do we gain this samatvam, or evenness of mind? In the mind of the Karma Yogi, there will be detachment from the fruit of karma. This is because the nature of karma is to produce a result. If a karma is performed in the complete manner, for example, if the Vedic karmas are performed correctly with all of their sections, then they will definitely produce a result. What about worldly karma? They will surely produce a result. This is if the karma is performed completely without any obstacles. That is a thing included in the law of karma. So even if one doesn't have freedom over the fruit of karma, the result must happen. This is if the karma performed completely. That must simply happen.

Therefore, a person who understands the principle of karma doesn't desire the fruit of karma. In saying this, that the Karma Yogi doesn't desire the fruit of karma, there is something very principal. This is that for a Karma Yogi, there is no point in desiring the fruit of a karma. This is because karma must produce a result. There is no change at all for this law in worldly karmas. However, there is a change for alaukika, or unworldly karmas. If we consider the ordinary laukika karmas we perform, when we perform a karma, there is no need for us to desire a result. The longing for a result isn't necessary. Without hankering for the fruit, the karma will give a result. We can take cooking for example.

When a person cooks, it isn't necessary for him to desire, 'this must become food.' There is no kind of craving required for him to perform that karma. Negative desires and immoderate desire aren't needed. Not a single kind of desire is required. Without cultivating a single desire, he can cook. Still, the result must occur. Then a question may come? Suppose a person is hungry? How can he then perform a karma without desiring the fruit? Normally, in some

karmas, it isn't possible to perform them without some desire. This is in reference to a mere karmī, one who is not a Karma Yogi.

However, for a Karma Yogi, desire for the fruit of karma isn't necessary. Only awareness about the fruit is enough. Desire for the result and awareness about the result are different. The Karma Yogi isn't some fool who has no knowledge about the result of karma. A person who performs karma without thinking about the result is a fool. However, the karma yogi isn't like that. He knows about the result of the karma, and performs the karma. Knowing and desiring are two separate things.

However, he doesn't have any craving towards that. Why? He knows, in worldly karma, if the karma is performed, it will produce a fruit. This is general knowledge. This isn't knowledge of God, but common knowledge. A person who thinks logically according to cause and effect, and the relationship between these, will have the knowledge, if this action is performed, it will produce this result.' How? If one cooks, it will produce food.' He knows this.

That knowledge is enough. A Karma Yogi thus doesn't need to have desire in order to perform a karma. The hankering or desire for the fruit is what makes the mind disturbed. This means that this creates happiness and sorrow for the mind. Why? It is because he has desire for the result that he craves the fruit. If that result comes favorably, he is happy in attaining the fruit. Because he has desire for the fruit, if the result comes unfavorably, through the unfulfillment of the desire, he is sorrowful. This happiness and sorrow cause a break in the evenness of the mind. That is what happens to mere karmīs. When they act, they know about the result, and desire the result. When it comes favorably, they rejoice, and when it comes unfavorably, they suffer.

And what about a Karma Yogi? He knows about the result of the karma, but he doesn't desire it. Why? This is because the result isn't produced from that desire. He knows this principle. Instead, for the mere karmī, the favorable or unfavorable results of karma produce both happiness and sorrow. Therefore, for a Karma Yogi, it is enough to grasp the principle of karma. There, desire isn't the cause of the result. Generally, it is said about any action, 'knowledge, desire, action.' Then, there is a doubt as to if the Karma Yogi falls under this

category. This is a doubt for those who think, and also for those who do not think. This principle is active in the Karma Yogi.

However, the desire of the Karma Yogi isn't a desire towards the result. There may be different kinds of desire for the Karma Yogi. He may have a desire for the discipline of karma. He desires the Grace of God. Those are all the desires of the karma Yogi. All of these make the sadhak established in the discipline of Karma Yoga. This isn't desire for the result. It can be said that even such desires aren't possible. Actually, for the progress of the karma yogi, he should not even desire God's grace. This will be said later in the bhashya. Once we reach that part, we will discuss that. However, a person who enters into karma yoga will desire all of these; he will desire purity of mind (chitta śuddhi), he will desire the attainment of Self-knowledge (Jñāna prāpti). Because he is a mumukṣu, he will desire mokṣa, liberation. These are all desires. These desires are enough for the karma yogi. He acts out of these desires, and avoids the desire for the fruit of action.

Then a question will immediately arise; can a person perform karma without desire for the fruit? Who can do this? Only a karma yogi can do that. In the level of a mere karmī, this isn't possible. This is because the ordinary karmī is prompted to act from desire for the result. However, as far as the karma yogi is concerned, there is no desire for the result. We said before that the fruits of karma are endless. There are seen results, and unseen results. There is a primary result, and secondary results. In this way, there are endless fruits of karma. We discussed this in the previous class.

We took the example of cooking. When we normally perform karma, we will desire some kind of result or other. We don't perform karma without desiring something. The primary thing about that karma is that it must be one's svadharma, which makes the karma a sadkarma, or good deed. However, it isn't true that all good deeds can be said to be karma yoga. We said this before. We said that if a karma is performed without awareness of God, then that action isn't karma yoga. Or suppose one performs karma for the benefit of others. Just that doesn't make the karma karma yoga. That does not mean that one shouldn't help others.

Suppose we build a house. Generally, people build a house for themselves, for them to stay in. Here, we build a house for others to stay in. That is a sadkarma, a good deed. That is a virtuous karma. However, just from doing a good deed doesn't make the action karma yoga. No one has the right to claim, 'I'm building a house for others, so I'm performing karma yoga.' Just saying, 'I did the concrete,' doesn't make the action karma yoga. This doesn't mean that this isn't a good deed. That is definitely a meritorious karma.

However, what is needed for karma yoga? The performer of the karma must grasp this principle. Only if one performs karma after having understood the principle instructed by the Lord can it become karma yoga. Don't this, 'oh, we shouldn't have done this!' No, that is a virtuous deed. That is not a waste. That is punya, merit. We discussed before, the shloka, 'svalpam apyasya dharmasya.'

This is because selflessness is necessary for performing such a karma. That karma isn't for oneself. There, there is a piece of selflessness. Thus, it says, 'svalpam apyasya dharmasya.' Through even a small practice of that dharma, one is saved from great fear.' Still, no one should call that karma yoga. If it must be karma yoga, what is needed? This principle must be known properly.

The coming shloka says, 'buddhiyukto jahātīha.' United in knowledge, perform karma. That is primary. The Lord here instructs an awareness about karma yoga. Only if one performs karma along with that awareness will it become karma yoga. This means that karma yoga isn't such an insignificant and small subject that we are used to thinking it of. Only if a person has proper awareness about the cause, nature, and fruits of karma can a person bring this to his performance of karma. Otherwise, it will merely be a sadkarma, a good deed. I will be a mere sadkarma, a karma that produces merit.

'The karmas that we perform benefit others. Many poor people are helped by our actions.' All of these are situated on the side of punya, merit. They are on the side of goodness. All of that is fine. Where is all of that? In the worldly view. However, in the spiritual view, that isn't enough. We must progress more from that internally. The Lord says, 'united in knowledge, perform karma.' This is to perform karma, united in yoga. 'Yoga yukto bhavārjuna.' 'Arjuna, united in Yoga, act, perform your svadharma.' Shankara says that the karma yogi should

perform karma along with viveka, discrimination, and vijñāna, knowledge gained through experience. Only then does that become karma yoga.

One must understand the essence the phrase, ‘mā phaleṣu kadāchana,’ you don’t have the right to the fruits, you don’t have control over the fruit.’ This shloka in the Gita is very famous. There isn’t a person who doesn’t know it. Everyone says this. However, those who understand the essence of this are very few, only a few people. Only if one understands the meaning, can one practice it. Otherwise, it isn’t possible to perform karma yoga.

Some people think, ‘I’m a bhakta. I’m devoted to God. Is this necessary for me, karma yoga?’ Some think this. ‘Is this needed for a devotee of God?’ Some people say this word ‘bhakta’ as a kind of label. If one obtains this ‘label’ of being a bhakta, then this is no longer necessary. This karma yogi is not as dangerous as the so-called bhakta. Suppose a person says, ‘I’m performing karma yoga.’ Even if that karma isn’t karma yoga, that isn’t dangerous, because this is because he doesn’t know about karma yoga. That’s not his fault, because he doesn’t know. He doesn’t know, so even though he performs a good deed, he thinks, ‘I am doing karma yoga.’ That isn’t that dangerous a matter.

In my opinion, the most dangerous matter is bhakti. This is because there is the most acting in bhakti. This becomes a cheat for some, bhakti. This is because sometimes we imagine ourselves to have bhakti. In general, people say, there is more danger in Jñāna than in bhakti. However, I don’t feel that it is so. This is because there is the most acting and displaying in bhakti. If a person doesn’t have bhakti in his heart, he can act as if he has bhakti. This kind of acting isn’t possible in Jñāna. This is because if necessary, people can come and give him a beating. After that, they will ask, ‘what did you say?’

In bhakti, you can’t ask that question. All you need to do is namaskar, and live in that way. In karma yoga, other people will look to see the person acting. That isn’t needed in the other. In bhakti, one can be saved anywhere. Therefore, bhakti is the most dangerous thing. Is this needed in bhakti? Is karma yoga necessary? The most important factor of karma yoga is bhakti. ‘Remembrance of God.’ Karma yoga is impossible for a person without bhakti. That is why it is said that a person without faith in God cannot perform karma yoga. Here, also it will say in several parts. Shankara will say again and again.

The Lord says this in so many parts. 'Mām anusmara.' Remember Me, and act.' Thus, constant remembrance of God; that is bhakti, devotion. This is the bhakti we understand. There is the bhakti we don't understand in many. Let's not go there for now. The bhakti that we understand is remembrance of God. The karma yogi performs karma, along with remembrance of God. He doesn't mentally remember his ego, his abilities, the results, or any gain. Remembering God, what does the karma yogi do? He tries to attain the favor of God. If one doesn't desire this, that is the greatest. However, until then, he desires God's grace.

Thus, the karma yogi is the greatest bhakta. There is no difference in true karma yoga and the path of devotion. It can be said that the external practices of a bhakta are karma yoga. Otherwise, it can be said that the inner attitude of a karma yogi is bhakti. Both of these are situated together. Therefore, it isn't possible to see these as two. The Gita speaks about these together. Wherever it speaks about remembrance of God, there will be bhakti, true devotion. That is something that cannot be separated from karma yoga. It is that remembrance of God that inspires a person to act without desire for the results.

We said before, that in the fruit of Jñāna, all other karma fruits are contained. The mind has a nature to hold onto insignificant things. The mind is constantly holding onto small and petty fruits of karma. If the mind must let go of these, you have to show the mind a bigger fruit. Therefore, greater than the insignificant thoughts of karmic fruits is the thought of God. Only if that thought is given will it be possible for the mind to leave these other thoughts. When this thought about the karmic fruits is discussed, we don't just mean fruits like heaven.

Now we perform worldly actions. There are numerous fruits that we desire in these worldly karmas. Two people are engaged to construct two separate houses. One person thinks, 'if the other person's house is bad, mine will look good.' That will be the desire. If we desire for our house to appear good, what will we think? 'There is no problem if other person's house is a little ugly.' That is how the thoughts about the fruits will go. The thoughts about the karmic fruits can also be about recognition.

Suppose we build a nice house. Then we may feel proud, look back, and say, 'I built that house.' One will become proud. In this way, thoughts about the fruit will enter through different ways, by being proud in our work. 'It looks nice. I am not so insignificant'. Thinking about the fruits will go like that. Then, what do we think? 'We helped to build houses for others, selflessly.' There is no selflessness in that. This is because the building of the houses was for the respect given, for the adoration of others. Others will comment 'See, the budget was for 20,000 rupees, and he completed the work with just 10,000 rupees. That is much ability he has.'

When all of this is heard, the mind feels some contentment. These are things that we accept as the fruit of our karma. When others praise us, we feel happy. They praise our abilities. This isn't all. Then, after having built all of these houses, one will get a high status. Then we accept these also, position and respect, as the fruits. This is how it will go. This is the way of the ordinary person's thoughts. I'm just telling an example. No one should feel hatred towards me. Since I've said things in a way that people can understand, if this has touched anyone inside, let go of it.

These are things that an ordinary person who performs action desires. We normally say, 'gain contentment through that action.' Otherwise, we gain acceptance from society through that action. Or, we get other fruits through the action; fame, position, respect, all of this will be there. Therefore, when this happens, we cannot say that these actions are performed out of selflessness. That's not possible. That is for one's own selfishness. However, there is at least a portion of selflessness. What is that? We aren't staying in that house. That is selfless. That is virtuous, surely.

And what about the other matters? Karma yoga doesn't come into this action. Why? Our mind desires the fruits of karma on many different levels. In other words, the mind accepts many things as the fruit of karma which we do not consider to be the fruit of karma. That doesn't happen to a karma yogi. That is the difference between a karmī and a karma yogi. Wherever a person feels pride in thinking, 'I did this much,' there is not karma yoga. Now it says next, 'karmaphala hetur mā bhū kadāchana.' For whatever reason, we should never have longing for the fruit of karma in the mind. All that we said before is तृष्णā,

craving. That is the external effulgence of the internal desires. We feel pride in the action; we feel contentment from the action; we like when other people praise that action. Some people think, 'How sincerely I worked, but nobody recognizes me'. When that action is criticized, one feels sorrow. All of this are the external moods of craving. None of this can happen to the karma yogi.

Only then can the action we perform become karma yoga. If it must become karma yoga, what must happen? There must be correct knowledge and understanding about the karma, the fruit, and the performer. Like that, united in knowledge, perform karma. That is the meaning. Now for the matter I started to discuss. This is in two ways; laukika, or worldly karma, and alaukika, or unworldly karma.

What is it for laukika karma? Our desire is not the cause for the fruit of karma. However, alaukika karmas aren't like that. For alaukika karmas, the cause of the karmic fruit is desire. Only if there is desire in the performance of these karmas will they bear fruit. We know that the alaukika karmas refer to Vedic karmas. Pūrva Mīmāṃsā discusses this in more depth. Several ācharyas in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā have discussed this subject deeply and in detail, such as Jaiminiya, Prabhākara, etc. there is one thing that all of them say. In brief, this is that the special quality of the performer of Vedic karmas is desire. This means that a performer of the Vedic rites and rituals, such as yagna, must have desire for the fruit. Otherwise, these karmas won't produce the result. This was examined in the commentary previously.

A person performs a yagna, with desire for the result. In the middle of the yagna, his desire is destroyed, but he continues to complete the karma. However, that yagna will not give the fruit. That is a big principle, in relation to Vedic karma. Then, we should keep this in our mind, when it says, 'renounce desire and perform karma.' When this is said, what is meant? 'That karma doesn't give fruit.' This doesn't just refer to laukika karma. This also affects Vedic karma. In laukika karma, or worldly karma, even if one performs action without desiring the fruit, there will be a fruit. And what about for Vedic karma? If one performs a Vedic rite without desire, then it won't produce a result. Why? This is because the fulfilling of the karma did not occur. Only if the karma is complete can it

give a fruit. In the language of the Karma Kanda, this is called vaigunyam. That will thus occur.

That is why it says, ‘perform karma without desiring.’ This doesn’t just aim at the evenness of the mind. We will discuss in detail about the fruit of karma. We haven’t entered there. The fruit of the worldly karma we perform is of two types; the primary fruit and secondary fruits. We have discussed all of this before. If the listener feels that this is new, then I am not to be blamed. The primary fruit of any karma, whether it be Vedic or worldly, cannot be changed. The primary fruit of karma is pleasure and pain. These are the primary result of any karma, be it Vedic karma or worldly karma; pleasure, or pain. After that, come the secondary fruits, called gauna fruits.

The most important among the gauna fruits is birth. This is explained next. We should keep this in mind to understand the phrase, ‘mā phaleṣu kadāchana.’ Thus, we can say that the most primary fruits of karma are birth, and the experiences of pleasure and pain. For Vedic karmas, if their fruit must be experienced, one must take birth, and then experience both pleasure and pain. In some of the worldly karmas we perform, the primary fruit will remain the same, but these karmas don’t directly cause birth. Still, that becomes a cause for birth. Why? How does that karma produce a result? When we know this, we will understand. We know, karma is primarily through mind, speech, and body.

Whenever we perform ‘action,’ there will be a ‘reaction.’ That is the samskāra of karma. It isn’t possible to destroy an action merely by refraining from acting. That is why we study in Science about the action and reactions. That is also spoken of in spiritual science. There it says, ‘action,’ and here, ‘karma.’ It isn’t possible to destroy a karma without it leaving a samskāra. It creates the samskāra, and then is destroyed. It is according to the nature of the samskāra, that a result is produced. So, no matter what karma one performs, that karma will produce a samskāra. That samskāra will give a fruit, according to the karma. This is not simply said in the śāstras. This is our experience. We should look at our own experience and see this.

What is our experience? We eat food. That is an experience. When we eat food, what happens? We feel contentment. That is the fruit of the action. Thus, there will be the fruit produce from the karma, which is contentment. This

contentment that we experience is ultimately sukham, pleasure. This happens when the mind becomes connected to the act of eating. Once the food is ingested, it is digested in a pleasing manner. The tastes of the food are appreciated by the mind. When all of this happens, the mind feels happiness, pleasure, and contentment. That is the primary fruit of the karma.

There are numerous gauna, or secondary fruits. They are in different ways, like our body gets good health etc. We become able to perform more work. This is in any level. We are able to think more, act more, etc. All of these are the secondary fruits of the karma. The secondary fruits of karma are endless. Once the food enters within, this effects the condition of the nādis in the body, the condition of digestion, all of the renewal processes in the body, even things that are unable to be determined by modern scientists occur from this. This process started from the food creates an endless amount of material, secondary results. Through all of these fruits, what is the main thing that we obtain? It is contentment. This occurs if all facets of the karma happen properly.

And what if some factors are unfavorable? We may have bad digestion. What if that happens? Then we experience dukham, suffering. That may also come from the result of eating. This is the fruit of karma. This is through an example. This can be understood by taking and examining any action. Then what is the difference there between karmi and karmayogi? The karmī eats food, and the karma yogi eats food. Both perform the same action. Now, somebody asked this about karma yoga. 'A Karma Yogi does not eat without chewing thoroughly. Karma yoga is to eat the food with alertness.' This means to eat food with great alertness. Is this karma yoga?

The question was to what is the difference between these two. One eats food with zeal and in a hurry. So isn't this the difference? There is a reason for this question. This was asked after attending a class on karma yoga. This wasn't asked for no reason. Otherwise, nobody would think like this. Then we will know, 'oh, they taught like that.'

'If you eat food with great alertness, that is karma yoga.' You should pay attention to each swallow. Which teeth in what way is chewing the food, like that. If you pay that kind of attention, it becomes karma yoga. I'm not saying that is bad; it isn't. That is good for digestion. If you chew thoroughly the saliva

will mix with the food and is good for proper digestion. Then digestion will take place properly, and this will be good for the body. All of that is good. It is good to teach people to eat food one swallow at a time. However, it is sad to say that that is karma yoga. That is not karma yoga.

Then what is the difference between the karmī and the karma yogi? This person says, 'in whatever action we perform, if we give full attention, then it becomes karma yoga.' No, that's not it. It is good to perform every action with full awareness. It is good if the karma yogi performs karmas with attention. I have no difference of opinion in that. 'A karma yogi performs actions with good alertness.' That's a good thing. However, there, in Karma yoga, the principle of karma yoga will be there. Where will the principle of karma yoga be?

Both people eat food. The fruit of that food is contentment. Normally, when a person eats food, he has a big sankalpa, a negative vasana towards the fruit of that food, the contentment. He keeps that negative desire in the mind. What is that contentment? It can be the taste of the food, the quality, etc. He has sankalpas, imaginings about all of these. In his mind, there is a negative desire towards the fruit of that food, about that contentment. That negative desire is reflected onto the food. It may be on the object of food that the negative desire reflects. Therefore, what does an ordinary person do, because of that negative desire? He lives for the food. That is what an ordinary person does. What is the primary goal of his life? To eat good-tasting food. That is his goal.

For that, he will suffer any kind of sacrifice. For him, there is no other thought. He is like an animal. Animals have the feeling, 'in whatever way, I should fill my stomach.' However, his thought goes further; 'my food must be the most tasty. I should obtain that food at any means. That is the way his thought goes. This is the mental attitude an ordinary person has towards this action. It is the negative desire within him that prompts him to perform that act.

And what about a karma yogi, if we take this same example? He also eats food. However, there is only a single difference. The primary matter is not, 'he eats with alertness,' or 'he eats without alertness,' or 'he eats tasty food,' or 'he eats food that isn't tasty.' He doesn't have the craving in the mind for the food or the pleasurable experience caused by the food. That is the only difference.

Because he doesn't have any ārthī, or craving, he is not an ārthan, a person who suffers. A person with ārthī is an ārthan.

He doesn't have any craving in relation to matters of food. If there is a negative desire, what happens? If the ordinary person doesn't get the food, he will become sorrowful. If the food isn't digested properly, he will be sorrowful. Even if the food is digested, he has the sorrow, 'oh, it is gone!' Like this, any matter can cause him sorrow. If he enters the kitchen, he thinks for a long time. He has to think about food matters for a long time. This is in different levels. Thus, because he has arthī, craving, he becomes an ārthan, sorrowful. He leaps into the sorrows related to food matters.

And what about the yogi? He eats food. However, because he doesn't have craving, arthī, he never becomes sorrowful, an arthan. He never causes this action to disturb his evenness of mind. He may sometimes get good food. He will eat that. If he is left only with bad food, and he has to eat it, he doesn't curse it. He doesn't praise the good food. He eats what comes to him that is eatable. In other words, all of the factors that disturb the ordinary people in eating food don't disturb the karma yogi. That is the meaning. What is the cause of this? It is because there is no craving in his mind.

What does he do in all matters related to food? He doesn't break his evenness of mind. Then, what about a person who is practicing karma yoga? He understands, 'it isn't the action of eating that is harmful to me. However, it is the craving in the mind in all these matters. That is what harms me. That makes me jump from pleasure to pain, etc.' Then there may be a question; if a karma yogi eats food, won't he experience contentment? If the karma yogi experiences bad digestion, won't he feel sorrow? There are those who ask this.

Yes, all of that will occur. When food is eaten, contentment happens. However, that contentment isn't the contentment for fulfilling a person's negative desires. Instead, that is the natural result from eating food. That is the transformation of the mind. It may be pain or pleasure. That isn't cause from desire. Whenever these are cause by desire, the nature of both pleasure and pain become different. Then they become intense, more intense, and intensely intense. This kind of change in their experience doesn't occur to the karma yogi. The spontaneous unavoidable fruit will occur. That is where it stops. It doesn't

go before or after that. That much must occur, due to the law of God. 'Action will produce a result.' It isn't requested here to avoid that.

'Mā karmaphala hetur bhū.' This phrase, 'don't become a cause to the fruit of karma,' a very expansive meaning. When an ordinary person eats food, this produces the result. This creates an infinite amount of results, along with a succession of happiness and sorrow. Thus, the person becomes the cause of this. Why? It is because of his craving that this lineage of happiness and sorrow is created.

And what about for a karma yogi? The law of karma itself causes the fruit of karma. The Karma Yogi doesn't create any fruits. There, this lineage of sukham and dukham doesn't occur. It isn't the karma yogi that creates the unavoidable fruit of action. That is karma, the nature of karma. That is the specialty of the antaḥkaraṇa. That is how it will transform.

The karma yogi is devoid of thought in that matter. The Karma Yogi has no anxiety over those fruits, no disturbance, no longing in the mind. In the other person, all of these happen. Therefore, the karma yogi never becomes a cause to the fruit of karma. The mere karmī, however, becomes a cause to the fruits of karma. In this way, through numerous examples we can explain this. However, we should think with our own experience before us. There's no point in thinking about another person's karma and karmic fruits. Each person should place their own experience before them and ask, 'how does karma come in me?' 'How does the fruit of karma happen to me?' 'What are the causes for that result?' One should place his or her own experience before them and think. The rishis wrote these matters by taking their own experience before them and thinking. A person can understand this without the scriptures.

That is how several Gurus understood these matters. Without studying the scriptures, they took their own experience before them and thought. What is our nature? We are hardly aware of our experiences. Only those who are truly aware can deeply recall and analyze their experience. For them, there is no need of any saṅgha. They are called mahatmas. Those of us who are unable to do that must rely on the scriptures. This is because that kind of discriminative faculty isn't developed within us. Once this inner discriminative faculty is developed, then

there is no need to depend on the scriptures. Therefore, it is enough if we think about these matters, karma, and karma yoga, through our own experience.

‘A person taught us. A person gave us a new idea. A person put light into our head.’ You need not think that. Each person must bring light into their own head. That’s not possible for another to do. Is it possible for another person to make a person’s head lighted, like with a torch? No, that’s not possible. It isn’t possible for that to come from outside. Each person must gain his or her own light. We should take our own experience and think. When we think, ‘what is the suitability in karma? What is the lack of suitability in karma?’ when we think by ourselves, and understand; only then can that become our own experience.

Otherwise, that won’t go to the level of experience. ‘Book knowledge,’ ‘intellectual knowledge,’ like this, the knowledge will stay only in these levels. If it must be brought into one’s own experience, we must take our own experience before us and think. Some will say, ‘we are karma yogis. We don’t have time to think.’ Then I don’t have anything to say. If there is time, and we take our own experience before us and think, these matters will come into our own experience. We will become aware by ourselves, ‘this is correct.’ Only if this awareness is gained from our own inner Self will it be of benefit. Otherwise, karma yoga sits before us like a picture book. It sits before us like a book we have studied, or as a book to be studied.. This means that it didn’t do us any good in our individual life. Therefore, think and consider. Now we can look at the shloka.

Karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mā karmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṁgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.

AUM AMRITESHVARYAI NAMAH