

Remembering the Guru Parampara, we begin our discussion on the Bhagavad Gita, Shankara Bhashya, Chapter 2, Verse 47.

**Karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mākarmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṁgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.**

This is a specialty of karma yoga. How should one understand karma yoga? That is what we are discussing here. Most importantly, it says, 'karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe.' You have the suitability for the karma. 'Mā phaleṣu kadāchana.' The Jiva can never have freedom over the result. This is what was said. Therefore, it says next, 'mā karmaphalahetur bhūḥ.' Don't ever become a cause for the fruits of karma.' That is what we are discussing.

We discussed what the fruits of karma are. Primarily, happiness and sorrow are the results of karma. Each karma has numerous fruits. There is a primary result, and secondary results. The primary result is the experience of pleasure or pain. The secondary results are things such as rebirth, etc. There are both known and unknown results of karma. Thus, the results of karma are of two kinds. There is the result that one knows, and the result one doesn't know. Like this, the fruits of karma are endless. 'Don't become a cause for these fruits of karma.' That is the meaning.

Perform karma. Don't become a cause for their fruits.' That is the specialty of the karma yogi. Normally, when an ordinary person performs a karma, he becomes a cause to the results of that karma. We have discussed this idea in some places in detail. When we have such a detailed discussion, some will think, 'the Lord only said this much to Arjuna.' 'Karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadāchana.' We are discussing this for hours. Shouldn't the Lord have also discussed in detail?' Aren't we doing something the Lord didn't do? Then isn't this too much speaking?' Some people will feel this in their mind. 'Is a discussion this drawn out necessary?'

When we go to a long discussion like that, how will the relationship between the discussion and this be? Will we leave the subject?' These kinds of

doubts will come to the mind. These are questions asked by some who pay close attention to satsang. Is this long explanation and discussion necessary? Are these thoughts related to the subject?' This kind of thinking is necessary. I have said this in several places.

People have different attitudes towards the Gita. Some cover the Gita with saffron silk cloth. They wave ornamented fans before it. Thus, they conduct arati and puja to the Gita. There are special āraṭi shlokas for the worship of the Gita. There are people who chant that and worship with ghee lamps. That is a great adoration and devotion to the Gita. That is how some do. Or some daily read from the Gita. They memorize the verses, keeping them in their memory. There are some who gain contentment from this.

Some aren't like that. They read the Gita and understand the meanings of the words. They study the Gita, through understanding the meanings of the words and sentences. However, what does the Lord say here? The Lord says one or two things about the Gita. When we have this discussion, and we think very deeply about all of this, if we must avoid thinking that this is too much speaking, one thing is said by the Lord. 'Iti guhyatamaṁ śāstraṁ.' This Gita is ultimately guhyaṁ, of a secret nature. This is said. Then it says also, 'guhyād guhyataram.' It's not enough to simply say that this is a secret. This is more secret than any other secret.'

For those who wave lights before the Gita, and those who understand the word-meanings of the Gita, there is nothing secret. They think, 'what is secret about what the Lord says?' You can read and understand; 'karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe.' You have the right only to karma.' What is secret about this?' This is clear, isn't it?

No. After saying that this Gita is a secret, what does the Lord say in the end? 'vimṛṣaitad taccheṣṇa.' That is what the Lord says. That is the importance. This means to think deeply about the matters spoken of in order to understand what is said in Gita. It means to understand the essence of what is necessary. Therefore, that is why we are having a lot of discussion. This means that we must think very deeply. Only by thinking very deeply can we understand the idea expressed in the Gita. It's not enough to understand the appearance idea

expressed through the Gita's translation to understand the Gita. Therefore, the Lord says, 'āśeṣena tad vimṛṣya.'

When we think about the Gita, all of these thoughts will come. This isn't something that must be understood through reading. Instead, it is something that must be thought of and made one's own. Here, we are discussing about the method of Karma Yoga. There are numerous things in the Gita that we won't be able to grasp if we think about them. There are many things we won't be able to grasp, even if we think about them in the Gita. It is said that there are things that neither the Devas or Asuras can understand within this. Therefore, if we think about these, we won't grasp everything. We may understand some things.

So, because the Gita speaks of things that must be understood through deep reflection, it is called, 'guhyaṭamam,' the most secret. Often, Shankara says that for 'prākṛta buddhi,' one with an uncultured mind, this is difficult to grasp. This isn't said in a bad way. All ordinary people are like that, 'prākṛta buddhi.' In their minds, the space for the Gita is very small. The Gita will have to pound in to enter. There is no space there for the Gita. Therefore, for imbibing these matters into our practical lives, it is necessary to think about these things connected to our day-to-day life. Then only we will be able to understand a small piece.

Some people say about the Gita, 'The Lord understood everything He said in the Gita. And what about Veda Vyāsa? He understood $\frac{3}{4}$ of it. So Lord Vyāsa grasped $\frac{3}{4}$ of this. Then, because Sanjay was very intelligent, he grasped $\frac{1}{2}$ of it. And for Arjuna, he understood only $\frac{1}{4}$. Then what about us? Thus, there is no other way other than thinking about this, to know what is said. That is what all of the commentators of the Gita do. This is true for all the major commentators, who were both Jnanis and great pandits. This commentary is a form of thinking. After thinking about several things, they revealed them.

It wasn't possible for Arjuna to think deeply about these matters, because he had to step into the battle immediately after. That is why Arjuna says later, 'I have forgotten. Please reveal it to me again.' Forgetting is not Arjuna's fault. This is because this is a matter that is that deep. Therefore, a long discussion and reflection on these matters is of utmost importance. That is what the Lord Himself advises. 'I have only told you this much. Now you go and think, and

understand.’ There, these are matters that are concealed. Through thinking, we must bring them out into the open. These are within. Otherwise, we can just go through the shloka. ‘Karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe.’ If we merely chant this our entire life, it will just remain as words. That’s not enough. That is why the Lord says this, if there is any doubt. ‘vimṛṣaitad,’ means for us to discuss, think, and everything.

Here, we are discussing how to not become a cause for the fruits of karma. There is a reason for us discussing more in this shloka. This is a famous shloka in the Gita. Secondly, the realm that we are situated in is the realm of karma. After discussing this, we may benefit, at least a little. I don’t have the delusion that having heard this, everyone here will change into karma yogis. However, discussing and trying to understand will help one. This won’t ever be a waste. Therefore, we are thinking more about this. How can we not become a cause to the fruit of karma?

We spoke about the fruits of karma. Primarily, this is the experience of pleasure and pain. What is repeated again and again in this section dealing with karma yoga? ‘samatvam yoga uchyate.’ Karma Yoga is the samatvam, the evenness of the mind. That is the sign, the indication of the Karma Yogi. Whoever has evenness while performing karma is a karma yogi. The karma being performed must be one’s svadharma. There is no point in saying that the karma being performed must be for the benefit of others. This is because the karma yogi performs action while sacrificing the ego. He renounces selfishness and acts. Surely that will be beneficial to others in the worldly level of experience.

In the view of the world, that action will be seen as beneficial to others. However, how is this in the spiritual view? In the spiritual view, that action is for himself. I said this the other day. In the spiritual view, that act is for himself. He performs it for him. How is this? He acts for his own purity of mind, chitta śuddhi. He doesn’t do anything for the world. However, in the worldly view, that becomes an act beneficial to others. That is not true. In truth, it is performed out of Selfishness. It is for himself. The action performed for oneself becomes beneficial to others. Why? This is because the person

renounces ego there. He renounces the selfishness of the ego, the ahaṁkāra. It is not that he simply performs an action that is good for others.

No matter what karma the Karma Yogi performs, even though it may be seen in the worldly view as benefiting others, in the spiritual view, it is for himself. It is for the purity of the antaḥkaraṇa. There, it is not the normal meanings of 'for oneself' and 'for others' that are meant. This isn't 'service to the world.' What is primary for a Karma Yogi? That is mental purity, chitta śuddhi. His center of focus is the purity of the antaḥkaraṇa. All other matters come secondary, such as serving the world, etc.

The actions that the Karma Yogi performs will be for the good of the world. However, his attention won't be in the world; it will be in himself. He practices identification with his own inner Self; not the world. Sure, his action will benefit the world, but what does the karma yogi do? The shraddha, the focus of the karma yogi is within himself. It isn't in the karma, but in the karmī, the performer of the karma. There, he renounces the ego. For what does he renounce the ego? It says here, 'mā karmaphalāhetur bhūḥ.' This is to avoid becoming a hetu, a cause to the fruits of karma. That is why he renounces the ego. He performs action without the bhāva, 'I am acting.' That is the meaning of renouncing the ego.

When acting, the bhāva, 'I am acting,' will come in the mind. Why is this? This happens when we give over-importance to the karma we perform. This doesn't happen always. We don't constantly repeat 'I am acting, I am acting..' when we perform our actions. However, that attitude will come. That can come in any stage of the karma. Suppose we are able to perform a karma very well, or if we get recognition from society for our work. Or else, suppose others praise our work, or if we desire any worldly gain from our action. These can be a high position, respect, money, fame, acceptance, etc. When these thoughts come in the mind, the attitude of 'I' will come. Throughout the action, what happens? We are in ātmavismṛtiti, self-forgetfulness. Whenever we perform an action with great interest, we don't constantly repeat, 'I, I, I..' One acts, forgetting himself. However, when does the 'I' come? It comes in relation to the fruit of the action.

These are ordinary fruits of action. What are the worldly results of good deeds? It is these acceptance, praise, position, respect, money, fame, etc. These

are all the secondary fruits of karma. When the performer of the karma becomes connected to these fruits, what happens? Then the attitude of 'I' comes. Karma yoga is to renounce that attitude. In another way, we can say that the attitude of 'I' is what connects the Jiva to the fruit of karma. If that 'I' attitude doesn't come, then these fruits don't have any relationship to the Jiva. Suppose we are praised after performing work. 'I was able to do this beautifully.' 'I was able to do this in a way that others will praise.' It is only when that kind of attitude comes that we become bound to the praise. Otherwise, the karma will be left behind, and the performer will stand aside, separate.

All of this is what is called asakti, attachment. It is through this ahamta, the attitude of 'I' that causes the Jiva to be attached to the fruits of karma. This is the attitude of 'I.' In sanskrit, this is called 'ahamta.' This doesn't mean the word 'ego' that we use in a negative way in Malayalam. That isn't what we are discussing. We should pay attention to that. 'He has such a big ego.' This means that the person is inconsiderate. He doesn't obey anyone. That isn't the meaning here. Here, where we are discussing the scriptures, the word 'ahanta' doesn't mean this kind of negative ego. Instead, this means the natural feeling of 'I.' That is the only meaning here. It doesn't mean inconsiderateness, selfishness, etc, here.

Normally, the word 'ego' is used to indicate a negative emotion. That isn't what we are discussing. In the sections where we are discussing karma yoga, the word 'ahanta,' or 'ego,' means the spontaneous, constant effulgence of 'I' in the mind. That is the meaning. When a person thinks about a karma, that becomes active. A person performs a karma in its entirety. He completes the karma in the correct manner. This is called the 'performance' of the karma. There also, ahanta will come, the attitude of 'I.' 'I am able to do this well.' He will feel this. All of this is ahanta. The ahanta will raise its head immediately.

We use the word 'I' in conversation, don't we? When we speak, we use the word 'I,' when we think, we use the word 'I.' Ahanta doesn't come just from saying like that. To avoid that, instead of saying 'I,' some people say 'we.' This just from saying like that, ahanta won't leave. If there is ahanta, then whatever language you use, fine. Whether we use the word 'I' or 'you', etc., the ego will remain. That can't be improved through changes in language. That is an attitude

of the mind. The attitude of 'I' is a modification of the antaḥkaraṇa. That binds the Jiva to the fruits of karma at all times. This is the worldly condition of karma. When an ordinary person, a worldly man performs karma, the karma will produce fruits, and the person's ahanta will constantly bind him to those.

So if the ahanta binds the Jiva to the fruit of karma, what happens? Asamatvam, or disequilibrium of mind occurs. Evenness won't occur. How does that happen? We said before that the primary fruit of karma are happiness and sorrow. That is generally in three types. This can be divided into 3 ways; intense, medium, and weak. These are 'tīvram, madhyam, and mandam. These are the three. We know all of these; it is just that this is explained in a scientific way.

In pain and pleasure, we sometimes experience intense pain. That is an intense experience. This can be in pain or pleasure. When a person who is very desirous attains the object of desire, he experiences intense happiness. These are ordinary experiences. A person strongly desires to drink milk pudding. He gets some, and experiences that. In the mind, there will be great delight. That is an intense experience. What happens in this intense experience? There will be the intense modification of ahanta, the ego. The pleasure is a modification of the mind, and so is the ahanta, the attitude of 'I.' That must be understood especially.

The intense modification of the antaḥkaraṇa is an intense experience of either pleasure or pain. This experience is called samvedana. This has a specialty. There is a specialty of the experiences of pleasure and pain within the inner instrument. This isn't like knowing external objects. We have discussed before, that the antaḥkaraṇa, the inner faculty, is along with the reflection of Consciousness, chit-chāya. The antaḥkaraṇa is full of chaitanya, Pure Consciousness, in all times. There, after there is a modification in the antaḥkaraṇa, there is no other knowledge needed for the Jiva to grasp this. In other words, take the external objects. The book is situated. That book, in truth, is a modification of that pure consciousness. This can be said in a certain level.

However, for grasping that, another kind of knowledge is necessary. This is because that is a tamasic modification. We normally say, this is 'book knowledge,' when we know the book. However, the knowledge of pain and

pleasure isn't like that. Pleasure and pain are the transformations of the antaḥkaraṇa, and a sattvic transformation. These are situated closer to the chaitanya, Pure Consciousness. Whenever pleasure or pain is experienced in the antaḥkaraṇa, at that time, we cannot know prevent knowing it. If this book is seated here, I can not know about the book. If my mind isn't there, I cannot know about it.

Pleasure and pain aren't like that. Once their transformation occurs in the mind, one can only know it. To have pleasure and pain in the mind, and not experience them; that can never happen. Then what happens there? When I know the book, which is outside, I know it on the external level. Pleasure and pain aren't like that. These are classified as intense, medium, and dull. It isn't that every experience fits perfectly within one these categories; this is said as a general rule. Pleasure and pain can modify in 3 ways within the antaḥkaraṇa. When there is an intense modification of pleasure in the mind, that is an intense samvedana, or experience of the pleasure. In this case, we know the pleasure or pain as intense. That comes to our attention, that this is very powerful.

When this comes as pleasure, we take to great delight. When it comes as pain, it is experienced as intense suffering. That is experienced. There, what happens? What is the medium through the Jiva experiences this? It is the attitude of 'I.' At the same time, in the same level, the mind is modified as both the experience of pleasure or pain, and as the bhāva of 'I.' In all this, it is the chaitanya, Pure Consciousness, which supports this, and pervades the entire antaḥkaraṇa. This is said to be a sākṣi bhāsi, the Witness. This is discussed in some Advaita texts. Then you will ask, 'in which book is this said?' This is in Madhusūdana Sarasvati's works. I won't say the name of the book because I know there is no use.

Then what happens? The antaḥkaraṇa exists along with the reflection of Pure Consciousness. I have explained this concept of the reflection of Consciousness in the Brahma Sutra classes. That is not like the ordinary way we think of an image and reflection. This is said as an example. This means that the antaḥkaraṇa can never become separate from Chaitanya, Pure Consciousness. It is situated in Chaitanya. It is full of Consciousness. All of this

is said. In that condition, if pleasure and pain appear, when we experience pleasure and pain, what does this mean? According to that experience, the antaḥkaraṇa transforms, and according to the intensity of that transformation, the ahanta, the feeling of 'I' is modified powerfully. The antaḥkaraṇa modifies in the form of the ahanta. What does the Jiva do? Through the medium of the ahanta, the Jiva experiences pleasure and pain. In the unconditioned state of the Atman, there is no experience. When all of these experiences take place, what does the Atman do? It says in the Puruṣa Suktam, 'tripādasyāmṛtaṁ divi.' This means that it is pure, situated above and beyond all of this. There none of this occurs. That is why I am saying that the Jiva experiences these modifications, not that the Atman does. That is why in the Gita, when these subjects are discussed, instead of saying 'Atman,' the word 'dehī' is used. This means 'one with a deham, a body, the Jiva.' All of these matters apply to the Jiva. In the true condition of the Atman, none of this occurs.

There, there is neither bondage nor liberation. The Atman is always situated beyond this. So, what happens when pleasure and pain are experienced intensely? The Jiva becomes completely identified with the ego, the ahanta. What is the cause that produces that intense experience? It is the desire within the Jiva. It is due to the powerful vāsanās of previous lives. That is why if we look at someone who obtains milk pudding and experiences it, we see that he is in complete delight. The cause of this is powerful vāsanās from previous lives, and the powerful bond between these and the Jiva. This is the bondage of karma. Lord Krishna says, 'karmabandham prahāsyasi.' You will destroy the bondage of karma. This bond of karma is formed by the vāsanās of previous lives.

This is what generally happens for all people. No matter what action we perform, there will be results according to the action, which may be intense, medium, or dull. According to that, one experiences pleasure and pain, and the Jiva knows these through the medium of the ahanta, 'I am happy.' 'I am sorrowful.' We say all of this. 'I had a happy experience.' 'I had a sorrowful experience.' 'I am in pain.' 'I am happy.' We say all of this. The Jiva experiences the intense modification of pleasure or pain through the medium of the ahanta.

How is this a medium? Suppose someone constantly drinks milk pudding. He strongly desired it, and obtained it, but he continuously experiences it. We

said before, that samskaras, previous impressions, are destroyed through experience. Through experience, the inner desires are pacified. Then the modification of the antahkaraṇa becomes weak. That is why he felt so much happiness when he first drank the pudding, but not as much later. If they served milk pudding (payasam) everyday at the ashram, after some time, you wouldn't feel any difference between payasam and kanji. You would feel that it is the same as kanji water.

What happens through repetition? All pleasures become in the medium state. That is the second stage. Thus, through the repetition of the experience of pleasure, the intensity of that is felt to be less. Some will then try to make it more sweet, by adding jaggery. They will do anything to make the experience like before. If the external form is changed, then the experience can again become intense. This is because that intensity comes as the result of karma. Through that, samskaras are destroyed.

That is why one has to make the experience more and more intense. What do we do in some experiences? We increase the intensity through the experience. That can happen. That happens in a different manner. For some, due to a different kind of samskara, the experience becomes more intense than the first. That is why some experiences go from intense, to more intense, to intensely intense. However, in general, the experiences go from intense to the medium stage. All of the Jiva's experiences are situated in these two; intense and medium. And what about the karma yogi? For a karma yogi, the experience of this pleasure and pain will be mandam, dull.

The experiences gained through karma of pleasure and pain will be mandam, dull. We perform an action. It's commonly said, 'you gain happiness from work.' One is able to do the work effortlessly; therefore one performs the work in pleasure. Thus, while performing an action, we experience happiness. When we perform an action that we like, that is favorable to us, we experience happiness. We will think, 'the fruit of the action is that happiness.' That need not be true.

We have discussed this in the previous class. We cannot be certain about the bond between our karma and its fruit. That's not possible. The happiness we experience while performing an action won't be the happiness that is a fruit

of that karma. We have said that the primary cause for the experience of sukham, happiness, is samskara. That is why we have to experience suffering, even while performing good deeds. The happiness we experience while performing a karma never comes as a fruit of that karma. Likewise, the sorrow we experience while performing an action doesn't come as a fruit of that action. The cause of that sukham and dukham is the impressions left from actions in this life and previous ones, called samskāras. This is why we may perform a good action, and yet experience suffering. This happens because the samskāra for causing that sorrowful experience is lying with the antaḥkaraṇa. The action we are doing now may influence the experience of sukham, happiness. However, the happiness we experience is primarily not the fruit of the action we currently perform.

The karma yogi understands this principle. Ordinary karmīs don't know this. That is why it says that the mind of the karma yogi is situated in equilibrium, samatvam. What is the fruit the karma yogi should reap from the performance of good actions? This is worship and respect by others. Sometimes, we get beatings. Then sorrow comes. 'How did this kind of action give us such a fruit?' 'I set out to work for the benefit of others. If I had just sat in the house with the wife, I wouldn't have had to get these beatings. Instead, having set out to help others, I received these beatings'. He thus becomes sorrowful.

What do we do? There, we see that sorrow as the fruit of the action. Why is this? It is because that isn't karma yoga; it is just mere karma. It is a good action that the person does, but what happens when there is not karma yoga? Then there won't be any evenness of mind. How does the karma yogi understand? 'The cause of the sorrows and obstacles faced in performing this action are caused by samskāra. That is unavoidable. No matter where I go, I will have to accept that beatings.' 'Wherever you go, it is covered and wrapped, waiting for you, this prize. Wherever you go, that must be received.' That is how the karma yogi thinks.

Wherever we expect a reward, adoration, respect, etc., and we receive rejection, disrespect, and cursing, the ordinary person's mind becomes sorrowful as a result. There will be intense suffering. That doesn't happen to the karma yogi. What does he do? We said before that he knows the secret. 'This isn't the

fruit of the action I am performing. This is the fruit of the sin I have accumulated.' Wherever there is suffering, that is the fruit of sin. Wherever there is pleasure, that is the fruit of merit. That is the law of karma samskāras. This isn't changed in any karma.

Therefore, where one is performing good actions, one may experience suffering. Likewise with one performing bad actions. There are many people who perform bad actions. However, they experience happiness. This is said out of jealousy. 'May lightning fall on his head.' Why is this? They constantly experience the accumulated merit they have acquired. Thus, in the karmas we perform in the present moment, the happiness and pain we experience do not have direct relationship with this. That is why it says in the Yoga Shāstras and elsewhere, that the experiences of pleasure and pain are 'karma vipāka.' This means that our karmas have become very pāka, or mature. The pleasure and pain we experience in the present moment are the fruit of the accumulation of karma samskāra up to this moment.

It is not that if one performs a good action, he will experience happiness. If the anthakarana has the capacity to combine with previous merits, and produce a modification in it, which will produce the experience of pleasure, sukham, then he will surely experience pleasure. However, if the person's samskara make-up is predominated with demerit, papa, then he will only experience suffering. That is why some still experience suffering, even after having joined the ashram. One will think, 'I was more happy, staying in the house.' In truth, if the samskara is there for the person to experience that suffering, then even if he stays in the house, he will have to experience it.

If the person performs remedial actions to destroy the sin, then the intensity of the suffering can be lessened to an extent. This happens through destroying the samskāras of sin. That is karma yoga. What happens with ordinary karmas? These make the karma vāsanās firmer. Then there will again be a strong prompting to karma. However, what about karma yoga? This pacifies these. It destroys the promptings to karma.

So, in the karma yogi, the modifications of pleasure and pain will be soft. They will be dull. That is what we said. That is the cause for this. In other words, if there are karmas that are strong causes of the experiences of pleasure

and pain, that will produce soft and dull modifications in the antaḥkaraṇa of the karma yogi. Why does that happen? The primary cause of the intense modification of sukham and dukham is desire. That will be powerful in the mind of the ordinary person when performing karma. This is true, no matter karma it is. This can be a good action, or otherwise. He will have desire. There is even desire in our selflessness. We desire certain things through our selflessness. If nothing material, it may be acceptance by society, respect, adoration, etc. Some people don't want money; they won't show any interest in this. However, they desire an esteemed position. They feel the need to control others. Otherwise, they won't get any sleep. There are some like this. However, they won't show any interest in cash.

If he has control over 10 people, that is his self-contentment. Their only pleasure is in controlling. Some will be like this. Some won't be like that. Their interest will be in money. The interest of others is in things we cannot mention. This is how it goes. In the karmas that we think are selfless, there will be some selfishness. This is speaking about the case of the ordinary person. Immediately, some will think that this is referring to a Jñāni. This is referring to the ordinary man, who performs good actions. This is about those who perform works for the service of the world. If nothing else, they will act with expectation of acceptance by the world.

There, what happens? There, there will be a powerful modification of the feeling of 'I,' the ego. The antaḥkaraṇa becomes modified intensely in the form of ahanta, the ego. That ahanta becomes bound to the experiences of pleasure and pain. Then the Jiva experiences the intense sensations of pleasure or pain. And what about for the karma yogi? One thing is that he doesn't have desire. Therefore, the karma won't produce an intense modification in the antaḥkaraṇa. For him, it isn't necessary to experience that pleasure leads to pain. He knows it through his viveka. Only a complete fool feels the need to drink poison to see if it is poison. And what about for a discriminative person? He doesn't feel the need to drink it and see that it is poison. Once one drinks it, then it isn't possible to recognize it is poison. The fool isn't like that. He will put some on the tongue and see, whether it is potassium cyanide. Then he knows 'it is poison.'

That isn't necessary for the viveki, a person with discrimination. What does he do? He understands that it is poison. Therefore, there is no need for the repetition of experience. Therefore, the medium level of the sensation of pleasure and pain doesn't occur to him. The medium sensation of sukham and dukham doesn't happen to the karma yogi. Instead, what does the karma yogi do? He performs action while renouncing the ego. He doesn't become attached to the fruits of karma by thinking, 'I did that work.' For the karma yogi, karma is like a birth mother.

In other words, a person doesn't accept someone as their mother after birth. This is accepted before. He accepts birth only through a mother. In that way, karma is something that has already come to the karma yogi. He doesn't accept that consciously. And what about the karmī? The ordinary karmī places before him the ego and picks out karmas, and accepts them. The karma yogi doesn't ask and receive. This means that he doesn't fill out an application, then have an interview, and then gain karma. That shouldn't be understood literally. Understand the meaning. The karma yogi performs the karma that come to him. In whatever circumstance, the karma yogi performs those actions which come to him.

Then some may ask, 'and what about if bad karmas come to him?' immediately, our minds go there. 'Will he do any karma which comes to him?' We said before that man cannot grasp the law of karma. However, there is a divine law behind this; therefore the karma yogi will not have to perform bad actions. There is no point in thinking that. Bad actions are those which we stick our head into; they don't come to us. The actions that a karma yogi performs will be good actions. These will be service to the world, etc. They will be actions that benefit others. Those kinds of actions come spontaneously to the karma yogi. The karma yogi cannot turn away from these karmas which come to him. He thus performs them.

There, the karma yogi doesn't perform karma out of the prompting of desire. Whether it is the performance of the karma, or in the experiencing of the fruits of karma, he isn't prompted by desire. He performs karma without the attitude of 'I.' It is easy to say, 'I act without the attitude of 'I.' However, only if we think about all the ways the reflection of this influences, will we understand

how to avoid it. Normally, we feel pride in our competence in performing a work. That is a reflection of the attitude of 'I.' The karma yogi may have the competence to perform karma, but he doesn't have pride in it. What does he do? He doesn't connect the ego to that ability, by thinking, 'this is my ability.' Instead, what happens? He considers, 'this is God's ability.' That is what is called *īśvarārpana*, performing karma as an offering to God.

The karma yogi never becomes the enjoyer of the fruit of karma, whether in the performance of karma, or in the experience of the fruit. An ordinary *karmī* isn't like that. he will become the enjoyed in all aspects of the karma. However, a karma yogi is never like that. He doesn't perform any action for his own gain. That is what is called the renunciation of the karma yogi. That is what is called 'renunciation of the ego,' or '*ahanta tyāga*.' We said before, we perform a good action. We obtain acceptance from the society, from that karma. The karma yogi doesn't accept that acceptance. That doesn't come into the mind. It doesn't become his. There may be acceptance there. These matters we are discussing are purely mental things.

If one performs good actions, then certainly, a few people will give acceptance to the person. That acceptance will remain, but the karma yogi doesn't make it his own. It is when a person makes that acceptance his own, that the ego comes. The attitude will come, 'I received the fruit of the action I performed.' The karma yogi is indifferent to the acceptance of the world. 'How many people knew? How many saw? How many told?' the ordinary person accepts these kinds of acceptances, in all actions, from big matters to insignificant ones. He becomes the *guṇabhokta*, the enjoyer of the karma, in all levels. If nothing else, he will at least feel, 'I did this very competently.'

Thus, wherever there is goodness in the karma, what does the karma yogi do? He sees it as belonging to God. 'It isn't my ability.' Even the karma yogi doesn't fully know the subtle bond between karma and its fruit. Suppose we receive acceptance from our karma. We cannot be for certain whether that pleasurable experience is caused by that action. The cause of that is the accumulation of *samskaras* from countless previous lives. An ordinary person feels pride, thinking, 'I received this result from my work.' That is merely pride; it isn't the truth. The karma yogi understands this principle. Therefore, he

doesn't become the enjoyer in any part of the karma he performs. The karma yogi doesn't accept the karmic fruits, he doesn't make them his own.

Then what does he do to eliminate the feeling of 'I.' In whatever place where the mere karmī thinks 'I, I,' the karma yogi replaces this with, 'You, the Lord.' That is why we said before, that only a person with īśvara bodha, awareness of God can perform karma yoga. This is because besides the feeling, 'You, the Lord,' there is nothing else that can replace the feeling of 'I.' This word 'īśvara' can be said in a different way. This can mean, 'Guru,' 'our Amma,' etc. That is only a difference in language. The principle is only one. What I am saying is in the language that suits me. The language you use will be suitable to you. Wherever I say, 'īśvara,' you may say, 'Amma.' This is because the language I use must be transformed into the language that suits you. Without that principle, there is nothing which can replace the feeling of 'I.'

That is why without awareness of God, īśvara bodha, we can never become a karma yogi. Thus, wherever the attitude of 'I' comes for the ordinary Jiva, the attitude of 'You, the Lord,' comes to the karma yogi. In that, there is no desire. It isn't desire that prompts him to karma. It is said, that desire is the prompting for an ordinary person to perform action. And what about a karma yogi? He performs the karma that comes to him naturally. The acceptance of karma is like how a person accepts a mother. He accepts that karma and performs it.

Therefore, because there is no place for the ego within him, the modifications of pleasure and pain will be soft. They will be dull. In whatever antaḥkaraṇa that the modifications of pleasure and pain are soft, there will be samatvam, evenness there. The mind will become peaceful there. That is why we say that the karma yogi experiences peace. The mere karmī doesn't have peace. This peace, or equilibrium of the mind is what is called chitta śuddhi, purity of mind. Shankara describes this as, 'rāgadveṣau adhīna abhāvaḥ.' The absence of likes and dislikes is purity of mind.' That was said earlier.

Thus, this mental purity, chitta śuddhi, is something that is self-known to the karma yogi. It isn't something that someone else must tell. One becomes aware that the actions one perform are karma yoga by oneself. As for fools, they will think wrongly that the actions they perform are karma yoga. That is stupidity. However, how is it that the chitta śuddhi is self-known to the karma

yogi? This is the soft sensation of pleasure and pain. Through that, his mind gains peace, śānti. ‘Samatvam yoga uchyate.’ ‘Yoga karmasu kauśalam.’ This will be said next.

What is the nature of karma? It’s nature is to create intense sensations of pleasure and pain in the antaḥkaraṇa. However, that same karma creates a soft sensation in the mind of the karma yogi. That is what is described by the Lord as ‘kauśalam,’ dexterity in action. He uses karma with dexterity, with expertness. It is said that this is the center of karma yoga. This is the most important matter.

It is possible for us to distinguish, ‘is he performing karma yoga?’ ‘Is he a karma yogi?’ He will be peaceful internally. He may perform magnificent karmas. Still, he will be undisturbed. Chitta svasthatā, undisturbance of mind, that is said. The freedom (svacchandata) of mind. That belongs to the karma yogi. These kinds of karmas don’t create any kind of karma vāsana or saṃskāra. Then, the karma yogi doesn’t accumulate karma in the way that he had in countless previous lives. How does that not happen? We said before that the ahanta, the sense of ‘I’, binds the Jiva to the fruit of karma. Wherever, there is renunciation of the ahanta, the ego, wherever the person thinks of God wherever the thought of ‘aham, I’ appears, then there is no means for accumulating karma saṃskāras. The means for developing the karma saṃskaras is ahanta.

This is because these saṃskaras must be accumulated in the antaḥkaraṇa. Where is it that the saṃskaras are collected and gathered? In the antaḥkaraṇa. The link which binds the Jiva to the antaḥkaraṇa is the ego, the ahaṃkāra. If there is no ahaṃkāra, then the saṃskaras will not accumulate. This is because that the link has broken. That is why there is a logic in this. Karma saṃskara does not accumulate within the karma yogi. When this is said, this isn’t an insignificant matter. This karma yoga is a process that must be practiced consciously, with great awareness. Perform karma, but don’t become a cause to the fruits of karma.

What does the karma yogi do? Some will ask, ‘why is it said that the experience of pleasure and pain for the karma yogi is mild? Can’t that also be avoided?’ Some will ask this. There is a specialty about the experience of sukham and dukham, pleasure and pain. Sukham and dukham do not cause bondage of

themselves. Only when the ego becomes connected to these does this cause bondage. We can take the example of a Jnani. There is experiences of pleasure and pain in the antaḥkaraṇa of a Jnani.

If a Jnani drinks sweet payasam, he will experience it to be sweet. From the sweet taste comes sukham, pleasure. However, there is no ahanta there. If someone beats a Jnani, he will have pain, and cry out. However, there isn't ahanta there. This is the experience of sukham and dukham. Thus, the mere experience of sukham and dukham are not cause of bondage. Whenever these become connected to the ahanta, only then do these bind the Jiva.

What happens within the Jnani? His ahanta is completely destroyed. Therefore, his jivatvam, his individuality is destroyed. Therefore, even if the experience of sukham and dukham remain in the antaḥkarana, there is no means there to bind these to the Atman. There are no knots. That is called the hridaya granthi, the knot of the heart. It is said in the Upanishads, 'bhidyante hridaya granthi.' The knot of the heart is torn asunder.'

However, that isn't how it is for the Ajñāni. This knot is firmly set. The ahanta, the antaḥkaraṇa, all of these combined together form the individuality, the Jiva bhāva. This kind of bondage is imagined. It isn't the truth. According to the level of Advaita, this bondage is kalpita, imaginary. Wherever something is imagined, that thing exists. It ceases to exist only in the Truth. Therefore, what does he do? The Ajñāni becomes a cause to the fruits of karma in each action. He becomes the cause of the fruits of karma, through the ego, the ahanta. Therefore, it is said that there are two primary matters in karma yoga. One is the renunciation of ahanta, the ego. Second is the remembrance of God, īśvara smarana.

To bring about renunciation of the ego, the Lord says to Arjuna, 'nimitta mātram.' You are merely an instrument. You must never think in any circumstance, 'I am acting.' Don't be proud of the 'I' in any action, in any situation. Don't take upon the burden of doer-ship. For bringing about remembrance of God, Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, 'Mām anusmara.' I am just giving an example. This is said in several circumstances and shlokas. 'Remember Me.' Wherever the ordinary person accepts the ego, the karma yogi accepts God. This is the bhakti of karma yogi.

The karma yogi will be the supreme devotee. Why? Remembrance of God itself is bhakti. It says that the karma yogi performs karma as an offering to God. This is the same thing. In all places where the mere karmī thinks, ‘for me,’ the karma yogi thinks, ‘for God.’ Because the place where ‘I’ was is replaced by the thought of God, that karma becomes offered to the Lord. This isn’t the same way as taking a flower externally and offering it to the image of the Lord. This offering is to replace the feeling of ‘I’ with the awareness of God. That is the renunciation of ego, and surrender to God, of the karma yogi.

Then the next question will be, ‘is it possible for us to practice this perfectly?’ This is because it is difficult to even understand properly. What is requested here? It says ‘to practice.’ That is what the Lord tells Arjuna, ‘you practice this.’ ‘Begin!’ ‘Svalpam api.’ Even a little is enough. Whatever you can do is enough. The rest will come of itself. It requests us to begin. Otherwise, it doesn’t expect us to reach the perfection of this in this moment, the renunciation of the ego, and surrender to God. The Lord doesn’t even request that of Arjuna. ‘Abhyāsenā kaunteya.’ Through practice, this is possible.

Arjuna asks in the 6th chapter, ‘I don’t believe that this is possible.’ What does the Lord say? An effort is necessary. That must be done. If the mind isn’t interested in such an effort, then go do some other work. Stop all of this, fine. Go do farming, trading, etc. There are many fields to work in. Go ahead, anyone. No body will question you.. This is kartṛ tantra. All actions are dependant of the performer. So, do a work you like. However, when we think about this, what does the Lord say? He says to begin to practice. Start this. We said, this karma yoga is to perform karma, united in buddhi, discrimination. Having understand the underlying principle behind karma yoga, and perform karma. Never connect one’s ego with the fruits of karma.

The greatest renunciation is the renunciation of the ego. There are some who have criticized karma yoga because of this, and written books. ‘This is a trick to make people work without giving money.’ They say this. For a karma yogi, we said that he accepts the external fruit of karma. For sustaining his life, a person must take wages from a job. He can accept that. If a person doesn’t accept wages, that doesn’t make him a karma yogi. Suppose we work without accepting salary. No one can claim that they are a karma yogi because of that.

When such a person performs karma, there may be a better salary than that. It won't be in the form of bills, but in other forms.

Salary doesn't just mean notes and coins. There are books written, saying that this is a way to get people to work without giving them wages. A karma yogi can surely accept wages. If necessary, he can strike for wages. But please don't strike here for wages. I'm just saying a principle. Therefore, the matter is not whether or person accepts compensation for his work materially. Karma yoga is a completely internal process. That is the 'buddhi' that the Lord speaks about. Why is this word 'buddhi' used? Karma is one thing, and buddhi is another.

The Lord says to perform action, united with buddhi. Karma can never become buddhi. Karma is simply karma. A person acts. A person can perform any dharmic action united with Yoga. Then, the compensation for that work; that is never related to Karma Yoga. That kind of compensation is a means to live. If the body must be sustained, one needs air. Food is needed to sustain the body. Those are material means for the sustenance of the body. This compensation for work is in this category. Here, when the Gita discusses the fruit of karma, it doesn't refer to this kind of compensation. What does 'the fruit of karma' primarily refer to? It is sukham and dukham, pleasure and pain.

No one gives sukham and dukham as our compensation for a job. It's not possible for an employer to give that to an employee. No one will bargain about that. No one has a strike, saying, 'we need more of that.' That is a compensation that a person cannot strike for. The fruit of karma yoga and receiving wages for the work are two separate things. They aren't the same. Otherwise this would mean that karma yoga isn't under the laws of society. That has no relation with this.

Then what if a person performs karma and thinks, 'I don't need to accept compensation.' Some people think this out of foolishness. That is a renunciation. It is a part of renunciation. Why? Because a person like this has no use for such compensation. A brahmachari performs seva; he doesn't accept wages. Why? Because it serves no purpose for him. If one has a wife and children, then he must accept wages to support them. That isn't true for a brahmachari. Therefore, wages aren't possible. That is a part of a person's tyāga.

That is their svadharma. If a person is a brahmachari, and accepts wages, then that isn't his svadharma. Then what happens?

Then he performs the dharma of a gr̥hastha. That is necessary for a householder. Money is necessary. He must support his wife and children. Therefore, he needs money. Then, he must be duly paid. That is also a point. That isn't necessary for a brahmachari. Therefore, a brahmachari doesn't accept that. There is no point in giving money to a brahmachari. These are material, worldly matters. But, what about the gr̥hastha? That is necessary. Therefore, the householder accepts this, and that should be given to the gr̥hastha.

The life of a brahmachari is complete renunciation, tyāga. He renounces materially everything. This is said for a brahmachari and sanyassi. The householder cannot renounce like that. The material needs of a brahmachari are very limited. Therefore, it isn't necessary for him to accept compensation, or wages in the way others must accept. This is because he lives in the path of tyāga, renunciation. That is correct for him.

However, others aren't like that. For them, compensation is necessary. That is where the material compensation has relevance. That is another subject. In that circumstance, the concept of fair and unfair are material. I talked about wages to say that we should not connect that with karma yoga.

For example, a person comes to the ashram and performs seva. He doesn't accept compensation, therefore he is a karma yogi.' No one should go and think this. A person without these details is not a karma yogi. Who performs karma, having determination in these details, united in buddhi, he is a karma yogi. Even if it is gr̥hastha, he is a karma yogi. Even if he is in the house, he is a karma yogi. Even if he supports a wife and children, he is a karma yogi, without a doubt.

Why is that? This is because it isn't a person's external actions that is important. What does a gr̥hastha do? He performs his dharma. What does a brahmachari do? He performs his dharma. In performing their dharma, there is no difference at all between these two. Where does the difference come? In the internal mental attitude. If that mental attitude is united with Yoga, united with buddhi, then both people are equal. There isn't a single difference.

Then some will think, 'ok, then let me go straight there.' If both are equal, why should I take this trouble, when I just go back? Whether or not that is needed depends on the individual person's vasana. Nobody tied you up and brought you here. That is why anyone can leave at anytime. What is it that decides this? It is that person's samskara from previous lives. If that samskara is mature, then it isn't possible for him to go. If that samskara isn't mature, then he can't renounce. At any time, he may step down and leave, if the samskara isn't mature. Therefore, it is samskara that decides this. That has more influence over the decision than one's own will power. Only if a person's samskara is favorable can he renounce. It's not about the dress of a brahmachari. If one must actually be a brahmachari, the samskara must be favorable.

There is a special greatness in that life. It is complete purity. This greatness means that that life is full of purity. That will be in that kind of life. That is its quality. However, no matter what stage of life, karma yoga has no relation with whether we take or don't take material compensation. Whether one accepts or rejects has no relevance to that. What is it that we were discussing? Don't become a cause for the fruit of karma. The Jiva becomes a cause for the fruits of karma through the medium of the ego, ahanta. In summary, if he replaces the thought of 'I', with the remembrance of God, he doesn't become a cause for the fruit of karma. That is the meaning. There are numerous matters in the subject that we must think about and understand. As for now, we have only touched a grain of this. This must be thought about and understood by each individual. Now we can look at the shloka.

**Karmaṇyevādhikāraṣṭe mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mākarmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṁgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.**

AUM AMRITESHVARYAI NAMAH

AUM AMRITESHVARYAI NAMAH

Remembering the Guru Parampara, we begin our discussion on the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, verse 47.

**Karmaṇyevādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mā karmaphalahetur bhū mā te saṅgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.**

Here, we discussed three important things related to this shloka. One is 'you have the right to karma. You have the suitability for karma.' The second thing was, 'you have no freedom over the fruits of karma. You have no control over this.' Then what is said next? When a karma yogi performs karma, he must never become a cause to the fruits of karma. That is what discussed the other day fully. How can one avoid becoming a cause to the fruits of karma? Experiencing the results of karma is jiva. The fruit of karma is the experiences of pleasure and pain. That is the primary result of karma. That which aids in the experiences of pleasure and pain is the attitude of 'I,' the ego. That is what binds the Jiva to the fruit of karma, the ego.

Thus, a karma yogi is able to renounce the fruits of karma through the renunciation of the ego, the ahanta. The fruit of karma which is experienced by the karma yogi is very mild, dull. That fruit of karma which must be experienced, doesn't become a cause of bondage for the karma yogi. Thus, the karma yogi doesn't become a cause for that fruit. This is because he sacrifices the ego. How does the karma yogi destroy the ego? In all places where the thought, 'I' appears, he thinks of God. Thus, according to the development of this bhāva of the Lord in the karma yogi, we said before that the bondage of karma disappears for him. That is the meaning of not becoming a cause to the fruits of karma. We discussed this fully the other day.

Therefore, what is the primary difference between a karma yogi and a mere karmī? A karmī, an ordinary person, performs action with several intentions. At the same time, the karma yogi performs karma for chitta śuddhi, mental purity. Even though the fruits of karma that must be experienced are experienced by

him, the karma yogi has no interest in such fruits. Results will come, according to the laws of karma. Those cannot be avoided. That is an important matter. The karma yogi doesn't prevent the experiences of karmic results that must be experienced. All of those experiences simply must be gone through. However, the karma yogi never makes those fruits his own. He doesn't become the enjoyer of those results.

Therefore, it says that the karma yogi doesn't become a cause for the fruits of karma. For the karma yogi, the performance of karma is worship of God. Shankara says this in several sections. Why does the karma yogi perform karma? It is for worshipping the Lord. He performs karma as *īśvarārādhana*, worship of God. Thus, the performance of karma for a karma yogi is worship of God. And what about the ordinary person? He performs these actions, aiming at their results. That is the difference between the two.

Results occur for both people. Because the karma yogi renounces the ego, he doesn't make that result his own. Because he doesn't make the karmic fruit his own, it is then for others. What does the karma yogi accept for himself? That is *chitta śuddhi*, mental purity. All of the other karmic fruits, as far as the karma yogi is concerned, are for others. In other words, the material results of the karma yogi's actions are *parārtham*, for other people. These benefit others. What is it that he accepts? That is purity of mind alone. Thus, the karma yogi performs karmas as worship of the Lord, for attaining mental purity. The karma yogi performs karmas with that kind of awareness. It talks about *chitta śuddhi* next, in the commentary of the next shloka. The karma yogi doesn't desire *chitta śuddhi*.

Desire isn't necessary. There, knowledge is enough. Awareness of the karma and its fruits is enough for the karma yogi to perform karma as karma yoga. Thus, nowhere, desire is necessary. The results are according to the desire. We said before, the fruits of Vedic karmas are determined by the performer's desire. Here, the results such as mental purity, aren't caused by desire. Therefore, the karma yogi doesn't desire the result of *chitta śuddhi*. However, what is it that prompts the karma yogi? It is knowledge and not desire. That is a most important matter.

Some will ask questions that oppose this. 'How is it possible to perform karma without desire? Doesn't the karma yogi desire chitta śuddhi, mental purity? That is how the karma yogi performs karma. Isn't that a desire?' Some will say this. No. It is discrimination, viveka, that prompts the karma yogi to perform karma, not desire. There, viveka is enough. Desire prompts an Ajnani to perform karma. Here, it isn't desire that constantly prompts a karma yogi to karma; it is viveka. He acts through discrimination. Why? The karma yogi understands the laws of karma. He knows, 'when karma is performed in Yoga, it produces mental purity.' That mental purity isn't caused by desire. Therefore, there is no reason to desire mental purity. This should be understood.

What is the supreme goal of the karma yogi? It is chitta śuddhi, (mental purity), Jñāna prāpti, (Self-knowledge,) and Saṁsāra Nivṛtti, cessation of Samsara. It is these. Thus, when the karma yogi has true awareness of these principles, then that knowledge is enough for prompting him to perform karma. Where do knowledge and desire prompt karma? That is in ordinary, worldly karma. That is a law there. That is why this is said. Therefore, this means that the karma yogi doesn't desire like worldly people do. This means that even such a desire become unimportant. That is the greatness of karma yoga, the specialty. That is a most important matter.

Some commentators have explained karma yoga in several different ways. Therefore, we are discussing for a person who takes these matters very seriously. This is very important matter for us. Why? This is because we are standing in the realm of karma. Thus, this must be given great importance. When we approach this with that kind of seriousness, what kind of mental attitude is necessary? That is what is important. Some may think 'is it possible to acquire this discrimination and perform action? Or is it necessary to acquire this discrimination for performing actions?' After this thought comes, then there is only 2 ways. One is to perform karma, not being in Yoga. Perform karma without karma yoga. Perform karma in the same way as you have been till now. No one has to teach someone to do that. This is because that comes naturally. It isn't necessary to teach someone an action that occurs naturally. That is why it isn't necessary to teach this to birds and animals.

Birds and animal act according to their nature. There, scriptural knowledge isn't necessary. In that level, if one thinks, 'this is very difficult,' then one can just act in the same way and live. Then the help of the scriptures isn't needed; just act according to your natural instinct. Then, that is how the majority of humans act. They act naturally, like birds and animals. For them, the scriptures aren't a subject. This scriptural discussion is only possible by leaving out those people. This is said clearly by Shankara. Avoid dull people, in saying these discussions. Instead, give them matters that are suitable for them. These matters being discussed aren't easy there. If a person feels, 'this isn't possible. I can't do this,' then surely, he should leave this scene. He should leave the stage. There is no other way. First, see if this is possible. That is how everyone does normally. Everybody tries to do that. However, what does the Lord say here?

'Mā te saṅgostvakarmaṇi.' Don't be attached to inaction.' In once case, perform karma naturally. There isn't akarma, just karma. That is what I said. Live like birds and animals. The Upanishads says, 'Jāyasva mriyasva.' Live and die, again and again, doing something or other in between.. Just coming to the ashram doesn't make any change. This will still apply. This is in the society, and in the ashram. These people have another place. 'Jāyasva mriyasva.' That is how they go. There is no meaning in thinking that one comes to spirituality just from coming to the ashram. There may be many householders who are more spiritual than the ashramites. Otherwise, live according to instinct. Live according to spontaneous prompting, like birds and animals.

Thus, the third thing is what Arjuna had chosen; that is akarma, inaction. This means to retreat from karma. That must also be avoided. That is the most dangerous. This akarma is more dangerous than mere karma. The Lord says to Arjuna, 'you must not have any interest in that also!' That is the most dangerous matter. This danger of akarma is something that can happen to a person who enters karma yoga. That is even more dangerous than a mere karmī. What happens to the mere karmī, a person who performs actions naturally according to his or her vasanas? There is no defect there. There, there is no merit or sin.

One group performs karma according to the injunctions of the scriptures, for attaining merit. They thus attain merit, go to worlds for the meritorious, and again have to return. That is one group. Another group performs karmas

naturally. They no kind of awareness about this. Such people act according to their vasanas. That is another group. For them, there is nothing in particular to gain or lose. They attain neither sin nor merit. These people live like animals. Then, what does another group do? They come to karma yoga, etc. This akarma, or inaction, happens in those who come like this. That is why I said earlier that the rejection of something is relevant only where there is application of the that same thing In other words, these people become disinterested in karma. That is akarma. They have no interest in performing karma.

That can happen due to confusion. It can happen through a backwards intellect. That is what happens normally. This is what happened to Arjuna. Arjuna decided to leave karma in an instant. He suddenly renounced karma. That is akarma. This is for a person who comes to the scene of karma. Then, they suddenly renounce and leave karma. In truth, Arjuna should perform karma yoga. That is what the Lord instructed. Thus, if a person who should perform karma yoga renounces karma, that is the most dangerous thing. What is most dangerous? He goes to akarma. He goes to opposing karmas. That is the danger. Then one doesn't perform karma naturally, he doesn't gain merit through karma. By accepting akarma, he goes to vikarma, opposing actions. He goes to destruction.

Therefore, it says, 'mā saṅgaḥ astu.' May you have no interest in akarma, inaction.' What is the primary cause that takes a person who comes to karma yoga to akarma? It is the lack of true knowledge about karma yoga. He sees karma as a burden. Otherwise, he may not grasp the principles of karma. As far as a karma yogi is concerned, karma is before him. There is no need for him to search for karma. He sees karma in front of him always. We said that this is like accepting a mother. A person comes into the world, along with the karma he is meant to perform.

A person once asked in satsang, 'Swami, you always talk about how to perform karma, how to have true awareness about karma yoga. Swami, that's not my problem. My problem is unemployment.' I searched for a job in many places, and worked here and there, and then I lost my interest in everything. Then, I remembered the book 'Complete works of Swami Vivekananda' which I read in my collage days and decided to join the ashram. Thus, it wasn't karma

that brought him to my ashram; it was lack of karma. Then I felt it was strange to listen about how to perform karma. If I had karma, I wouldn't have come here.' Someone asked this.

That's not all. How can we say this openly? People say, 'The major problem of society isn't karma yoga, but unemployment. People don't have any job. They have no work to do. Then how can one go to society and talk about karma yoga? First, give us a job, and then teach karma yoga.' They will say this. There, that is our concept about karma. That is our samskara about karma. That is why we come to the ashram and try to withdraw from karma. This is because we never had discrimination about our karma. Even when we go looking for karma, karma is right besides us.

This doesn't refer to a job. Why do we desire a job? That is a means for living. A person doesn't perform a job to practice karma yoga. He searches for a job to gain money. It is a means for living. Then what is behind this? There will be desire that prompts him. This is the desire to live.

For him, life or philosophy aren't a subject. He searches for a job. He may get one, or not. That is another subject. We said before, 'tritiyam san.' There are three kinds of people. The first acts according to the natural internal instincts. They do whatever these vasanas direct them to do. For them, life isn't an object of study. He performs action out of whatever natural promptings arise within. He searches for a job. He attains that, gains money, and lives. There, life isn't a subject. That is why it is said that there is an adhikāri, a fit aspirant for spirituality. Here, when he starts to think about karma yoga, he will understand that karma was always along with him. Even when he was searching for karma there was karma, his own karma.

It is just that we are unable to imbibe that karma because we don't recognize what karma is. Here, that is not the kind of karma we are discussing. This is the karma that is along with us from birth itself. Whenever we recognize that karma, when we have discrimination about karma, we become a karma yogi.

For the karma yogi, unemployment isn't a problem. He sees karma right before him. Here is an example. A person was unemployed for a long time, and finally comes to the ashram. When he comes to the ashram, 'is there any shortage of karma here? Is there unemployment?' No, because the only obstacle

to karma is our laziness. Thus, there is karma there. So he was told, 'what you see before you is your job.' Then did I lose anything from before? No, nothing is lost. It is just that the person recognizes now, 'this is my karma. If he had recognized before, he would begin that karma. So, a person may not recognize their karma like this. Here, even after coming to ashram we try to move away from whatever karma comes to us. 'This isn't my karma.'

Again, what do we say? We take pride in akarma, saying, 'this isn't my karma.' This kind of delusion is seen in spiritual seekers even more than in ordinary people. They aren't able to recognize their karma. They try to move away from karma. They turn away from karma. Immature and undeveloped knowledge about spirituality is what helps this. That is what drives a person to akarma. The other reason may be that there is not the effulgence of discrimination within them about karma yoga. That is why this happens. Therefore, recognize your karma. See the karma before you, accept it, and perform it. That is the most important matter. The meaning is, 'don't renounce that.'

One may work hard like an ox. We will say, 'he's a karma yogi.' He wakes up in the morning and works till late in the night. That work is good, because it keeps him away from laziness and sleep. That's all. However, there is no karma yoga there.

This isn't very harmful, compared to akarma, inaction. In that, a person moves away from karma. He slips away from the duties he is supposed to do. There, another person is not needed to point out his karma. The person must recognize his own karma. We normally say, 'The Guru said to do this karma.' In truth, there is no need for the Guru to say this. Either way, the karma yogi needs discrimination. Through that discrimination, he must recognize his karma. That is primary. The Guru will have to instruct those who are unable to recognize that. Thus, we don't see karma as being right in front of us.

We may ask, 'isn't adharma before us? We need discrimination for recognizing adharma. That is viveka. That is also needed. 'Is what is before us dharma or adharma?' This is said in particular to Arjuna. 'You need awareness of dharma to choose what is necessary and unnecessary. If one looks with this awareness of dharma, one can avoid adharma. Having avoided this, then

perform the karma that is before you. Never go to akarma, inaction. What is it that inspires one to go to akarma? It is the tamasic guna. The qualities of tamas, such as laziness, sleep, etc., inspire one to go to akarma. A person says, 'I am a Yogi. I practice Yoga. I don't need karma.' I won't be available for cooking, cleaning etc. I am practicing Yoga, Aṣṭāṅga Yoga.

That is correct, for a person practicing Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. However, the question is whether his interest is really in Aṣṭāṅga Yoga. If it is, that itself is his karma. If he says firmly that he spends all his time in ashtanga yoga, even in that there is a part, a section for this. There, what is said? Act with surrender to God, as an offering to the Lord. That itself is in the Yoga Sutras of Pāṇjali. There too, it says that for mental control, one should perform actions as an offering to God. A person cannot move away from karma just by saying, 'I am a Yogi.'

Some people say like that. 'I am a devotee. I constantly enjoys the bliss of bhakti. I have no need for karma.' People say this. There we must pay attention. In bhakti, what does one do? What sweetness are they enjoying? By bhakti, what are they doing? Eat and sleep happily. For some time, he may do some action and wastes the rest of the time. In bhakti also it is there. What is bhakti? 'Act as an offering to God.' Thus, the devotee also cannot escape from karma yoga.

Whether in the name of bhakti, or Yoga, or renunciation, it isn't possible to escape from karmayoga. This retreating from karma is called here as 'akarma,' by the Lord. 'You must never be interested in that.' Then some people say, 'we have done karma for such a long time. We need a rest, a retirement.' That is necessary. If a person works for a long time, then retirement is a good thing. However, they say that this is a result of karma yoga.

In olden days oxes were used to extract oil from the coconuts. The ox may work for years but it will not understand the utility of oil. That is the nature of the ox. It can never understand the quality of oil. If one thinks, 'I have done seva for 10, 20 years in the ashram,' it may not necessarily be Karma Yoga.

For a karma yogi, such a retirement isn't necessary. That isn't needed for the karma yogi. That can be given to a person who is active. Giving a rest is a different matter, but through this rest also, one should not go to akarma, inaction. Some say, 'Oh, this karmayoga etc are for the youths; we are old and

what is the use of karmayoga'. Karmayoga is for youths; old people should not do that. Their time can be used for gossip.' There are people who say like this., That isn't correct. When one becomes old, one should give more importance to this karma yoga. Otherwise, the end will be very sad.

Even if the end is sad, the next birth will be worse. Then it may be that one cannot join the ashram. In this birth somehow we have joined the ashram.. We maynot get another chance in the future birth. Like that, it isn't possible to go to akarma in the name of age. There, also, karma is necessary.

Then others ask, 'that's not it. It's enough for us to practice japa and meditation. Therefore, we don't need karma. 'What about this?' They say, 'we will only perform these, without any other karmas.' I'm explaining the ways which take us to akarma. They won't do any worldly karmas, such as cooking food, taking care of the cows, or any other work. 'We will remain immersed in japa and meditation.' There are some who say this. Here, look carefully.

They will need an 'audience' for their japa and meditation. If there is no audience, then these won't be seen. We should lock this person in a room and secretly put a hole on the wall so that we can see what he is doing. Then we can watch him through this hole. Whoever wants to do japa and meditation only, do like this. Put a watchman for him. Watch how many hours he does japa or meditation. That man should not know that somebody is watching him. If he knows then he will always be in Padmāsana. You can't catch him.

Thus, this is a means to escape from karma. Then some will say, 'what about a person immersed in japa and meditation?' Such a person won't see any karma. There won't be any karma or movement. For him, there is no karma. That is correct. If a person is immersed in japa and meditation, then he doesn't see any karma. There, there will not be any duty before him. Nor does akarma come. Therefore, he doesn't have to escape from karma. Nobody can bring such a person to karma. The karma will not come by itself. However, that must be the real thing.

Otherwise, if there is some mental problems, some people lock themselves in their room. That is the sign of diseases such as depression. We should be careful. If there is treatment in the beginning, this can change, but later, it will become difficult. It's not possible to go to akarma like that. Then, some don't

say like that. 'I came to the ashram. I became a brahmachari, and now I am a sanyassi.' That is the most dangerous condition. He changes his clothes. 'Now I don't have any karma.' There are some who think like that. What does he do? There are numerous sanyassis who simply wander from place to place. This wandering, they come to the ashram and then leave; there are many like this. Then to the next place to get food, the next place where they can rest. Where shall I go to get money for my next journey?' These kinds of thoughts will be in their mind. They are no good to themselves or to society.

They falsely respect themselves as, 'sarva sanga parityāgi,' one who has renounced all attachments. There are many like this. Like this, there are those who go to akarma in that way. They hear something or other about karma and karma tyāga and act like this. This means that they misunderstand the negative qualities within them of tamas and laziness as 'tyāga' renunciation. They think that laziness is renunciation and think of themselves as being great. That is one section. Like this, all of this is akarma. In any of these kinds of akarma, 'mā sangaḥ te astu.' May you never have any interest towards this.' Some respect themselves, 'sarva sanga parityāgi,' renounces of all attachment, and act like this. However, the mind will be completely immersed in insignificant matters, like food, a bed, etc. That is how it is. There are 1000s like this. Once one of our leaders told that this is a big burden to India, this sanyassa.

It is burden to India. This is because don't all of these people have to be fed? Thus, society has to support them. That is of no benefit. In this way, there are numerous chances for a person going to akarma. Don't go to that. That is the meaning. All of this is false pride. What prompts all of this? It is false pride. 'I am a yogi.' 'I am a renunciate, a tyagi.' 'I am a devotee.' 'I am a paramahansa.' These are all forms of false pride, which prompt the person to akarma. Then, there are others who take on sanyassa as a means to live. These are sadhus. We should feel pity for them. They do this as a means to live. There are those like this. They don't have any awareness of the śāstras. They don't show that kind of pride. However, here it isn't like that. They understand some things, and then think that akarma is renunciation and live like this.. First they come to the ashram, and then go. Or, there are people who stay in the ashram. Let us consider about ourselves first. There, one must not come to akarma.

People who live in akarma like this have formed a kind of 'philosophy.' This doesn't refer to the sadhus who wander outside. They accept sanyassa as a means to live. There is no wrong in this. There are those living like this. That is a different matter. They don't go to steal. They wear ochre robes and beg for food. There's no wrong in this. However, this isn't like that. This creates a philosophy. 'Once one turns to the path of spirituality, one can't perform actions.' That is dangerous. 'That will produce samskaras. It will produce vasanas, which will cause rebirth.' The one who says this is going to be born as a buffalo. Why is that? If one turns to the tamasic guna, to laziness, then he will become that. Then the fruit will come accordingly. That itself is said in some śāstras.

Thus, according to the śāstras, a person who goes to an ashram and doesn't perform any actions, he will be reborn as a pig. A good birth. One can live in sewage, and can have many wives and children as one likes. Then that is said. Therefore, never have any interest in akarma. Why does Krishna say this to Arjuna? Arjuna had already gone to akarma. 'Na yotsya.' 'I don't have any interest in performing my svadharma.' Arjuna gave other reasons for this, not the ones said here. We discussed that the basis of Arjuna going to akarma was his grief and delusion. That is why the Lord says, 'you must never go that way.' 'You shouldn't turn away from karma when karma stands before you.' 'Don't retreat from karma.' 'Wherever you go, karma will be there. Understand this.'

Suppose we renounce our homes and come to the ashram. When we reach the ashram, karma will be there, waiting for us. Wherever we go to, karma will already be there before we reach. As soon as we reach the ashram, we will be assigned some work. Then we understand, 'didn't I renounce this?' 'I thought this wasn't needed.' People have asked this. 'Swami, I feel this to be contradictory. Isn't it enough for me to do this in the house? But I came to the ashram. If I had known I could have done the same thing at home..' Then the question is asked, 'who told you to come?' That is correct. 'No one invited you to come. Still you came'. Still, they don't understand.

Karma is always with us, uninvited. This is because we have invited it before. It's not possible to escape from that. Sanyassa isn't a means for that. Some people say, 'Swami, I can't live in this world. The world is in adharma.'

Therefore, they come to the ashram. Some people come to the ashram and ask, 'is there anyone doing tapas in the ashram. A normal person asks this. What he means is the tapas that is scene in movies, in serials. With long matted locks, wearing a rudrakṣa mala, with eyes closed. Is there anyone like that in the ashram? They ask this. Then the person in the ashram thinks, 'Oh, he is right, I came to the ashram to do tapas; so far I've not done any tapas. So let me start now onward. Society will accept only if one does tapas. Therefore, I will do tapas. These actions aren't necessary.

The mind is influenced like this in several ways. The mind can be influenced by samskara. It can be through the knowledge one has obtained. Otherwise, society can influence one, one's environmental influence. Through all of these, if we don't gain true knowledge of śāstra, we will gain 'confusion.' This will be where the person is being led. Who's advice should be taken? Should I accept what my little knowledge says, or should I accept what the society says?'. This will create this kind of mental confusion. To avoid that, we should think about the Lord's instruction here. In spiritual path, a sadhak should not ever go to akarma.

'Mā te sangostu akarmani.' That is the meaning. Thus, there are 3 important things said in this shloka. This must be given most attention in karma yoga. There are still things to explain about this. As we have to continue the classes, we can set aside those points for when they appear later in the text. Now look at the bhāṣyā. 'Evaṁ mā karmaphalahetur bhūḥ.' That is what we discussed. Then, 'yadā hi karmaphalatṛṣṇāprayuktaḥ karmaṇi pravartate tadā karmaphalasyaiva janmano hetur bhavet.' So, it said, 'yadā,' when, 'karmaphalatṛṣṇāprayuktaḥ,' the desire for the fruits of karma, 'prayuktaḥ,' being active, 'karmaṇi pravartate,' when the Jiva is active in karma, like how ordinary people act, 'tadā,' then, 'karmaphalasyaiva janmano hetur bhavet.' The fruits of karma,--birth is caused.

We said before, the fruit of karma is birth. Through the fruit of karma, one attains birth. Those karmic fruits become a cause for birth. That is the meaning. One will again have to take birth. The travel of samsāra becomes ceaseless. Then, 'yadi karmaphalam neṣyate.' When a karma yogi doesn't desire the fruit of karma.' Any kind of thought about the fruit of karma doesn't enter

his or her mind. When that happens, he performs karma. However, the karma yogi may think, ‘kiṁ karmaṇā duḥkharūpeṇa?’ That is it. This karma is in the form of dukha, suffering. This means that it isn’t enough to merely perform karma. If one performs karma as karma yoga, there will be more suffering. One must obtain knowledge, and perform karma in the light of that knowledge. It must be performed dharmically. In this, this self-development is somewhat difficult. A person sets out for that. ‘It isn’t possible to have likes and dislikes. I can’t be affected by honor or dishonor.’ There are numerous matters involved in this. What happens when one thinks about all of this? ‘Duḥkha rupeṇa.’ He thinks, ‘why this karma, which is the form of suffering?’ ‘Iti,’ having thought this, ‘mā te tava saṅgaḥ astu akarmaṇi akaraṇe prītir mā bhūt.’ So, it says, ‘akaraṇe,’ in not performing karma, retreating from action, ‘te tava saṅgaḥ mā astu,’ may you never have any interest in that. ‘Prītir mā bhūt.’ May you never have liking towards that. Krishna says to Arjuna, ‘war is your svadharma. That is what you must do!’

From here, the Lord will say more about the laws and principles of karma, to show that this is inevitable. Now look at the shloka.

‘Te karmaṇi eva adhikāraḥ.’ ‘Te,’ for you, ‘karmaṇi,’ in karma, ‘eva,’ alone, ‘adhikāraḥ,’ is suitable. ‘Phaleṣu kadāchana mā adhikāraḥ.’ In the fruits of karma, you never have the right. Here, the word ‘adhikāraḥ,’ must be given special attention. It means, ‘control, freedom.’ That is the meaning. ‘Karmaphalāhetur mā bhūḥ.’ Never become a cause for the fruits of karma. ‘Te,’ for you, ‘akarmaṇi,’ in not performing karma, ‘saṅgaḥ mā astu.’ May you never have liking for that. You must not have any liking in not performing karma. You must perform karma.’

One thing that should be given attention is that this is the instruction of an adhyātmā śāstra, a spiritual scripture. This is not merely being said. This isn’t said to make someone work. This is the instruction of the adhyātmā śāstra. ‘You must never retreat from karma.’ When your duty appears before you, you must not move away. If you move away, it will grab you in one way or another.

**Karmaṇyevādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadāchana
Mā karmaphalāhetur bhū mā te saṅgostvakarmaṇi. 2.47.**

**Yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhananjaya
Siddhyasiddhyoṅ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga uchyate. 2.48.**

We can look at the bhāṣyā. It says, ‘Yadi,’ if, ‘karmaphalaprayuktena na kartavyaṁ karma.’ This is a question that is asked normally.

‘Karmaphalaprayuktena na kartavyaṁ.’ If one should perform karma without desire for the results, ‘kathaṁ tarhi kartavyam iti,’ then how should one perform karma. If it is without the desire for the fruits, then how should one perform karma? ‘Kathaṁ tarhi karma kartavyaṁ?’ ‘Iti uchyate,’ the answer to this is said.

Then shankara explains the words in the shloka. ‘Yogasthaḥ san kuru karmāṇi.’ Perform karmas, situated in Yoga. This is repeated many times. Act, united in Yoga. Understand the Yoga of karma. The Yoga connected with karma doesn’t refer to the Aṣṭanga Yoga we are thinking of. There is a portion of that here, but this isn’t that. Here, the Yoga spoken of by Lord Krishna primarily means, ‘when one performs karma, to have evenness of mind.’ It says next, ‘samatvaṁ yoga uchyate.’ This Yoga is that evenness. What is the evenness of the mind? This is clear; it is peace of mind. Wherever there is equilibrium, there is peace. Wherever there is no equilibrium, what is there? There is these pairs of opposites, the dvandvas, such as victory and defeat, gain and loss, etc. These are likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion, pleasure and pain. That is the unevenness of the mind. And what about evenness, samatvaṁ? There, the mind doesn’t come under the grasp of these. That is samatvaṁ.

Like this, what is said about a mind with evenness? It is said that is a peaceful mind. This is peace of mind. Thus, situated in this Yoga, ‘yogasthaḥ.’ This means, ‘a person situated in Yoga.’ To say simply, ‘a person with peace of mind.’ A mind that isn’t made disturbed by any kind of thought. One situated in Yoga, with peace of mind, ‘karmāṇi kuru,’ perform karma. We discussed that all mental practices are for sustaining that mental peace. How does the mind become disturbed in action? How can we perform that action, keeping the mind in harmony? That is what we discussed.

Some people say, ‘there was more peace when I was in the home. After joining the ashram, that has all gone.’ In truth, when the person was in the

house, they had no peace, and after coming to the ashram, they have no peace. Then why do they say, 'I had more peace in the home?' This means that they didn't expect peace there. They think, 'once I join the ashram, I will have peace.' That is why they say, 'I had peace in the home.' It is true, that they had an expectation here, and that was destroyed. One reached the ashram because of that expectation. Then why does the person collapse? They say the ashram makes them collapse. They won't accept that they make themselves collapse.

Why do they think this? It is oneself that makes one collapse. The ashram doesn't do this. That happens from oneself. Where did that exhaustion come from? Because they came here, and there was no change in this. It is the same mind, the same abilities, the same samskara. Just from moving from one place to another won't make a change. If one changes like that, this will only get worse. One's peace will continue to be lost. Getting worse and worse, means that their age will grow more and more. Then their mind will feel sad. They feel, 'it was a mistake to come to the ashram.' This isn't the kind of regret one has for committing mistakes. It is regret for the sake of regretting. This means to continue to suffer. He suffers in the house, he suffers in the ashram, and then again, he suffers. This is what was discussed before, as 'anuśochanam.' Then what happens there? This evenness of mind doesn't happen. Why doesn't that happen? It is because they never thought seriously about the means to attain that. Because of that, they never seriously did anything for that. That is how they collapse and fall. Therefore, one must make this evenness practical.

How can this be made an experience? 'Yogasthaḥ san kuru karmāṇi kevalam īśvarārthaṁ.' It says, 'kevalam īśvarārthaṁ,' solely for the Lord, perform karmas. 'Kuru karmāṇi.' Why is the word 'kevalam,' used? A karma produces an endless array results. In all of these fruits, which are endless, do not desire any of these, and perform karma. Sometimes, we won't recognize the fruits that come to us. Some we recognize. Everything that we constantly experience is the fruits of karma, in different forms. However, it isn't possible for us to recognize that all of this is the fruits of karma.

There is an example. A person dishonors us. We immediately think, 'this person spites me out of his fault. He shouldn't do that. Is it right to spite me like that? No, it's not correct.' We say that the one who spites us is at fault.

Definitely it was wrong for the person to spite us. It's not right to spite others. However, the spite that came to us is the fruit of some bad action we have performed. It comes as the fruit of sin. If we understand this, we will understand what is before us. It is true, no one has the right to spite others. Spiting others is wrong, and a sin. However, when we have to accept this spite, there is another matter we should consider. What is that? That spite comes as the fruit of one's sin. Both factors come together. One is a person's lack of knowledge in the present, and the other is his lack of knowledge in the past. Both of these are combined together.

There, one forgets his part. We give importance to the other person's side. 'He is wrong.' We demand for him to be punished. This is something that happens in our dealings with each other. Here, what is it? The Karma Yogi recognizes this. He understands and recognizes what was done on his part. He doesn't perform action for recognition and respect. Then why does he act? 'īśvarārtham,' for pleasing the Lord. Then we may ask, 'why should we perform karma for God?' Many will doubt like this. 'Why must this insignificant individual perform karmas for all-powerful God?' Does God benefit from our karmas at all? God doesn't benefit from our karmas. But, the words 'īśvarārtham,' mean 'for God.' 'Why then, should we perform karma for God?'

What is meant by the phrase, 'īśvarārtham?' 'īśvaraprāptyartham.' For attaining God. It isn't that we give anything to God through our karmas. Mothers and fathers act, for their children. There, what happens? They obtain money for feeding them. They do this for sending them to school, and raising them. This is called, 'santānārtham,' for children. Like this, 'īśvarārtham,' for God. This doesn't mean that he does some karma for God. That isn't the meaning. This means, 'īśvaraprāptyartham,' for the attainment of God. That is how he performs karma.

In the same way, there is the phrase, 'īśvarasamārpanārtham.' He performs karmas, with surrender to God. What does it mean to offer to God? 'God, here is this karma, take it.' Is that surrender? We offer naivedyam to God. We offer flowers to God. With these objects, we offer them before a statue or image of the Lord How can we offer karmas like that to God? That isn't something that we can take and place before God. Where does karma happen? It happens in our

antaḥkaraṇa, the mind. Then how is it possible to perform karmas as 'īśvarārtham?' We say all the time, 'I am acting for God.' What does this mean? What does it mean to offer actions to God? What is this in the most subtle form? That is the renunciation of the ego. We said this in the previous class. Here, what does the Lord Himself say?'

'Bhramayan sarvabhūtāni yantrarūddhāni māyayā.' Dwelling within all beings, I make them act.' I make the mind, the senses, the intellect, everything function.' There, we normally think, 'I am thinking. I am acting.' The Lord says, 'It is I who am making act.' This is where viveka comes in. We think, 'I am not making this work. Instead, God is making this function.' In that action, pride won't enter. Wherever there was the feeling of 'I,' this is replaced with the feeling of God. God makes one act. When that happens, what does he do? That action becomes an offering to God. The offering to God is the recognition, the discrimination that, 'I am not making these act. The Lord makes me act.' In Sanskrit, this is called the tyāga of kartṛtvam, or doer-ship. Normally, this is called renunciation of the ego. That is it.

What does it mean to sacrifice the ego? Is the ego something that can be thrown away and destroyed? No. We can destroy some mental attitudes. We can destroy arrogance. We can avoid being arrogant, and be humble. That is all possible. However, it's not possible to renounce ego like that. It isn't possible to reject the feeling of 'I.' One must replace it with something else. Thus, what happens in surrender to God, or offering to God? There, the mind imagines 'God' in every place where the feeling of 'I' comes. Wherever it comes, and along with that attachment.

Normally, after finishing a work, we feel pride. 'I was able to do this really well.' 'I could do this more beautifully than others.' That is a circumstance where the action becomes 'mine.' Then, if it wasn't 'I' who performed the action, if it was God, then what happens? That isn't mine. That is God's' This is the offering to God, īśvarārpana. 'This action isn't mine. Isn't wasn't me that finished it. Instead, it was God.' There, what does he do? It is said that he offers his action to God. Why? He offers the mental attitude of being the doer. If it was God that performed the action, then all the quality that belongs to the action are not 'mine,' but God's. Think this. That is surrender to God.

The surrender to God of the karma yogi is these kinds of mental attitudes. Otherwise, one doesn't give an action one has done to God. That is possible. A person makes naivedyam and offers it to God. Because God doesn't eat it, we ultimately eat it. That happens. However, here karma doesn't refer to any kind of material object. If it is a material object, we can take it and surrender it. Here, that isn't it. A karma here means the mental attitude behind the karma. The transformation in the mental attitude is what is worship of God and surrender to God. Because one thus has the mental attitude that it isn't 'I' that is acting, he thinks that all quality in that action belongs to God. Thus, the karma yogi completely steps aside from the karma. That is detachment, which is said next. This is called 'niḥsaṅgata.'

Thus, it said, 'kevalam īśvarārtham,' Only for God. 'Only,' means that one has no part in this. That is the bhāvana of the karma yogi. That why it is said that the karma yogi doesn't accept the fruits of the karma. Otherwise, a person gains these fruits. In such a karma yogi, in performing karma, there won't be any feeling of competition. Normally, we have this feeling of competitiveness. This competitive attitude, in the realm of karma, and worldly experiences isn't seen in the karma yogi. This is because he knows, 'I have nothing to gain from this. Then with who should I compete with?'

We compete for karma. We will use our influences. We do many things, to change the karma. This is because our thinking about karma is lacking. Then, we compete for the fruit of karma. If a person hears that the karma yogi says 'I don't perform the action,' then he will think, 'If I don't perform the action, then why does a person give me credit for it?' He can't accept that someone else does the karma he performed. Here, the common lack is in our thinking. Then, when we consider these matters, we realize, 'I am not performing Karma Yoga.' There is no competition, or jealousy there at all. Those actions are thus not performed as 'īśvarārtham,' for God. This means that we don't place all our mental attitudes and thoughts in God.

Like this, it also says to renounce ego and attachment. That is how one gains detachment. Here, this is an important subject. This can happen through īśvara bhāvana, identifying with God. This is a common question. 'How can a person bring surrender to God in the mind?' This is a question that is asked

many times. This is a question asked by those who are alert in satsang. Which kind of īśvara bhāvana is it? How should one perform that bhāvana?

Another person asks, 'is it the formless īśvara, or God with form that we should perform bhāvana on? This is because we need God's Grace. If one thinks, 'I am God.' 'Aham brahmāsmi,' then what God will bless us?' How is the īśvara bhāvana of the karma yogi? This is made clear in the Gita itself in several circumstances. Here it says, 'yo lokatrayaṁ aviśya bibhartavyāya īśvaraḥ.' 'God who controls and sustains the three worlds.' That is the karma yogi's resolve about God. This God with the powers of concealment and blessing. That Īśvara has the ability to change all of the obstacles in the path of the karma yogi. Through that God's Grace, the Jiva is able to obtain chitta śuddhi, mental purity. That God has this power. This is God who makes the combination of body, senses, and mind function as the Inner Controller. This is God who can give Liberation from Samsara. The karma yogi prays to this kind of God. The karma yogi acts, thinking, 'God will decide what is best.'

When that happens, a doubt will again come to the mind. 'When we think of such an īśvara, does the feeling of distinction occur? Then 'I' will become different from God. Then won't there be a conflict with Advaita? Doesn't that happen?' That doesn't happen. The Lord Himself reminds us of this. 'Uttamaḥ puruṣaś chānyaḥ.' This is said. In the same section where the Lord says that the Supreme Being, the Puruṣottama, which is the author of Creation, sustenance, and destruction, is different from you,' what does the Lord say? 'Aham ātmā gudhākeṣa sarva bhūtaśayasthitaḥ.' He says this right after. This is in order to avoid such a feeling of different, bhedabudhiḥ.' The same Krishna that says, 'I am the Supreme Being that control creation, sustenance, and destruction,' what does He say? 'I am situated in all of Creation.' 'I Myself am within you.' There, that feeling of 'otherness' is destroyed.

However, as long as one remains an Ignorance, we said before. Who is karma yoga for? It is for the Ajnani, one who lack true Self-knowledge. Karma Yoga is only necessary for removing obstacles. As long as one is in Ajnana, God will remain that Supreme Being, the Puruṣottama. It will be God, along with the powers of Grace and concealment. The Grace of God is needed for the sadhak. Here, the karma yogi doesn't have the knowledge of the attributless

parabrahman. There, karma yoga isn't necessary. It is in the level of Ajnana, Ignorance, that karma yoga and God's Grace are necessary. For him, how is God? As the Inner Controller of all, and at the same time, the embodiment of Compassion, Dayāmayi. Also, as the supreme Controller. For him, God is different.

Thus, the karma yogi imbibes both attitudes. In the Truth, what does the karma yogi know? 'Īśvara is attributless and formless.' However, why does he perform worship? It is to the form of God with attributes. That is possible for God; to be both formless and with form at the same time. He is situated in both the bhāva with attributes and that without attributes, at the same time, in the same Reality. Then what is needed for the karma yogi? For him, the Saguna bhāva, the form of God with attributes is necessary. It is that bhāva that the karma yogi surrenders to, worships, and offers to. That is how anugraham, Grace comes. The aspect of Grace doesn't exist in nirguṇa aspect of God.

Then the karma yoga definitely worship such a God. That is said again and again repeatedly in several parts of the Gita. Then, what about the rest that is said? 'Mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke jīvabhūta sanātanaḥ.' There are many shlokas like this. A portion of Me becomes the entire Jīvas. That is said for one to remember. What is requested for the karma yogi? 'You must remember Me.' We explained this in the shloka, 'nānuśochanti paṇḍitāḥ.' This is called ātma smarana, remembrance of one's true Self. There is this ātma smarana for the karma yogi. There is also Paramātma smarana. Both of these. He knows the principle behind this. However, experience is different.

What is remembrance of the Self for? If this isn't there, he will fall way to pride. He will identify with the body and senses. To avoid pride and identification in the body and senses, he remembers the true nature of his own Self. Even in that remembrance, where as being an Ajnani without discrimination, he strives for Jnana and viveka, what does he do? He worships God so that his effort is able to give fruit. Thus, there are both for the karma yogi. There is ātmā smarana, remembrance of the Self, and īśvarārādhana, worship of the Lord. Why is this? The karma yogi isn't completely in Ignorance. Nor is he completely in Knowledge. He stands in between.

He recognizes that he is in Ignorance, the karma yogi. Therefore there is no conflict between the saṅguṇa bhāva and nirguṇa bhāva of God. Having both worship of the Saṅguṇa, and the resolve of Nirguṇa, is never a cause for confusion. Remembering the Supreme Reality of the Self is never an obstacle to worshipping īśvara. However, due to lack of discrimination, what happens? One says, 'I have heard that the Atman is formless and attributeless. If that is so, then what is the need for worshipping God?' This is after having understood this much. The karma yogi is a supreme devotee. That is why. When we progress forward, we will understand, that in truth, there is no difference between the karma yogi and a bhakta. Both are the same. This karma yogi here is the same as a bhakta.

Then we may ask, 'then what is the difference between a Jnani and karma yogi?' There, there is a difference. When we go forward, you will understand. We say the progression, 'Karma - karma yoga - karma sanyassa - jnana nishta - then Jnani. All of this is said. We are going to say this in a way for us to understand. There are also parts where this is no difference between these. A bhakta, karma yogi, jnani, etc; these three are there in all stages. We can understand this easily. Spiritual thinking is necessary for a karma yogi. Do you understand? You won't understand if you just do work, but if you perform karma yoga you will understand. There, there is spiritual thinking, tattva chinta. Who's is this? This tattva chinta is in the part of Jnana Nishta. Worship of God is needed for the Karma Yogi. The karma yogi must worship God, who possesses the powers of concealment and blessing, for His Grace.. That is a part of bhakti. Thus the karma yogi needs bhakti. Even in the level of a sādhana, these are not things that can separated apart from each other. Only when all of these are yoked together will the sādhana become complete. That is the kind of path of sādhana that the Gita instructs. It isn't that because the chapters have different names, such as 'bhakti yoga,' 'karma yoga,' 'jnana yoga,' etc., that these are all separate sadhanas.

The Lord Himself says this in the final chapter. 'pravadanti na panditāḥ.' That is how fools speak, that is different. Pandits, knowers of the Self, don't speak like that.' It is fools who say like this, 'this is one, and that is a different thing.' Some will suddenly have a doubt, 'doesn't Shankaracharya say, 'Jnana

and karma cannot be joined.' 'Doesn't Shankara say, 'Karma and Jnana are separate.' What you just said doesn't sound agreeable with Shanaracharya.' There is no point in thinking of this, and sweating. This part is commentated on by Shankaracharya. There is the answer.

What are all of these in the Truth? They are unseparable, and one. Imbibing these in the fullness is the success of a sadhak. That is why we must correctly understand what karma yoga is. In the karma yogi's resolve of īśvara, all of this comes. There is nothing wrong with this either. Some people say this. 'No one should study Advaita. They will all become arrogant. That is dangerous. Thinking that everything is the formless, they will become egoistic and be destroyed. Don't create a danger like that.' Is there anything dangerous in anything I have said so far?

Up till now, I have explained what Shankaracharya has said. This is my feeling of what Shankaracharya has written.

AUM AMRITESHVARYAI NAMAH