

Newsletter on Bhagavad Gita by Dr. P.V. Nath

The following text is a compilation of the single issues of a regular newsletter by e-mail, composed by Dr. Pathikonda Viswambara Nath. It includes the original slokas of the Gita as well as the transliteration, translation and commentaries by Dr. Nath.

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**OM SAHA NAVAVATU SAHA NAU BHUNAKTU
SAHA VEERYAM KARAVAVAHAI
TEJASWI NAVADHEETAMASTU
MAA VID VISHAVAHAI**

May He protect us both (the teacher and the pupil)

May He cause us both to enjoy (the Supreme)

May we both exert together (to discover the true inner meaning of the scriptures)

May our studies be thorough and fruitful.

May we never misunderstand each other.

The Gita is in the form of dialogue between Krishna, the preceptor and the disciple Arjuna. Sanjaya, the narrator to King Dhritarashtra, intercepts now and then with a comment of his own. There are a total of 18 chapters with 701 verses (slokas.) Each of the chapters has a title and the title ends with the word "Yoga".

The word "**Yoga**" is derived from the word "Yuj" which means "Unite."

Study of every chapter assists the seeker to unite with the Lord and hence the use of the word "Yoga."

The seeker is he/she who is looking for attaining the union with the "Parabrahman" and experience the "Eternal Bliss." In Sanskrit the name for the word "seeker" is "Sadhaka". The efforts of the sadhaka is known as "Sadhana".

To undertake the task, the seeker must have "Faith" and "Devotion" in the subject, the teacher and "Parabrahman."

Chapter 5: KARMA SANYASA YOGA

Introduction

"Karma": It means "Actions."

"Sanyasa": It means "Renunciation of all desireful actions".

Renunciation of "desire oriented" actions is "Karma Sanyasa Yoga."

This is in continuation of the fundamentals of action and knowledge described in the previous two chapters under the heading of "Karma Yoga" and "Jnana Yoga."

As one proceeds to dwell deeper into the subject matter in this spiritual discourse by the Lord Himself to the entire mankind through the medium of Arjuna, there is going to be some confusion on the meaning of the words "Sanyasa and Tyaga." We do get explanations for these two words every so often during the dialogue and the final explanation is to be found in the 18th chapter.

At this juncture let us understand that:

Sanyasa is "desirelessness" and "Tyaga" is "renunciation of fruits of action."

In the conduct of any actions sequentially desire, action and result follow.

It is a fact that to get anything in life one should conduct actions.

To get something higher, one should still conduct actions but be prepared to forego the lower pleasures.

Renouncing the lower pleasures to experience "Bliss" is the subject matter of this chapter.

The lower pleasures start from pleasures in this life and in this world of ours: "Bhooloka".

And according to our scriptures,

Bhuvaha,

Suvaha,

Mahaha,

Janaha,

Tapaha,

Satyam,

are the higher lokas which are on planes higher than the earth we live in, are ruled by devas, and wherein we are guaranteed to get more pleasures.

Initially we have to learn to sacrifice more and more pleasures which we get as results of actions in this life of ours to reach the higher lokas.

Finally, we should learn to be ready to sacrifice all the pleasures we expect to get from higher lokas to reach the final destination "Moksha."

Apart from the "Moksha" our stay in any of the other 6 lokas is only temporary and has a time span of stay. On completion of enjoyment of stay in those lokas we have to come down to earth and start accumulating meritorious points to enjoy pleasures again.

We should conduct actions with the knowledge of what we will get as a result of the actions. Once we decide on what we like to get, our attention has to be on the actions and no more on the end product. The end product will come on its own in course of time depending upon our actions. The results of past karmas do have an influence on the results conducted now. Actions form the present and result the future.

This rule applies to all walks of life and more so for the spiritual seeker aiming to achieve "Moksha."

"Mental renunciation in the conduct of actions (absence of "I"ness in actions) and the fruits of actions" is "Karma Sanyasa".

To get a degree is the aim of the student entering the university. The next step will be earning with the knowledge obtained and lead the life as a householder. Once enrolled in the university, the concentration has to be on the studies and studies only. The more one puts the concentration on the studies, better will be the results and the grades one would get in the final exams. Good grades in turn would help in securing better employment.

It is also important to remember that our efforts/attitude for studies in the earlier years of study before entering the university do influence the results in the final year of exams. The student who does not concentrate on the present and study as needed and who works at enjoying the stay in the university would find that the pleasures he experienced are limited. He who has wasted a lot of time neglecting the studies in the pre university studies also will find that his attitude for studies in the earlier years is affecting the final goal. He would end up by not being able to find a secure means of livelihood and will experience hardship in future life.

The basic rule to follow in life is: "For the security of tomorrow, sacrifice the pleasures of today."

This is the theme of discussion in this chapter. By giving us the basics of "Karma and Jnana" in chapters 3 and 4, we are now given higher education in spiritual science.

In this chapter we will understand that we need to renounce desire prompted actions that will hinder in the progress towards spiritual maturity. We will learn:

The art of renunciation of sense of agency (ego), in actions and:

The art of renouncing the desire and anxiety for results of actions.

Sloka 1

Arjuna Uvacha:

**SANYASAM KARMANA KRISHNA PUNARYOGAM CHA SHAMSASI
YAC CHREYAYETAYOR EKAM TANME' BRUHI SUNISCHAYAT.**

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, you praise renunciation of actions and again yoga of action. Of these two which is better? Tell me conclusively.

Arjuna, the disciple who surrendered at the feet of his master Sri Krishna wanted the knowledge that would overcome his ignorance. He was ignorant of what was beneficial for him. He was not an ignorant student of the sastras. He had been to Gurukulam in the earlier days of his life to learn the sastras.

Kshatriyas in those days were taught only the "Karma Kanda" part of the Vedas. They did not study "Upasana Kanda and Jnana Kanda" of the Vedas. Arjuna was no exception. He is now getting confused on whether he should stand up and fight or renounce all actions.

The last sloka in the previous chapter ended up by the command to stand up and fight from Krishna. Krishna had said "Uthishta."

But, at the same time, some slokas in the previous chapters emphasised on renunciation of actions. Sloka 71, chapter 2, clearly said: "That man who, abandoning all desires, lives without longing for them, without the sense of I and mine, attains peace."

Arjuna wanted the guidance in the form of a definite statement from Krishna as to which path was the best. He showed the qualities of a sincere student by asking for clarifications in what has been taught. This is the lesson for us all. We must clear our doubts and make our path clear in any field of activity and especially so in the spiritual path.

Sloka 34 in the last chapter is all about the approach to the guru in quest of knowledge. (Tad viddhi Pranipatena') By asking for clarification of doubts, he is following the message from that sloka.

Sloka 2

Sri Bhagawan Uvacha:

**SANYASAHA KARMAYOGASCHA NISHREYASAKARAVUBHOU
TAYOSTU KARMASANYASAT KARMAYOGO VISHISHYATE.**

The Lord replied:

Renunciation of action and yoga of action both lead to the highest bliss. But of these two, yoga of action is superior to the renunciation of action.

Nishreyasakarou: without doubt, leading to the highest bliss.

The word incorporates "Shreyas" in it.

We have discussed the meaning of the word in chapter 2, sloka 7.

Shreyas is what is for our welfare.

Opposite to it is "Preyas" which means "What is pleasing to us."

Shreyas for every individual life on earth is attainment of "Moksha".

Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna that both the paths of "Karma and Sanyasa" ultimately lead to the final state of "Bliss."

He then adds the statement that "Yoga of action" is superior. This he says so with reference to the ordinary men and women on this earth. "Yoga of renunciation" is not possible by the majority and hence the preference to the yoga of action.

Sanyasa is total renunciation of all actions and concentrating totally on the divine. This is a very difficult practice and very few can take up to this method.

We live in the world of a large number of men and women and other forms of life. In our daily life we come across so many types of people. As we have learnt before, every individual is a representative of the Lord on this earth. Majority of us unfortunately have a predominance of ego and we block the divinity within. When we learn the art of overcoming the ego and annihilating the same we will be able to express the divinity within. Ultimately, we will, through the path of "Shreyas" attain Moksha.

We have also discussed before the fact that the Lord appears in so many forms to teach us a lesson. He appears as good and bad, rich and poor, sick and healthy, strong and weak and in many contrasting ways. He comes in those forms to give us an example of what that is.

By following the path of karma, we have an opportunity to come across so many varieties of expression of life. We get an opportunity to develop communion with the Lord's creation. The Lord's

wish is "Loka Kalyana", the welfare of life on earth. We, the human are the medium to fulfil that wish. If each one of us can work for Loka Kalyana, we can make this world a place of peace and prosperity.

This is possible by following the path of "karma yoga."

The followers of path of renunciation fail to get an opportunity to fulfil this wish of the Lord.

It is true that by following the path of sanyasa, one can experience quietude and tranquillity. There is a need for mental equilibrium and this is fulfilled by following the path of sanyasa. On the other hand actions do bring mental disturbance (sukha, dukha) which disturbs the concentration on acts for Loka Kalyana. But at the end, perfection is possible by practicing the karma yoga. We have learnt this by looking at the qualities of a man of steady wisdom in chapter 2.

What we have to understand from this sloka is that:

Jnana resulting in renunciation of ego in all actions and

Karma consisting in actions without desires and with no attachment to the fruits of action,

Both lead to the ultimate Bliss.

If everyone takes to the path of sanyasa, the life on earth will have to come to a standstill and no progress will then be possible. There is a duty to cater for the needs of ordinary men and women and this sloka is directed to that group of people.

Renunciation should come from ripeness of the mind. This takes a long time and in many cases many births and deaths. Taking the decision to become a sanyasi either out of ignorance or as an act of sudden impulse will make the individual a lost soul on earth.

After all the teaching of the sacred text is to Arjuna. Instead of taking up the arms and fighting the war of righteousness under the guidance of Sri Krishna, if he had retired to the forest, Arjuna would have become a lost soul in the forest. This was because Arjuna had not achieved "Mano nasha and vasana kshaya".

We need to burn the existing vasanas (vasana kshaya) and not accumulate any new vasanas (mano nasha). This is possible only by a long life of dedication to actions in the form of "Desire-less actions and no attachment to the fruits of action." (Sloka 47, chapter 2.)

Sri Ramanuja gives a clarification to the word of "Sanyasa" used in this context. He states that "sanyasa" means "Jnana." True karma yogi while being a part of the society performs nishkama karma and by that state attains Jnana of the Atman. This is the later stage of spiritual maturity. Hence, the statement by Sri Krishna that Karma is superior to sanyasa.

Sloka 3

**JNEYAHA SA NITYA SANYASEE YO NA DWESHTI NA KANKSHATI
NIRDWANDVO'PI MAHABAHO SUKHAM BANDHAT PRAMUCHYATE.**

**O Arjuna, he who neither hates nor desires should be known as a man of eternal renunciation.
He who is free from the pairs of opposites is easily set free from bondage.**

Sri Krishna is making it clear that the act of sanyasa has to be at all the three planes of "Mind, speech and actions." This is known as "Trikarana Shuddhi". (Purity at the three planes.) Just by wearing ochre robes and living in the outskirts of town or the forest does not make one a true sanyasi. It is not the physical appearance that makes one a sanyasi but his mental attitude that makes him one.

Real sanyasa is not by renouncing what one dislikes, of feeling happy because one escapes from obligatory duties. Sanyasa is an act of "self-denial". Selfishness cannot make the individual a sanyasi.

The act of renunciation should be not just momentary but must be pursued all through the rest of one's life. The Lord uses the word "Nitya Sanyasee." In this context the word means "A steady ascetic" who shows the qualities of a sanyasi in all his thoughts, actions and speech everyday of the rest of his life.

"He who neither hates nor desires" is to be known as "Nitya Sanyasee", the Lord asserts. Desires and hatreds can come only from being a part of and attached to the society and cannot be experienced by he who moves away from the society. This would mean that a sanyasi continues to be living his daily life by being a part of the society and at the same time following the principle of "Nishkama karma and Karma Phala tyaga." Continue to do what you are trained; continue to conduct "Nitya karmas" as dictated by the sastras is the message by the Lord.

The path to "Moksha" is therefore by being a true "Karma Yogi" and not simply by running away from obligatory duties. One needs to conduct actions that end in "Mano nasha and vasana kshaya." (Refer to the previous sloka).

The second half of the sloka brings out the theme of "Nirdwandva". One has to be free from the pairs of opposites in life like "happiness, sorrow; pain, pleasure; victory, defeat, heat and cold" and the like. These come from being attached to the world around and are the reactions of the mind to the impulses received from the sense organs. Developing "equanimity" to the stimuli received is an essential quality to be developed. This is another requisite for becoming a sanyasi.

If one does not get bound to the world by attachment or aversion, if he gives up selfishness, in course of time would experience "The Peace within and all around". Such a person can be a householder and perform all his duties.

The starting word of this sloka is "Jneyaha". It means "Should be known." Know what I am going to say is the statement from Sri Krishna.

Bandhat Pramuchyate: "Bandha" is attachment and "Pramuchya" is setting free. "Nitya Sanyasi" is freed from attachment and entitled to experience the "Eternal peace".

"Raga Dwesha": Desires and hatreds. Renunciation of influences of hatred and desires which bind the individual.

"Dwandva": Pairs of opposites. Abandoning the pairs of opposites. Such an individual who has managed to burn all the existing vasanas by his actions and not accumulated new vasanas, is a true sanyasi.

Let us remember that it is not action but attitudes that can bind or liberate us from this world.

Sloka 4

**SANKHYA YOGOU PRITHAG BAALAHA PRAVADANTI NA PANDITAHA
EKAM API ASTHITAH SAMYAK UBHAYOR VINDATE PHALAM**

Children, not the wise, say that Jnana yoga and karma yoga are distinct. He who is truly established in either of them obtains the fruits of both.

Prithak: distinct
Baalaha: children
Pravadanti: speak
Samyak: truly
Vindate: obtains

The Lord uses the word "Panditaha" in the context of the wise persons. A learned man is many times called as "pandita." This is not the true meaning of the word. Master in theory need not be a master in practical. He who knows the scriptures and puts the teaching into practice is a true pandita.

A true Jnani perform his actions with a state of renunciation of ego. He has no feeling of "I'ness."
A true karma yogi on the other hand works with the spirit of "No desire for the fruits of action".
Working in this spirit both will achieve the final result of "Mano nasha and vasana kshaya" which is a pre requisite for Moksha. Both the paths bring out the divinity within the individual.

Not understanding the true meaning of the scriptures, many a grown men/women argue that their path is the best and look down upon the others.

Through this sloka Sri Krishna is only chiding such persons. He is not angry at our faults. On the other hand like a mother to her child, he is telling us that we should not commit such mistakes. He says that only children make such mistakes and not adults. It is a common practice that we excuse the mistakes of the children. Similarly, we should develop the attitude of not boasting of our knowledge and look down upon others.

Majority of us are physically grown up but spiritually immature. Those who are spiritually grown up should learn to look upon the rest with compassion and understanding.

Through this sloka we also get a hint of the spirit of "adweshta." (no hatred) He wants religious tolerance. All paths lead to the same goal and one should not hate others who do not follow the same path. We must learn to be tolerant of other faiths, creeds and sects.

"Samyak asthitaha: He who is truly established." We must develop perfectness in whatever path we take. Imperfect understanding leads to differences and quarrels in course of time.

It does not matter if one is following the path of "Jnana or karma". What matters is that he should transcend the feeling of personal doer ship.

Sloka 5

**YAT SAMKHYE PRAPYATE STHANAM TAD YOGAIRAPI GAMYATE
EKAM SAMKHYAM CHA YOGAM CHA PASHYATI SA PASHYATI**

That state which is reached by Samkhya is also reached by yogis. He who sees the oneness of Samkhya and yoga really sees.

Gamya: the final goal.
Gamyate: reaches the final goal.

The Lord is to be looked upon as standing at the final goal point and observing the various paths that reach Him. He is seeing two main paths:

The path followed by Samkhyas and the path followed by yogis.

"Samkhya" as we have discussed in the second chapter means "Uniting with the knowledge." It is all about the knowledge of the "Imperishable Atman" within and all around. He who has fully and clearly understood the "Atman" is a true Jnani. "Samkhyas" in this context is to be understood as "Jnanis".

The word "Yogi" is with reference to "Men of action". True man of action is a "Karma Yogi."

Chapters 3 and 4 are about attaining the "Moksha" through the medium of "Knowledge and Action." We have a reiteration of the fact that both the paths are for final union with the "Parabrahman" and experiencing the "Bliss." The world is full of men with different temperaments. The various paths are to suit the temperaments of different groups of people. Men of knowledge should not show partiality to any specific group and be compassionate to all.

The Vedas say that the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

We should read it as "Jnani by action becomes Brahman".

Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga are just the two sides of a coin.

A coin has two sides with inscriptions on each side. It is accepted for circulation only when there are inscriptions on both sides. Absence of inscription on either side makes it unfit for circulation.

Similarly, the coin needed to reach the final destination should have inscriptions of karma on one side and Jnana on the other side. The seeker of the final destination should therefore show "Knowledge in actions". The knowing aspect of the knower is "Samkhya" and the becoming aspect is "Yoga".

Sloka 6

SANYASASTU MAHABAHO DUKHAM APTUM AYOGATAHA YOGA YUKTO MUNIR BRAHMA NACHIRENA ADHIGACHATI

O Arjuna, but renunciation (sanyasa) is hard to attain (dukham aptum) without the yoga of action. The sage who is harmonised in yoga quickly goes to Brahman.

Sanyasa is desire-less actions and tyaga is abandoning all fruits of actions.

Ego is the centre for desires and hatreds.

Sanyasa is therefore to be understood as renunciation of ego.

When there is no ego, there will not be any trace of desires or hatreds.

Many understand and consider sanyasa as renunciation of all possessions. They decide to leave all the possessions and go to a centre of pilgrimage and start a new life in the vicinity of their beloved God. There are some who would like to go to an ashrama and spend the rest of their life.

What we should remember is that the most important possession which we must renounce is "The Ego." Without renouncing ego all other acts of renunciations are of little use. It is the ego that keeps us attached to all material possessions in this world.

But to live in this world we have to conduct actions and work like a karma yogi. The first step therefore is karma yoga, second step is Jnana yoga and the third step is Vijnana yoga. "Vijnana" in this context is the maturity that makes the individual develop "Detachment in attachment." (It is true sanyasa.) The end result is "Moksha."

The child starts with learning to walk first. Karma yoga in this sense is attempts to learn walking. In course of time which takes about 2-3 yrs the child becomes competent in walking. The child develops the full knowledge in the art of walking. This is the beginning of Jnana yoga.

By realising the benefits/dangers in walking the child develops wisdom (Vijnana) in relation to walking that will help her to reach the goal. Finally the child develops the competence to reach the desired destination. Otherwise, on the way to the destination it will get distracted and forgets the goal to reach.

Without walking first the child would not have reached the final destination. This principle is brought out in this sloka.

Another example many scholars would quote is that of fruits on a tree.

The fruits are not sweet when they are not ripe. They will be sour or bitter. They have to remain on the branches of the tree, expose themselves to all weather condition, get the nourishment from the environment and finally become ripe. When they are ripe they slowly lose their connection to the branches and fall off to the ground.

What a beautiful example. Falling off to the ground is losing connection with the world and "Moksha" for the fruit. It gets mature only on exposing to the environment and being part of the tree during the process.

Similarly we should be part of the society and sanyasa is after total maturity and natural detachment from all attachments. Karma yogi gets nourished by various modifications of life, becomes a Jnani and finally attains Moksha. He has to develop the knack of working for the welfare of the society. Such self denial, forsaking personal pleasures for the benefit of society is true sanyasa and the individual is then a true "Karma Yogi."

Majority of us belong to this category of those who have to conduct daily activities.

"Yoga yukto munir Brahma na chirena adhigachati": harmonised muni quickly goes to Brahma

"Muni" is he who contemplates on the Supreme. "Mounam Charati iti munihi", they say. It means "Muni walks in the path of silence."

He who conducts all his daily duties by silencing the sense organs and preventing them distracting from his daily duties is "A Muni" and "Karma Yogi." He is harmonised in yoga.

Those who would like to consider "Moksha" as the final destination in life's journey should know the art of conducting all actions as prescribed by the sastras. The main focus in the conduct of actions will have to be "Detachment."

"Detachment in attachment" is the key to success.

In the journey of life our only constant companion is "Atman." All the other companions stay for a period of time with us. Either we have to part with them or they have to part with us. We have no say in this matter. True sanyasi is he who keeps his sense of balance on parting with his possessions. Mental renunciation of attachments is sanyasa.

Sloka 7

**YOGA YUKTO VISHUDDHATMA VIJITATMA JITENDRIYAH
SARVA BHOOTATMA BHUTATMA KURVANNAPI NA LIPYATE.**

He who is devoted to the yoga of action, with heart purified, with mind controlled and senses subdued, who realises his "Self" as the "Self" in all beings, though acting is not tainted.

In general most of us are engaged in actions and find the path of total renunciation almost impossible to practice.

Amongst those who conduct actions there are two types:

Those who work to gratify their senses.

Those who work to please the Atman within and strive for soul liberation.

This sloka is to assist those who work to gratify their senses in changing the mode of working and thereby become eligible for salvation.

We have discussed already several times that every action has a reaction. We act because of vasana imprints carried from the past. All the desire or hatred oriented actions in turn bring in more new vasanas. We have to be born again and again to fulfil the new vasanas and accumulate more new vasanas in turn. Thus we go through the endless cycle of births and deaths.

Na Lipyate: This is the last word in the sloka and means "Not tainted"

"Yoga yukto" is the first word and it means "engaged in action."

How by engaging in actions and not get tainted is given in this sloka through four practices:

They are:

Vishuddhatma

Vijitatma

Jitendriyaha

Sarva bhootatma bhootatma.

The above four point to the four instruments within us through which we act and we should use all the four instruments in our actions.

Let us look at these four practices:

Vishuddhatma: "Purified heart."

The heart referred to is "The Intellect." The intellect which is nearest to the Atman within and which has the capacity to control the mind should be pure. It is the organ for discrimination between right and wrong.

When this instrument gets tainted with impurity the individual expresses "Durbuddhi". "Buddhi" is intelligence and "durbuddhi" is perverted intelligence. When this is predominant the actions of the individual become selfish and bring harm to others.

When this instrument is pure the person expresses "Subuddhi," which means intelligent actions without selfishness. Such actions without any trace of hatred and desires bring tranquillity.

Shuddha is purified and Vishuddha is totally purified. A totally purified intellect is the first of the four points brought about in this sloka. The pure intellect which is powerful can then be the leader and control the mind which is the band master for all bodily actions.

This brings us to the next point in order in this discussion. It is:

Vijitatma: Self control over the mind is Jitatma and perfect self control is "Vijitatma."

The mind as we know is a very large memory bank with full of stored imprints from the past. It also receives constantly impulses from the outer world. The sensual impulses from outside world or the

awakening of one of the vasanas (memory bank of thoughts.) distracts the mind. It is like a monkey that keeps jumping from one branch to another. Control of this monkey within us is very important.

By being a charioteer for Arjuna Krishna has given us a great message. He is saying that give me the control over your mind, let your mind through the organs of action continue to discharge its duties.

A perfectly balanced mind can discharge its duties to the best of its capacity.

In the famous picture of Gitopadesha,

Arjuna is standing in the back of chariot holding on to his bow and arrows,

Krishna is in the front holding on to the reins.

Arjuna is the mind discharging its duties.

Krishna as the charioteer is the controller over destiny. He is the intellect taking over the role of the senior advisor and guiding the mind.

Arjuna is shown as the true karma yogi discharging his duties to protect dharma.

A sincere seeker who is not motivated by personal desires gradually develops clarity of understanding of the final destination. In course of time he learns from his own personal mistakes. As his vision gets clearer and clearer of the final destination his actions get more vigorous and show a lot of zeal. He develops perfect self control over his wandering mind.

Jitendriyaha: Indriyas are the senses. Victory over the senses is "Jitendriya."

Let us go back and look at the picture of Gitopadesham.

Krishna is holding on to the reins for the horses.

The reins are the senses and the four horses are the "Kama, (desire) Krodha,(anger) Lobha (greed) and Moha (delusion)." They pull the individual astray in his path. As the horses go astray the chariot moves hither and dither and may even fall into the ditch. Instead of taking the passenger to the destination of his choice, the horses rule and pull the passenger astray. The end result is not just failure to reach the destination but get injured also.

Krishna is holding on to the reins and not letting the horses go their own way. This control over the senses is Jitendriya.

The chariot as it moves nearer and nearer to the destination, the picture of destination gets clearer to the passenger.

Similarly, for the seeker, the final destination of "Moksha" is totally obscure in the beginning of his journey. He takes the path because his elders and guru gave him the idea of Moksha.

"Sarva Bhootatma Bhootatma": By developing the qualities of "Vishuddhatma and Jitendriya" he starts getting a vision of Moksha in the latter stages of his spiritual journey. He starts seeing the Atman within himself and in all forms of life, both moveable and non moveable.

But, all along he should be "Yoga Yukta." He should be devoted in his actions. Perfect devotion to the Supreme, to the guru who guides him in his spiritual path, unswerving faith in the scriptural teaching will give the strength of devotion to the actions.

The knowledge of one cosmic Consciousness apparently appearing as the various forms of creation on this universe is the tool to be perfect Yoga Yukta.

Karma yoga soon becomes "Karma Sanyasa" which is the title for this chapter.

Sloka 8 - 9

**NAIVA KINCHIT KAROMI ITS YUKTO MANYETA TATVAVIT
PASHYAN SHRUNVAN SPRUSHAN JIGHRAN ASHMAN GACCHAN SVAPAN SHVASAN**

**PRALAPAN VISRUJAN GHRIHMAN UNMISAN NIMISHAN N API
INDRIYANINDRIYARTHESHU VARTANTA ITI DHARAYAT**

The harmonised yogi who knows the Truth thinks, "I do nothing at all" on seeing, thinking, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, opening and closing the eyelids. He is convinced that the senses move among the sense objects.

This is the continuation of the previous sloka. We were told that the yogi who is harmonised in actions will not be tainted by action only on acquiring total intellectual purity, control of the mind and his senses subdued. He wins over the illusion/maya and sees the Atman within and the same Atman in all.

We get in these two slokas an enumeration of the various voluntary and involuntary actions we do in a day. Some of these are essential actions for survival, some to please others, some that give us pleasures and some as reactions to the impulses received by the sense organs from the surrounding world.

Let us briefly look at the meaning of the words used in these slokas.

Pashyan: seeing (eyes)

Shrunvan: hearing (ears)

Sprushan: touching (skin)

Jighran: smelling (nose)

Ashman: eating (mouth)

Gachan: going (legs)

Svapan: sleeping (mind)

Shvasan: breathing (lungs)

Pralapan: talking

Visrujan: giving

Grihman: grasping

Unmisan nimishan: opening and closing eyelids.

As long as we are alive technically speaking we are "Two in one". We are "The Atman" which is the true eternal entity and "The physical body" which is limited by space, time and causation.

The Atman remains as the eternal witness to all our thoughts and actions at the intellectual, mental and the physical planes. It is the "Sakshi" (witness) to the bodily actions.

Identification with the body is known as "Dehatma buddhi" and identification with the Atman is "Atma buddhi."

The yogi mentioned in these slokas is he who has understood his true identity, attributes his existence to the power within and has no feeling of identity with any thoughts/actions of the body. He follows the principle of "Nishkama karma and karma phala tyaga." Desire-prompting messages from the sense organs do not disturb his balance of mind. He is aware that as long as he is alive he has to work and be a member of the society. All his actions will be for being a useful member of the society and not bring harm to anybody knowingly or unknowingly.

While conducting any of the actions enumerated above his reaction is "I do nothing, I am not the doer of actions." Desire prompted messages from the sense organs do not get registered in his mind. It is not simple words but it is the attitude that comes from being a "Vishuddhatma, Vijitanta and Jitendriya." Purity in word, thought and speech is the hallmark of the yogi.

We have the example of "Mahatma Gandhi" who was a harmonised yogi. We cannot see ego expressed in any of his actions.

The spiritual seeker has constantly to remember that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord and has to gradually move from lower Tamas to higher Satva. When the veil of maya is totally removed and he enters the state of "Suddha Satva" he realises his own true identity and the true identity of all. Keeping in mind constantly that he is the eternal servant of the Lord, all his actions, thoughts and speech will be ever pure, for the welfare of life on earth and he will never attribute ownership of such actions.

Sloka 10

**BRAHMADHYAYA KARMANI SANGAM TYAKTVA KAROTI YAHA
LIPYATE NA SA PAPENA PADMA PATRAM IVAMBHASI**

He, who acts, offering them to Brahman, giving up attachment, is unaffected by the sin like a lotus leaf by water.

This is another poetic picture of the "Doctrine of Karma." The Lord has drawn so many such pictures on "Karma" and will do so many more times in the subsequent chapters to come. Just like an artist drawing a number of pictures on a canvas to bring out his vision, each one with minute changes in the picture to improve on his presentation and also to suit the tastes of different art lovers, Sri Krishna is giving us many slokas on this theme.

Basically, it is all about "Karma."

We are born into this ocean of samsara because of our past karmas,

We are sustained in the ocean of samsara by our actions.

What about the tomorrow to come? Will we be born into this world again or can we achieve unity with the Brahman?

The advice on how to work is given along with an example of lotus leaf. Those who are familiar with the lotus flower can understand this. The lotus plant sprouts from the soil at the bottom of the waters in the lake. One can see the droplets of water on its leaf. The droplets move about with the movement of the wind and the leaf. The leaf has a waxy surface that does not make the drop stick to it. The plant dies in water at the end of its life span.

It is born in water, stays in water and at the same time its leaves are unaffected by the water on their surface.

Similarly, our actions should not be the cause of our rebirth. They will be the cause of rebirth if we are attached to the actions and the results. Spiritually speaking, every action that is the cause of rebirth is "a sinful action."

By working as the servants of our master, offering the results of all correct actions un-selfishly at His feet, we will be able to exhaust the vasanas we are born with but will not accumulate any more new vasanas. We will therefore be able to act for the welfare of life on earth and finally attain union with Parabrahman.

This means that we must still conduct all our Nitya Karmas:

Pancha Maha Yajnas - Deva, Rishi, Pitru, Nara and Bhoota yajnas,

With devotion, along with prayers to the Lord,

Service to the parents and elders and the revered teachers,

Yajna, Dana and Tapas.

The key word is "Brahmany Adhyaya":

It means, "In Brahman, having always placed."

One of the meanings of the word Brahman is "The Absolute Truth."

We should read this as "In Truth, having always placed the intellect in and realising Absolute Parabrahman in all".

"Live the world of Truth at every moment of your life", is the message.

Sloka 11

**KAYENA' MANASA BUDDHYA KEVALAIR INDRIYAIR API
YOGINHA KARMA KURVANTI SANGAM TYAKTVA ATMA SHUDDHAYE.**

Yogis, abandoning all attachments, act for the self-purification with body, mind, intellect and also the senses.

Yoginaha: the yogis: those who are in the path of unity with the divinity within and all around. It refers to all the spiritual seekers who have made good progress in their efforts.

Karma kurvanti: conduct actions;

How?

Sangam tyaktva: abandoning attachments;

Attachment to what?

Attachment to the fruits of actions.

Then why should they conduct actions?

"Atma Shuddhaye": for the purification of the "self".

It refers to the "self" with the little "s". The "Self", with the capital "S" which is the Atman within is ever pure.

The "self" with the little "s" is the physical body (kayena) with the intellect (buddhya), the mind (manasa) and the senses (indriyair).

What is wrong with the "self" and why does it need purification?

In the spiritual sense, we refer to the "vasanas" as the dirt on the "self".

It is the impulses brought in by the sense organs,

Converted in the mind to "thought imprints",

"Thought imprints" residing in the mind as "vasanas",

These are the dirt on the "self".

The purpose of the seeker's journey in life is:

To realise that "yesterday" in his life,

He was also ignorant and had desires, hatreds and had accumulated a number of vasanas.

To realise that "tomorrow" in his life is the day to "Unite with the Brahman",

He has to conduct actions "today" to fulfil his mission of "Uniting with the Brahman."

This sloka refers to the actions for "Today":

Actions to maintain the body and to be an instrument of the Lord for welfare of life on earth,

Actions to fulfil the mission for tomorrow: "Moksha". They should clear the existing vasanas and there should not be any room for new vasanas.

a) The new born baby conducts so many actions involuntarily. The baby has no desires but keeps on moving the different parts of the body.

Similarly, the actions of the yogi have to be with no desires. This is "Kaya Karma."

b) During dream state, we move the limbs involuntarily. The dream is at the level of the mind without the involvement of the senses.

The mind of the yogi will be fixed on the Atman and he has no voluntary involvement with the senses. The senses do carry out the actions to sustain the body and his actions to be an instrument for the welfare of others but his mind is fixed on the "Atman" (Eternal truth). This is "Manasika Karma."

c) A drunken man who is inebriated does not know what he is doing. He has no sense of agency in his actions. The yogi is not a drunken man but he is totally inebriated with the thought of "Atman" that he does not know what he is doing with the physical body. It is "Indriya Karma."

Thus, a yogi, by constant union with the Atman, acts:

Like a baby - involuntary actions with no desires,

Like a dreamer - with the mind fixed on the Atman,

And is inebriated with the thought on the Atman.

Sloka 12

**YUKTAHA KARMAPHALAM TYAKTVA SHANTIM APNOTI NAISHTIKEEM
AYUKTAHA KAMA KARENA PHALAM SAKTO NIBHADYATE.**

The harmonised yogi, having abandoned the fruits of action attains the Eternal Peace. The non-harmonised, impelled by desire for the fruit of action, is bound.

Yuktaha: harmonised yogi,

Karma phalam tyaktva: having abandoned the fruits of actions,

Shantim apnoti naishtikeem: attains Eternal Peace. (Naishtikeem: final)

Ayuktaha: the non-harmonised,

Kama phalam karena saktto: impelled by the desires for the fruits of actions,

Nibhadyate: is bound.

We can see that the common factor in both the harmonised and non-harmonised is that both of them do conduct actions.

The difference is in the attitude to work.

Whereas the yogi works immersing his mind with the Atman within,

The non-harmonised is immersed with innumerable objects around him.

As there is so much of variety in the physical world, the reaction of the mind varies very frequently and there is no constancy in purpose.

The yogi has only one idea to be immersed in constantly.

More the choice to select, difficult will be for the mind to settle on any one.

For example, in the early 60's and 70's, the televisions had very few channels and the radio had very few stations for the audience. The choice was limited for the audience.

But now, there are hundreds of channels with so much of variety. Many a times we see consumers constantly changing the channels. They get bored quickly and look for some other source of entertainment.

By fixing the mind on the Atman, there is less of anxiety and worry for the seeker.

Any action impelled by desires for enjoyment leads to bondage.

The only sure way for freedom from bondage is desirelessness.

The only sure way for “Peace” is “non-attachment.”

Higher joy in Atman overtakes the lower joys achieved by material possessions.

The message from the sloka is simple and straight forward: “get release from the attachments to lower transitory pleasures of the world and fix your mind on the Atman which is at the highest plane.”

Sloka 13

**SARVA KARMANI MANASA SANYASTASTE’ SUKHAM VASHEE
NAVADWARE’ PURE’ DEHI NAIVA KURVAN NA KARAYAN.**

Mentally renouncing all actions and self-controlled, the embodied rests happily in the nine-gated city neither acting nor causing others to act.

This sloka refers to two beings.

The embodied (Dehee) and the Jiva.

What is the embodied doing and what should the jiva do is explained in here.

The jiva is conducting actions pertained to the life on earth and the embodied remains as a witness for the actions of the jiva.

Sarva karmani: all actions

Manasa sanyasaste: mentally renouncing

It means that all actions that are to be performed should be carried out without the sense of “I” ness in them.

It applies to both the voluntary and involuntary actions.

As a matter of fact the involuntary actions like breathing, circulation, digestion etc do not have any sense of “ego”. All of us live peacefully in relation to such actions. Technically speaking, those involuntary actions carry on by themselves. We do not say “I am breathing”, “my heart is beating” etc. But on the contrary we have a great sense of ego in most of our voluntary actions.

We are told that just like we conduct involuntary actions for the maintenance of our body, we should learn the art of performing all voluntary actions.

No one can shut himself in totally from the world outside. There should be contact with the world.

There is a lot to learn from nature and from the life around. For this we need the senses, the mind and the sense organs. What we need to know is how to make use of them and how to keep them in check.

Vashee: This is the most important word we have to understand in this verse. It means “self-controlled.” The jiva/individual must learn the art of self-control.

What should be controlled is the next question one may ask.

We have two basic instruments:

The senses that bring in the impulses

And

The mind that analyses the impulses, stores them and dwells on them at its own discretion and uses the organs of actions to fulfil its needs.

We have to control both the senses and the mind. By controlling the mind we should be able to control the organs of action.

Unless we learn to control these two perfectly we will not experience the “Peace.”

Nava Dware Pure’: Nine gated city.

It is a beautiful example our scriptures like to put forward to the seekers.

The physical body is compared to a city of nine gates.

In the olden days many parts of the world were ruled by emperors, kings and the like. Their head quarter was a big city. That city had many gates and for discussion purpose they say it had nine gates. The gates had two purposes:

To keep a firm control over the traffic that would like to come in from outside (only let in what was needed and not to let in that is not required or that is dangerous. Not to let in those who might harm the residents or who would be spies/warriors in disguise to dethrone the king,)

AND

to let the residents go out as needed. (To bring in essential requirements, for pilgrimage etc.)

One can say it is like the customs clearance and security check at the ports of entry in any country.

The security to the king was dependant on making sure that no enemy comes in. As we know the cunning enemy slowly takes over the control and eventually dethrones the king.

What are the nine gates in our body?

2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, one mouth, anus and urethra.

Whatever comes in the body has to come through these nine gates. If we can control what comes in and out of these nine gates, we are said to help in keeping our body healthy and this in turn brings in peace.

If our mind learns to keep a control over itself and not get excited or develops hatred to what reaches it from the nine gates, it will experience the peace.

The enemy we are talking about in this instance is "The Ego". The ego gets more powerful with every success and soon the individual forgets the Atman within.

Finally, the last quarter of this sloka:

Naiva kurvan na karayan: Neither acting nor causing others to act. (the embodied rests happily)

This is to reiterate the fact that the Atman is only a witness to all the bodily actions, emotional feelings and mental thoughts. Each one of us are given the freedom to think and act and learn from own experiences in life. We have to go through the samsara which is a series of cycles of births and deaths.

In the example we have taken, all the residents of the city need to carry out their daily activities that ensure peace for themselves, their country and prosperity for the society. The monarch remains as a witness without personally interfering in the life of majority.

In relation to the Atman, it is the nearest example we can give but not totally similar to the life of the monarch.

He who constantly remembers the Atman within and acts as the servant of the divine will experience constant peace. On the contrary he who forgets the Atman within and lives for personal pleasures will experience the transitory nature of pleasures and does not experience "Peace."

Sloka 14

**NA KARTRUTVAM NA KARMANI LOKASYA PRABHUHU
NA KARMAPHALA SAMYOGA SVABHAVASTU PRAVARTATE.**

The Lord does not create agencies, nor action, nor union with the fruits of action. But nature leads to action.

It is the opinion of many that as God is within every individual, whatever the man does it is done by the God and God made him do it. The funny part of it is that when good things happen he gives the credit to himself and when bad happens he puts the blame on the God. When Mr. X goes and murders somebody they tend to say that God inside him made him do that and Mr. X cannot be held responsible for such an act.

This sloka is to clear that misapprehension. There is only one reality. We either misapprehend it or non-apprehend it. Non apprehension is due to ignorance and mis-apprehension is due to ego.

Na kartrutvam: no agency. The feeling of "I" did it is "Kartrutva bhavana". It is a mental attitude. It is due to the ego. The God did not create such agency and it is the individual who creates such a feeling within himself.

Na karamani: no actions. Each one of us conducts a variety of actions. Some are good, some are bad and some indifferent. The Lord did not make us do any of such actions.

Na karma phala samyoga: no union with the fruits of actions. Whatever action is conducted, it will have its own results albeit good or bad. Again the God did not bring the union with the results. God gave it to me and it is all mine should not be the attitude to the benefits from actions. When the results are bad, many are of the opinion that God gave the bad results.

All the three notions are wrong, the Lord says.

We should remember that "He" is only a witness to the actions and acting as a judge only. The judge may send a person to life imprisonment but he did not make the person get the life imprisonment. There is a great deal of difference between the two views.

The word used is that he is "Lokasya Prabhuhu": he is the Lord of this world and as such has taken the role of a judge to the actions conducted by men and women. Not that He is sitting on a high throne and passing his judgement but he is a witness to all actions by being the Atman within and passes his judgement accordingly.

Another meaning for the word "Loka" used here has to be analysed too. In Sanskrit "Loka" means the world created by each individual mind. The mental/intellectual analysis of the impulses received by the sense organs makes each individual create his own world. The loka we live is and what we call as "world" is the consensus of majority agreement of men/women with the impulses received and analysed. In this sense, what created our loka will be the ego and not the Lord.

Na Srujati: does not create. "I did not create any of these three" is the definite statement from the Lord.

But what makes us conduct our actions?

"Swabhavastu Pravartate" is the answer.

It means "but nature leads to actions."

What is "Nature?"

It is not the nature which is the world around us. The word "Nature" is used in the context of the way each one of us act.

Our actions as we have discussed several times in detail before is due to the thought imprints settling as vasanas in our mind.

What we take from the world around, how our mind reacts to the same, how and in what form it is stored in our mind, how we open up the stored vasanas, the sum total of these makes our "Nature."

If we act at the mental level and let the stored vasanas of desires/hatreds shine out our actions will be rajasic or tamasic.

On the other hand if we act at the intellectual level, think of our thoughts and actions, analyse whether they are right or wrong, not just for us but for our loved ones and the society and then conduct our actions, we will be assisting ourselves in clearing the stored vasanas and our actions will be Satvic. Finally, if we can use of the consciousness within by letting the light of divine knowledge shine forth, our actions will be divine and we are said to be on the path of "Union with the Supreme" and we would be able to experience the "Eternal Bliss."

Sloka 15

**NAADATTE' KASCHIT PAPAM NA CHAIVA SUKRUTAM VIBHUHU
AJNANENAVRUTAM JNANAM TENA MUHYANTI JANTAVAHA**

The Lord does not receive either the bad or the good of any one. Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance and by it beings are deluded.

Having said that each individual acts on his own and the Lord is just a neutral witness, we now get another firm assertion from Him that He does not receive the good or bad from the actions of any individual.

It is a simple statement of fact that good actions result in good results and bad actions result in bad results. We get the results of all the actions conducted by us. The Lord does not receive the results of any actions.

What is then "The knowledge" that is enveloped by ignorance?

The knowledge we should remember is that each one of us is truly "The Atman" within which is part of Parabrahman. Each one of us is "Tat", so says the Mahavakya from Chandogya Upanisad, Sama Veda, "Tat Tvam Asi." (Thou Art That.)

There are three aspects of "Ignorance" that hides this "Knowledge" and these are:

a) We carry forward results of a number of actions in our past including the past births. We did not get the results during that birth. The timing of receiving the results is "In His hands." The ignorance is that we do not remember this truth.

In the past births of ours, each one of us has done both good and bad actions. The Lord does bestow the results of actions is also something that has been drilled into us by the sastras.

Physical death in any one birth does not mean the end of all vasanas stored in the mind. We have to get the results of thoughts and actions in that birth and that of the past births too. The results will be given to us either in this present birth or later in the subsequent births we may have to take.

b) Whatever actions we conduct in this life should also bear fruits and these may be sweet fruits or bitter fruits as the case may be.

Some fruits we taste in this life but many are yet to ripen and we do not know when they will ripen. We have even forgotten that we have sown the seeds for these fruits by our actions. Not only we have

forgotten the past but we do not realise that our actions now will give us the fruits at a later date and we have to taste them. The ignorance is that we do not know this truth also.

c) Finally, the ignorance is that we have forgotten our true identity with the "Atman".

The absence of knowledge of these three aspects of our life is "Ignorance". This is referred to in the sloka with the statement "Knowledge is enveloped by ignorance and by it beings are deluded."

The "Ignorance" is referred to as "non-apprehension" of reality which in Sanskrit is "Avarana". This leads to "mis-apprehension" of Reality which in Sanskrit is "Vikshepa."

Let us realise that the God does not sit on a high pedestal in a remote part of the universe and blesses the jivas with vanquishing of all the vasanas at the time of death.

(refer to sloka 38, chapter 3: the fire is enveloped by smoke, the mirror is covered by dust and the foetus is enveloped by amnion).

Sloka 16

**JNANENA TU TAD AJNANAM ESHAM NASHITAM ATMANAHA
TESHAAM ADITYAVAY AJNANAM PRAKASHAYATI TAT PARAM**

But to those whose ignorance is destroyed by the knowledge of the Atman, shining like the sun, reveals the supreme to them.

The journey of life is mixed with happiness and sorrow. It is common for all. But what brings happiness or sorrow differs markedly from individual to individual.

We give more importance to happiness and in that we almost forget the Lord who blessed us with the experience of happiness. Whereas when we are in sorrow, we start asking questions like "why"? "Why did I have to suffer"? "Why was God so cruel to me"? And similar questions crop up in our minds.

In the last sloka we understood that "Knowledge is covered by ignorance."

In this sloka we are given the means to clear the ignorance.

"Ignorance has to be cleared by the knowledge of the Atman" is the simplest answer from the Lord for all mankind irrespective of wealth, caste, sex, creed, religion etc.

Where is this "Atman"?

Some of my friends from the state of Kerala tell me of a beautiful tradition they follow in their region which brings out the awareness that "The Atman is within all of us."

On the day of their "New Year", the tradition is:

The members of household or friends ask the question:

"Do you want to see God"?

When the answer is affirmative, the individual is asked to close his eyes and is led into a room. Inside the room he is asked to open the eyes. He is made to sit on a chair facing a mirror.

As soon as he opens his eyes, he will see his own reflection.

This symbolises the fact the Lord is within you and opening your eye of knowledge you can see the Atman within.

The second half of this sloka gives the beautiful example of the sun and the clouds.

The sun is ever shining in the sky during the day time. Many a times, he is not seen because of the dark clouds in the sky blocking him. Even a small cloud can block the view of the sun. It does not mean the sun is not there but it only means that the cloud blocks the sun and benefit of sun is not obtained because of the cloud.

As soon as the cloud moves away, the sun shines forth in his brilliance. It was not that the sun was not there. But, he was hidden by the dark clouds.

The sun did not have to move away but the clouds had to disperse.

The sun is to be looked upon as the example of the "Atman",
The clouds as the "Ignorance."
The sun, self luminous will shine forth and the,
Atman, self luminous shines forth.

Let us look at the idol of the Lord in a temple in the inner sanctorum. The tradition is that the inner sanctorum is a dark room with the statue of the Lord within. Lamps are placed on either side of the idol. As soon as the lamps are lit, the idol shines forth.

This is not the perfect example.

The best example is that of an article made up of radium. Radium as we know is "self-luminous." In a dark room if this article is placed with some item of cloth covering it, the article is not seen. The owner will keep on searching for this article.

As soon as he removes the cloth over the article, even in the dark room, the article shines forth because of its self-luminous property.

"The Atman" within is self-luminous. It is covered by ignorance known as "Ego". When we remove the mask of ego, the Atman shine forth in its full brilliance.

"Be still and know that I am God" says the Bible.
The important word is "be still". It means "do not move."
It is not physical movement it refers to.
It is the feeling of "I move" with the "I-ness" predominant in it.
The body, mind and the senses have to do their worldly duties without the sense of ego.
This is the perfect state of "Total, Intense meditation."
In this state, we can see the God within and all round.

Sloka 17

**TADBUDHAYAS TADATMA TANNISHTA TATPARAYANAHA
GACHYANTYA PUNARAVRTTIM JNANA NIRDHOOSHA KALMASHAHA.**

Intellect absorbed in "That", Self being "That", established in "That", "That" being the supreme goal, they go whence there is no return, their sins dispelled by knowledge.

Tad Buddhaya: buddhi/intellect absorbed in "That.":

Intelligence/intellect is the God's gift and privilege to the mankind. It is important that we learn the art of making proper use of this special gift. For what good we may have done in the past, we are blessed

with the birth as humans. We have to climb up from the plane of "stone man to animal man," from "animal man to man man", from "man man to God man". This is possible when our intellect is totally absorbed in "That." The role of the intellect in our body is "Reasoning capacity."

The reasoning capacity can be either good or bad. If it is bad it is due to the ego/ahamkara and it is then known as "Durbuddhi". Selfishness predominates in all the reasoning tasks.

If it is good, it relates to the Atman within in all its reasoning tasks. It will then take the individual on towards the upward path in spiritual progress. Such buddhi which has no ego in it is "Subuddhi." "Intellect absorbed in That" refers to "Subuddhi."

It does not mean that we forget our role in the society. Every act we conduct has to be in the spirit of "Working for our Master." We should continue to discharge our duties to repay the debt to the society and at the same time be humble servants of the Divine Master. "Intellect absorbed in That" implies remembering this advice from the spiritual masters.

"Tad Atmanaha": their self being That:

This refers to the "Mind." It is not the Atman but "Jivatma". The Jivatma is the Atman that has developed contact with the outer world and forgotten its true identity. "Tadatmanaha" means the mind has to remember its connection to the Atman, ever pure and in constant bliss. Keeping in memory the true identity of oneself is "Tadatmanaha." It simply means that one should not have the "Ego" in their thoughts, actions and speech.

"Tan Nishtaha": established in That:

It refers to the state of the mind in relation to the impulses received from the sense organs. Despite receiving the various impulses from the world around, the mind should never forget the union with the Atman within.

The search light from the mind focussed externally through the sense organs should be directed towards the Atman within and,

The mind at the same time must remember that it should be under the control of the intellect.

Meeting these two conditions is "Tan Nishtaha."

Tat Parayanaha: That being the Supreme goal.

This refers to the practice of "Meditation".

The sastras advice that "God realisation" should be the goal in life. "God realisation" means realising the presence of God in all and respecting the God in all.

Gachyanti Apanaravruttim: They go whence there is no return.

In the material world we live in, absorbed in acquiring material gains we spend our time fulfilling our wishes and dreams. We have examples of businessmen, industrialists, politicians who have succeeded in their efforts by being totally absorbed in that and established in that objective. The success gained in the material world is related to time, space and causation. The happiness of achieving this success is not permanent.

On the contrary, the "Peace, Bliss" experienced on uniting with the Parabrahman is the end of spiritual journey. It is union with the "Supreme". When there are no more vasanas stored in the mind and the mind does not register any new vasanas it is said to be the ideal condition to merge with Brahman.

This can happen only when their sins are dispelled by knowledge. The "sins" referred to here are the "vasanas." Clearing the stored vasanas in the mind and not letting new vasanas get registered in the mind comes from "Knowledge". Highest knowledge the sastras would like us to develop is understanding the Mahavakya "Tat Tvam Asi."

Let us all stop in our path for a moment, contemplate on what progress we have made and on our future actions in relation to the goal of life, make a critical self-analysis of our actions in relation to our life, and we are sure to succeed and experience "Sat Chit Ananda."

This takes us on beautifully to the next sloka, which is:

Sloka 18

**VIDYA VINAYA SAMPANNE BRAHMANE' GAVI HASTINI
SHUNI CHAIVA SHWAPAKE' PANDITAH SAMADARSHINAH.**

The sage look with equal eye on a Brahmana endowed with knowledge and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste who feeds on dog's flesh.

The sage referred to in this sloka is the seeker who has put into practice the essence of the last verse and he is recognised as a true pandita. The doctrine of "Universal love" is the hallmark of Gita and stressed in this verse. It is not only the doctrine of brotherhood of man but love and compassion to all forms of life.

We learnt from the last sloka that the seekers by such practice would succeed in dispelling their sins by acquiring knowledge. The highest knowledge to be learnt is "Samatvam". "Equal vision" is "Samatvam." It is seeing the same "Atman" in all. It is the true knowledge and he who puts into practice this philosophy is a pandita.

The seeker who moves about in the material world would naturally come across variety of life. The sloka highlights some of the life observed by such a seeker.

The highest social order for Hindus is a Brahmana and the lowest is a sudra, who is considered as an outcaste. The learned sage sees the same atman in both and shows his respect.

Sri Krishna stresses that Brahmana is not the title received by the right of birth in a Brahmin family but by acquiring knowledge and showing humility.

Brahmana, man of knowledge, well versed in sastras has to put into practice the theory. One of the main qualities he has to develop the quality of "Humility." Educated man without humility is an arrogant man. It does not matter which branch of science one takes. Unless one develops humility, the ego will destroy him in course of time. It is a well known fact that no one will ever know what will happen tomorrow. It is also important to remember that the knowledge acquired was possible only by the benefits received in various forms from different sections of the society. Respecting the members of the society, being grateful to what is received from the society is stressed in our sastras very strongly.

At the other extreme we have been given the example of an outcaste who is from the lowest order of the social class. Outcaste is he who lives on filthy habits and hence the statement "he lives on dog's flesh". (It is only a figurative speech.)

Despite the fact that the sastras declare that "Kshama" (forgiveness) is a divine quality and need to be put into practice, when it comes to practical life this principle is forgotten. The pandita who has mastered the sastras remembers to put into practice the principle of forgiveness. He has developed the divine qualities of compassion and does not show displeasure or disrespect on any class of people.

As we have discussed before,

Let us learn to,

Move from the level of dehadrishti (looking at the level of the physical body) to,

Level of manodrishti (looking from the mental plane), to

The level of Atmadrishti (spiritual plane)

And see the same Atman in all.

The "samatvam" should apply to all forms of life and hence we have the examples of the cow, elephant and a dog.

The cow for a Hindu is the most revered. It feeds on grass and gives the best nourishment for all. "Sarvopanishado gavo doghdha Gopala nandanha" say our learned elders. All the Upanisads are the cows and Sri Krishna is the cowherd, they say. Among animals, cow takes up the highest order and hence the reference to it. The elephant though a strict vegetarian animal has to be admired for its massive strength. Dogs were not the pet animals in the days gone by and were mainly wild dogs.

The pandita is therefore he who shows the same love and compassion to all classes of people and all varieties of animals.

Sloka 19

**IHAIVA TAIR JITAHA SARGO' YESHAM SAAMYE' STHITAH MANAHA
NIRDESHAHA HI SAMAM BRAHMATASMAAD BRAHMANI TE' STHITAH.**

**Even here, birth and death are overcome by those whose mind is established in equality.
Brahman is free from evil and is balanced and therefore they are all established in Brahman.**

The way to attain "Moksha" is by uniting with the "Atman" within and the "Atman with the Paramatman." Experience of "Ananda" on realising this "Truth" is the "Jnana". (Sat Chit Ananda) "Establishing in Brahman" is to be understood as "Uniting permanently with the Atman."

Unless one learns the art of establishing totally in what he/she is doing, it is impossible to get the best results out of such actions. This is true in any aspect of life.

Totally concentrated on every aspect of cooking along with the proper knowledge of cooking will get the best meal ready by the cook. In this example, we have:

- a) Love in cooking - Bhakti
- b) Knowledge of cooking - Jnana
- c) Act of cooking - Karma
- d) Concentration on all aspects of cooking - Dhyana.

This sloka is highlighting the fourth aspect of "Concentration on the Supreme."

The first half of the verse says that the birth and death are overcome by those whose mind is established in "Equality". "Brahman" is referred to as "Equality." Let us look into this section first.

The mind is the instrument for either bondage or liberation.

By association with the outer physical world it takes us towards bondage.

By association with the Atman within it takes us towards Liberation.
Balanced mind is that which remains in the same position/feeling constantly.
Whatever waves that come from the physical world does not disturb the balance of the mind.

The weighing scale is balanced when the weight on either side of scale is the same and there is no increase or decrease in the weight of contents on either side. In our life, the contents on the two sides of scales are "Happiness and sorrow; Victory/defeat; Gains/losses." Births and deaths of these dwandvas are inevitable for those who are involved in worldly affairs and there is the element of "agency in their actions." These pairs of opposites tilt the balance and there is no steadiness.

The fall into the cycle of births and deaths which is referred to as "Samsara" by the scriptures is described as "Evil" in this sloka. By keeping the "Agency" and living in this world, we are constantly exposed to the evil. We have to pass through many cycles of physical births and deaths.

The only one who is free from this evil is "Brahman." He has no sense of agency and is in constant state of "Bliss."

Those seekers who are established in "Atman" can keep the balanced mind and will not go through the cycles of births and deaths. These people are the "Jivanmuktas" and the "Sthitaprajnas." It is inevitable that till their stored vasanas are destroyed they will not attain Liberation. Because of the state of mind they have developed, they do not feel that they are experiencing the pairs of opposites. They accept everything as "Lord's Grace" and keep a constant balanced mind. They are established in "Brahman", the Lord declares.

It is a fact of life that like things mix together and unlike things do not mix together.
Milk poured on to milk and oil poured in milk is the example we can take.
Milk mixes with milk easily but never with the oil.
The Atman is like the milk and the physical world is like the oil.
To unite with the Atman, the mind, like the milk should develop the qualities of the Atman.
To do so we should develop equality and purity.
By learning and practice of "Atma Dharma" man realises "Brahman" even in this present life.

Sloka 20

**NA PRAHYUSHYET PRIYAM PRAPYA NODWIJET PRAPYA CHAPRIYAM
STHIRABUDDHIR ASAMMUDHO BRAHMAVID BRAHMANI STHITHAHA**

The man of steady intellect (sthira buddhi), undeluded (asammudhaha), knower of brahman should not be elated having obtained the pleasant and should not be troubled having got the unpleasant.

Perfect Jnani, we have learnt is he who has:
A steady intellect, (sthirabuddhi),
Un-deluded (asammudaha) and
Who knows what Brahman is by the practice of spiritual teaching of the scriptures through the medium of Sadguru.

What such a Jnani should be doing during his day to day's activities within the world he is living in is given in this sloka.

We have also learnt that pleasant and unpleasant situations are part and parcel of one's life.

"You should not be elated on getting pleasant and depressed on getting unpleasant" is the message from the Lord to the Jnani.

It is reiterating the fact that the Lord is expecting the Jnani after acquiring the knowledge to continue discharge his duties to the society. This chapter is "Karma Sanyasa Yoga", let us not forget it.

"Conduct the actions but let not the results of actions disturb the balance of your mind", Sri Krishna is telling the literate.

Let us also see the subtle hint from the Lord through the Gita to the mankind. He has not said "do not go after pleasures." What He wants us to understand is that when we go after pleasures, we are also going after the pain. This is the law of nature. Happiness ends in sorrow eventually and sorrow in course of time is superseded by happiness from some source or other. The life is a see-saw of pleasures and pains. If the board of the see-saw is flat and not moving up or down, we get bored in the game. We want to enjoy going up which ends by going down. We work at going up again. We get a thrill at this play. If we do not want to go after the pain, we should not go after the pleasures.

Ordinarily our reactions to the outer world are due to our mental contact with any particular event. We see and hear of illnesses affecting a number of people. We are sad only when that illness affects us or our loved ones and friends. We are not perturbed otherwise.

Similarly we are elated when good things happen to us or our beloved ones. We celebrate success when it is for our loved ones or ourselves. We do not react or take notice of success for the rest of the millions in this world.

We should learn to:

Rejoice in the success of others and pray for the relief of pain for others.

Let us also learn the art of not only reacting with equilibrium to the ups and downs of life, but also, learn to develop equal love to those who are good to us and those who are not good to us.

This is the philosophy of the Gita that has to be practiced in life.

By establishing in "That" we will be able to live in "Eternal Peace."

We should develop "Atma drishti" and not "Deha drishti" by realising the Atman within and seeing the Atman all around us.

Sloka 21

**BAHYA SPARSHESU ASAKTATMA VINDATI ATMANI YAT SUKHAM
SA BRAHMAYOGA-YUKTATMA SUKHAM AKSAYAM ASNUTE**

With the Self unattached to the external objects, he finds happiness in the Self. With the Self united with Brahman in meditation, he enjoys imperishable happiness.

What we have here is the state of mind of the seeker who has progressed in his sadhana in leaps and bounds. This does not come overnight. Spiritual maturity brings this level of acceptance of the "Truth" which is described as "Bliss" in the scriptures. Everyone has to grow up and learn the lesson of life. Theory has no place in spiritual progress. Practical experience along with the study of the scriptures, blessings of the Guru and the Lord makes one realise this "Bliss." The seeker needs to have the two important pre-requisites of "Devotion and Knowledge". With these two as the tools he should conduct actions. The lessons learnt from actions become the guiding stones for the progress.

He would come across experiences in life due to attachments to objects that would bring happiness. He would learn that such state of happiness is related to the theory of "time, space and cause." The same principle applies also to the experience of pain.

The "Self" referred to is the Atman contacting the outer world through the medium of the intellect and the mind. It is the "Jivatma".

By detaching from attachment to the external objects he is free from the pairs of opposites of happiness and sorrow. This is negative state of happiness, "Shoonya". It is an empty state where there is nothing. The Lord adds that the Jivatma should practice at the same time to divert his attention to unite with his true identity of the Atman which is nothing but a spark of "Parabrahman." This comes only when he masters the practice of seeing the same Atman in every individual and every form of life and gives due respect to all. (sloka 18 - vidya vinaya sampanne)

This state of happiness is true "Ananda" referred to in the scriptures. It is not just "Ananda" but "Paramananda". (Highest state of Happiness.) Not just that but it is "Imperishable." It is a constant experience of Bliss. It is beyond description. The word used in this sloka is "Sukham Akshayam Asnute." "Akshaya" is referred to something that does not perish.

Love for the sake of love only and not for anything in return is the highest form of love and is true "devotion." Such love of the Lord gives us the experience of "Bliss." Every experience in life does perish in course of time. The only experience that does not perish comes from uniting with the Brahman. The sastras advocate the practice of "Ne'ti" which means "not this." By the art of negation in relation to the world of objects one moves upwards till he unites with the "Atman" within. Meditation is the method of achieving this union. The greatest source of "Love" is within each one of us. It is inexhaustible and indescribable. The more one taps it, the more will be the experience of "Peace." The next chapter is "Dhyana Yoga" which deals exclusively and in detail on the "Meditation". This is a prelude for the next chapter.

One cannot say it is an experience at all because it only comes on losing one's separate identity. All experiences are short lived and come from keeping the "individuality." We use the phrase "I experienced it" to describe the feelings. In spiritual progress, to realise the "Highest Truth" one has to lose the identity.

The sacred text teaches us the lesson "Sacrifice the less for the greater, the transitory for the Eternal."

Sloka 22

**YE HI SAMSPARSHAJA BHOGAA DUKHAYONAYA EVE TE'
ADYANTAVANTAHA KOUNTEYA NA TESHU RAMATE' BUDHAHA**

The enjoyments born of contact with external objects are indeed the source of pain only. They have a beginning and an end. The wise do not rejoice in them, o' Arjuna.

The word to note in this sloka is "Dukha yonaya": It means, the womb of pain. "Yoni" means "womb".

The pleasures one gets by contact with the objects from the material world are compared to the womb. The seeds of pain are enclosed in the womb and these grow in course of time and give birth to the pain. The pleasures one gets are short lived and the sorrows of pain last longer.

In the modern world we live in, we come across the problem of dependence on drugs, alcohol and the like. The euphoria of experiencing the pleasure on taking the stimulating drugs lasts only for a short

while. The individual without this knowledge finds that the pleasure of taking the drug for the first time was so wonderful and does not like the void he experiences when the effect of the drug wears off. He immediately will go for the second dose and subsequent doses. He forgets the world he lives in and the surroundings. He forgets his duties and responsibilities. Soon he will find himself in a shell in some corner of the house with the drug in his system and totally lost to the world. In course of time when he develops medical problems he finds that cure for the problem is not easy and the damage done by the habit is irreparable.

Similar situation arises with the smoking of cigarettes. The medical profession describe the effect of smoking as follows: Nicotine stimulates release of dopamine in brain through receptors and this causes feeling of well being. This lasts for a very brief period and level of dopamine drops rapidly. These make the individual experience low moods and hence urge to smoke one more cigarette. Smoking increases nicotine receptors in brain by 300%. We all know how the smoking brings on the innumerable health problems which lead to gross morbidity and high mortality.

So we can see that the pleasures we experience are only drops but the suffering we undergo are huge mountains.

The second word to note is "Bhoga." It means "enjoyments." There is a mass of variety in this world and there is no end in trying to get enjoyment from them. It is important to remember that the happiness is not in the objects themselves as such but it is in the reaction by the individual to the object in question and also related to time and causation. It therefore varies from individual to individual and in the same individual from one time to another period of time and on his/her moods. There is a saying that "Bhogi becomes a rogi". (Enjoyer ends up as a patient.)

Another word to note is "Rama". (Please note that it is not "Raama" the incarnation of Vishnu who killed demon Ravana.) "Rama" literally means "Eternal Joy." We have discussed this Eternal Joy already as the "Ocean of Bliss" which is inherent in every individual.

A Jnani therefore realises this truth and follows the principle of "Karma Sanyasa" which is the title of this chapter. He gets the knowledge and uses the knowledge to live in this world and at the same time remain as a "Jivanmukta." He becomes a "Sthitaprajna". He does not hanker for momentary sense pleasures.

Sloka 23

**SHAKNOTI'HAIVA YAHA SODUM PRAK SHAREERA VIMOKSHANAAT
KAMA KRODODHBHAVAM VEGAM SA YUKTAHA SA SUKHEE NARAHA**

He who is able to resist/endure the impulse of desire and anger even in this world before the fall of the body he is harmonised man and is happy.

Ihaiva: even here, (in this world, in this birth.)

We are asked to endure the impulses of desire and anger in the world even before the fall of the body.

The word "even" has to be understood clearly.

What does it imply?

To understand this we must know the belief of an average Hindu and the teaching of the sacred texts.

The Hindu believes in the cycle of births and deaths. After physical death the subtle body of ours goes to one of the 14 lokas. The length of stay in the lokas depends upon the points of merit or demerit

acquired by our actions in this birth. Paramatma, the Lord Supreme is the judge who decides on where we go and how long we stay in those lokas.

The sastras describe the 14 lokas, six above including the earth and 7 below the earth. Devas, illumined ones reside in the higher lokas. These are the places of experiencing the happiness. The lower lokas below the earth are places of experiencing pain and sorrow. (as a consequence of having conducted adharmic actions.)

The point to remember is that the practice of righteous living and acquiring points of merit or acquiring points of demerit by unrighteous living applies only to this life on earth. Hence the earth is called "Karma Bhoomi". We accrue points for every thought and action in this life only and our future birth after death depends upon those points. This sloka is requesting the sincere seekers to resist impulses of desire and anger in this life. If we miss the boat and succumb to the temptations, we have to undergo future births.

The stay in other lokas is only to experience the results of actions conducted on earth. One does not acquire points during the stay in those lokas. At the expiry of stay in those lokas, we are sent back to the earth again. This cycle goes on and on till knowledge dawns. Instead of looking for happiness from our actions we should learn to conduct righteous actions and offer the results of such actions at the feet of the Lord.

It is a fact of life that we look for happiness all through our life. We get happiness from some actions and do not get happiness from some other actions. These upset the balance of the mind and consequently there will be no peace.

In the higher lokas where we will be sent depending upon our points of merit after our death, there will be no actions that result in reactions and the stay is only for reaping the benefits of good actions conducted on earth.

Similarly in the lower lokas where we may have to go, there will be no actions that result in reactions and the stay is only to pay for the wrong actions conducted on earth.

This earth is the only place where the results of actions accrue.

The seeker who understands this and lives with balance of mind, even if it is before the fall of the body, will experience "The Peace" and he is said to be harmonised.

Balance of mind comes from enduring the impulses of desire and anger during the stay in this world in this life only. There will be no impulses of desire and anger in the other lokas.

Finally, one more point to note in this sloka. It is on the use of the word "Vegam". "Kama krodod bhavam vegam sa yuktaha sa sukhee naraha" it says in the second half of the sloka.

"Vegam" used in this context means "impulse."

Desire and anger make us conduct actions out of impulse. The seeker who by spiritual practice has developed the power to control the impulses arising from desire and anger is a yogi, the Lord says.

Sloka 24

**YO ANTAH SUKHO ANTARAARAMAS TATHA ANTAH JYOTIR EVA CHA
SA YOGI BRAHMA NIRVANAM BRAHMA BHUTODHIGACCHATI**

He who is happy within, who delights within, who is illumined within, that yogi, becoming Brahman, attains moksha.

We are gradually led to the next chapter "Dhyana Yoga" which is all about meditation to attain unity with the Brahman.

We are asked to practice the three qualities:

- a) Antah sukho: be happy within,
- b) Antar arama: who delights/rejoices within,
- c) Antar jyothir: who is illumined within.

By mastering these three qualities, the seeker, it says:

Brahma Bhootaha: becoming Brahman and

Brahma Nirvanam: Freedom of Brahman,

Adhi Gachati: attains.

Antaha sukhaha: we should learn to be happy within.

After having told us that the impulses from the external world bring in a state of imbalance of the mind, we are asked to look within for happiness. "O, foolish man, do not go out in search of happiness", says the scriptures.

Yes, everyone wants to be happy, but majority go not for real happiness but transitory happiness that leads to sorrow. We keep on searching for that "Eternal happiness" in the wrong place.

There is a lovely story about an old woman living in a hut and one day she was searching for a pin during daylight outside her house. An ascetic comes to the door and asks her, "What are you searching for?"

She says that she was searching for a pin dropped inside the house the previous night. The ascetic laughs at her and asks her as how could she find the pin which was dropped inside the house?

In reply, the old lady puts the ascetic a counter question. She asks, "What are you searching for going from house to house?"

The ascetic replies that he was going in search of God.

The old lady then laughs back at him and says:

"When the Lord is within you, why are you going out like this in search of Him?"

The Lord within as the Atman is the source of happiness and not the material objects form the world outside. This is the explanation and meaning for the sentence "Anta sukhee." "Be happy" and not try to "become happy." "Becoming happy" by gaining material possessions is not permanent happiness and "Being happy" with the Eternal source of happiness from within is the way to be happy.

"Antar arama":

"Rejoice from within." Instead of going outside to get something to rejoice with, learn to rejoice being with the "Brahman within" is the message. "Dhyana yoga, " the practice of meditation should not be an effort that tires out but a relaxing experience.

"Antar Jyothir":

"The Light within" is the "Light of Brahman". Whatever we see from our eyes including the sun and the moon, is really a reflected light.

We see objects in day light and not in darkness. We say that we have the light of the rays of sun that helps us to see. We consider that the sun is the source of light. Consider a dead body for a moment.

Dead body cannot see any objects. If the sun was illumining everything, the dead body should also be able to see.

I can see the sun but the dead body cannot see the sun. There must be something that made me alive and made me see the sun and the objects around. This something is the "Light of Consciousness within". This power of the "Atman" is so bright that it illumines everything.

In a dark room we say that we can see if there is a source of light. Even in broad day light if all the curtains are closed in a house/if all the doors and windows are closed, one cannot see inside. The sunshine would still be present outside and we blocked its entry by closure of the windows and doors.

Similarly, we, out of the power of "Maya," which acts as "ignorance", block the vision of the "Atman" within and thereby "live in darkness."

To say it in simple words,

The eye is illumined by the mind, the mind by the intellect and the intellect by the Atman. The yogi looks for this source of light for the entire world.

We go for "Bahir sukha" which means "external source of happiness" and "Bahir Jyothi" which means external source of light.

By the practice of "Vyavasayatmika buddhi" (sloka 41, chapter 2) we can divert the search light of the mind within.

The entire scriptures are for making us realise this "Light of Brahman within and all round" and enjoy the "Bliss" of the same. The "Bliss" they talk about and the "rejoicing" they advocate, is "Brahman" and the yogi attains this state which is "Brahma Nirvanam."

Once this state is attained, there is no more:

"Enjoyer and enjoyable",

"Subject and object",

"Knower and knowable".

None of these exists when one unites totally with the "Atman within." There is no more anger for the past or anxiety for the future.

Sloka 25

**LABHANTE BRAHMA NIRVANAM RISHAYAHA KSHEENA KALMASHAHA
CHINNADVAIDHA YATATMANAHA SARVA BHOOTAHITE RATAHA**

Rishis, whose sins are destroyed, whose dualities are cut surrender, who are self-controlled and who rejoice in the well being of others, attain union with Brahman.

Two points are worth noting from this sloka.

Who is a "Rishi"?

The word "Rishi" is often used and we need to know his qualities. Four broad qualities of a rishi are given in this sloka. He who fits in with these four qualities is "Rishi."

How to attain union with Brahman?

"Develop the four qualities, become a true rishi and you will attain Moksha" is the advice from the Lord to the sincere seekers.

a) Whose sins are destroyed: Ksheena Kalmashaha:

As we have discussed several times before, the sins are the vasanas in the mind. The vasanas are the three basic qualities on satva, rajas and tamas in our thoughts stored in the mind.

- Shifting from the state of laziness to become active and passionate in work,
- Shifting from passionate, to pure acts,
- And finally shifting from acts for personal salvation (by dropping the ego) to acts for welfare of life on earth,
- Will destroy the sins.

It is "mano nasha and Vasana Kshaya." (destruction of mind/ego and total annihilation of vasanas.)

b) Chinna dwaidha: whose dualities are torn asunder:

There should be no elation towards pleasant and no depression towards unpleasant. (sloka 38, chapter 2 - sukha dukhe same' krutva)

"Dwaidha" also means "Uncertainty". Whose uncertainty is torn asunder is "Chinna Dwaidha". By the development of love towards spiritual knowledge, working to get the spiritual knowledge from scriptures and the Guru should help in clearing the doubts in the subject. When we are certain that what we are doing is correct and it is according to the prescribed/approved texts we will have no more room for doubts and this will help in making rapid strides towards union with the Brahman. This means there should be no doubt about the "Atman" within and all round and His qualities of "Sat, Chit and Ananda".

c) Yatatmanaha: who is self-controlled.

There is a strong need to control the "self" which is the "Ego" and bring out to prominence the "Self" which is "Divinity."

The senses should be controlled by the mind, the mind by the intellect and the intellect by the inner consciousness. (slokas 42,43 chapter 3).

d) Sarva Bhoota hite Rataha." Rejoicing in the welfare of others".

It is not enough just by praying for welfare of others but one should also rejoice in their welfare.

Who are "Others?"

We refer to, in the order of merit:

- Ourselves first,
- Our nearest families,
- Extended family and finally,
- Our friends.

In other words, "near and dear ones".

Those that do not belong to the above four categories are "others."

We also add animals in the list of others.

It is not "my happiness" but "happiness of others" that is the criteria.

One should not be jealous of others' happiness and not wish for pain for others. To forget oneself in the joy of others one is fulfilling the role of human (adhikara) given by the Lord. When we include these others towards the "Rejoicing in the welfare of", we would have fulfilled the criteria fixed by Sri Krishna and He welcomes us to His abode.

"Rishi" is like a degree one can get by fulfilling the above four criteria. The judge who decides to give the title is "The Lord" himself.

It is possible to redirect our lives even in this birth and it is in our own hands.

In a negative way, the sloka also means that the rishi of today may have been a sinner of the past, looked on for pleasures for himself, who had no self control and was selfish. Yet, by sadhana of several births one can become a "Rishi". There is no bar for anyone to become a rishi and receive the grace of the Lord.

The last quality, "well being of others" implies that the man of knowledge should become a man of action and show that knowledge in action.

Sloka 26

**KAMA KRODHA VIYUKTANAAM YATEENAAM YATACHETASAAM
ABHITO BRAHMA NIRVANAM VARTATE VIDITATMANAAM**

To the self-controlled sages who are free from desire and anger, who have controlled their thoughts and who have realised the Self, absolute freedom exists on all sides.

Yateenaam: to the self-controlled ascetics.

Yati is the definition of an ascetic who has controlled his passions.

If we revert back to chapter 2 for a moment and look at the qualities of "Sthita Prajna":

Sloka 62 in it says that "Brooding over the objects of senses man develops attachment to them, from attachment comes desire, from desire anger sprouts forth".

Tracing the history of anger which is the root cause of destruction of the individual, of the family, of the society, we will realise that,

 desire,
 attachment and
 brooding over the objects of senses,
bring about the eventual destruction.

Object of senses:

Normally one refers to the objective world to be the source of objects of senses. It is partially correct. By deep analysis we have to understand that if we are truly the "Atman" within with a physical body, by relating ourselves to the Atman, even the physical body becomes a sense object. We develop deep rooted attachment to our own body first and with that body to the objects around us.

Yati is he who has developed a perfect control over his body. What is described in this sloka is a continuation of the previous sloka. We should understand it as further qualities of a rishi.

The mind is considered as the band master in our body. It is the centre for all activities. Mind is the centre to the expression of "Ego". We are the "self" with the little "s" and "Atman" is the "Self" with the capital "S".

Yati, by identifying himself with the Atman, controls the "self".

By controlling the senses which bring in the impulses from the outer world,

By being subservient to the intellect which is subservient to the "Antaratma" within,

He masters the art of being free from "desire and anger."

This comes from constant vigil on the thoughts that generate in the mind.

By sincere practice, he has achieved,

"Vasana kshaya" - clearing of all stored vasana in the mind and

"Mano nasha" - destroying the mind which was the "self" with the little "s". It is equivalent to destruction of "ego."

Having achieved the above two, he develops true knowledge of the "Parabrahman" and realises "Sat-Chit-Ananda". This is what the scriptures describe as "Tatva Jnana". Knowledge of the "Truth" dawns and blossoms in the seeker and he is fit to be addressed as "Yati."

He easily unites with the "Parabrahman" who is within and who is all round and this is "Brahma Nirvanam."

To summarise:

Kama krodha viyuktanam: free from desire and anger

Yata chetasaam: by controlling the thoughts,

Viditatmaanam: realized the Self,

Brahma nirvana Abhitaha vartate: freedom exists on all sides.

Sloka 27

**SPARSHAAN KRITVA BAHIR BHAHYAMS CHAKSUSCIAVANTARE' BHUVOHO
PRANAPANOU SAMO' KRUTVA NASABHYANTARACHARINE'**

Sloka 28

**YATENDRIYA MANO' BUDDHIR MOKSHA PARAYANAH
VIGATECHHA BHAYA KRODHA YAHA SADAA MUKTA EVA CHA.**

**The sage who has shut out all external contacts, fixing the gaze on the centre of the eye-brows,
controlling the incoming and outgoing breaths,
With senses, mind and intellect controlled, free from desire and hatred, liberation as his goal, he
enjoys freedom always.**

These two slokas are the basis for the practice of "Dhyana". "Dhyana" is meditation on a desired object and in the spiritual science it is on "Moksha". We get a detailed explanation on the practice of meditation in the next chapter.

It is practiced by "Moksha Parayanas": those aspiring for Moksha.

The first requisite should be the deep rooted desire/yearning for "Liberation."

As children, we are all told by our parents, elders and teachers that we should be educated. As we grow we understand what they meant by “education.” The life for an illiterate in this world is very hard.

We have to undergo basic education first. Towards the latter stages of basic education, we get to know about the various specialities in the field of science and arts and decide on a branch of science to further our studies. At this stage, we should be developing the deep rooted desire to achieve the objective. Once we enter deep into the selected subject, as we are nearer to the end of the course, the deep rooted desire has to go. We should be automatically geared by that time to get on with our studies and do not get distracted.

The same principle applies to spiritual science. As we grow in our spiritual maturity, we should initially develop the deep rooted yearning for “Moksha”. Later on we will learn that we should not entertain any desires including the desire for “Moksha.” Depending upon the way we conduct the sadhana, we will be able to drop the desire for Moksha. This may come in this present life or in future births and everything depends upon our vasanas.

What should the seeker who has a yearning for Moksha do?

This question is answered in these two slokas. The first sloka is on control of the physical body and the second sloka is on control of the subtle body.

Bahyan sparshan: impressions coming from the external world,
Bahih krutva: having turned out.

This is the first step. The five sense organs constantly send in impulses of the outer world to the mind. We are asked to learn the art of not letting the impulses in. “Turn them out”, we are told. What do we mean by this word?

It means that we should act as our own “gate keepers”. We must learn the art of letting in what is good and not letting in what is not good.

The field of sense activity is the world around us. Developing the art of controlling entry of what impulses from the world is essential. Hence in the “Ashtanga Yoga” of Patanjali, the first two practices are “Yama and Niyama.” (slokas 27, 28 chapter 4). Yama is restraint of senses and Niyama is regular practice of spiritual rules. This will be the first step towards turning out the impressions coming from the external world. One can say that the seeker should learn to be deaf and blind to the sensual distractions.

- > Yatendriya mano buddhir: with senses, mind and the intellect controlled,
- > Prana panou samou krutva nasabhyantara charinou: having made the outgoing and incoming breaths moving inside the nostrils equal.

Having controlled the entry of the impressions of the world, the seeker has to learn the art of controlling the mind and intellect.

Controlling the mind: This aspect refers to:

- a) The reaction by the mind towards the impulses received.
- b) Mind dwelling on the stored impressions from the past. (no day dreaming)

Controlling the intellect:

As we have discussed before, the intellect is the reasoning capacity. The "Ego" does reduce the reasoning capacity of the intellect. The intellect is supposed to act with "Subuddhi" and not with "Durbuddhi". When the reaction is good it is subuddhi and when it is selfish and bad it is durbuddhi.

Dropping the ego would assist in letting the light of "Antaratma" shine on the intellect and make it react with what is good for the individual in the spiritual sense.

Learning to give a pause between the receiving of impulses and reacting to the impulses received is a good habit to develop by the seeker. With a pure mind and intellect the reaction should turn out to be good for the seeker and the society.

Pranapanou samou krutva:

Regulating the incoming and outgoing breaths through the nostrils.

In the Ashtanga yoga, after yama and Niyama the third step is "asana" (correct posture) and the fourth step is "Pranayama."

The spiritual physicians recommend the seeker to control the breathing. The act of breathing is generally an involuntary act. In general this is not rhythmical and balanced. Entry of oxygen and exhaling of carbon-dioxide is the role of the respiratory system. There should not be an accumulation of carbon-dioxide in our system as it is harmful. It dulls the brain and reduces its capacity to regulate the bodily actions.

The art of making the respiration rhythmical and balanced is an essential pre requisite in the spiritual practice. It is good for health and concentration for the mind. Breathing and the mind are closely interlinked. Controlling one will control the other. To control the mind it is essential to control the breathing.

The next step is:

Chakshuh bhruvor antara eva krutva:

To help in the practice of controlling the senses, mind and the intellect, the masters have recommended that the seeker has to fix his gaze on a spot in the centre between the two eyebrows. It is known technically as "kechari mudra."

If the eyes are fully open, there is chance of too many impulses entering the mind. On the other hand if the eyes are closed, the seeker would easily fall asleep. Halfway between the two is to turn the gaze to the centre between the two eyebrows. The spot to concentrate is known as "Ajna chakra."

There are some who turn the gaze towards the tip of the nose. Any of the two methods can be followed.

Vigatechha Bhaya krodho:

Free from desire, fear and anger.

(refer to sloka 62, 63 chapter 2)

Attachment to the objects of the world brings in desire and this in turn leads to fear and anger. These are the enemies that take away the seeker from his spiritual path. Sri Krishna emphasises on this all through the Gita several times.

Such a seeker is said to be living:

Sada mukta eva saha: freedom always.

He is a true sage who practices these steps and masters the art of self-control. He has no fear of falling down in the spiritual path and lives in constant "Bliss." He is a "Sadananda".

Sloka 29

BHOKTARAM YAJNA TAPASAA SARVA LOKA MAHESHWARAM SUHRUDAM SARVA BHOOTANAAM JNATVA MAAM SHANTIMRUCHATI

Knowing "Me" as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, the Lord and controller of all the worlds and friend of all beings, man attains peace.

Three aspects of the Lord are brought out by Sri Krishna in this sloka. We should not consider that He is boasting about Himself but giving out the three facets of Himself.

a) Bhoktaram Yajna Tapasa:

I am the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities.

Yajna is a dedicated act and tapas is an act of purification of mind, body and speech. Both of these bring beneficial results. The Lord says He enjoys the results of these acts. He knows that the result of such actions is for the welfare of life on earth. After all the entire life is created by Him and who so ever takes care of the life on earth becomes the beloved of the Lord and the Lord does enjoy what they do.

b) Sarva Loka Maheshwaram:

I am the Lord of all the lokas.

We have already discussed on the meaning of the word "Loka." "Loka" is the world we create for ourselves by the impulses received from the sense organs and interpreted by the mind. Each sense organ has a designated deity. "The Sun" for the eyes, "Space" for the ears, "Air" for the skin, "Water" for the tongue and "Earth" for the nose. The mind being the head quarter for all the sense organs, it is known as the Lord of sense organs, "Iswara."

"Maheshwara" used in the sloka refers to the mind of the individuals. "Sarva Loka Maheshwara" refers to the total minds of all men/women on earth.

He is not only the Lord but controller of all the worlds. "The mind rules" in all our daily actions. And the mind is alive because of the "Life Force" within.

c) Suhrudam sarva bhootanaam:

Friend of all beings.

After asserting He is the Lord and controller, He immediately says that I am the friend of one and all. Whether He is making us suffer or enjoy he is still our friend. Whatever we are undergoing is the result of our own karmas and He is helping us to fulfil our desires or hatreds and thereby burn the vasanas stored. By keeping us alive, He is helping us towards achieving "Mano nasha and vasana kshaya."

A true friend is he who does good and does not expect return favours. Similarly, the Lord does not expect any return favours from us but at the same time stays with us as the individual soul all through our births and deaths till we attain the final union with Parabrahman. He is our best friend.

It is like the mother's love and affection for her child. She is expected to be the child's best friend all through her life, "in childhood, in adolescence and after marriage". The child looks forward to coming to her mother and rest its head on its beloved mum's lap.

The best gift He has given to the mankind in general is the "Gita" to guide us in our life.

Lastly we are told:

Jnatvaa Maam shantimruchati:

Knowing Me as such, man attains Peace.

Each one of us conduct actions, have conducted actions and will continue to conduct actions in future. As a consequence we experience the results. The results either please us or upset us. We get elated or depressed when we receive the results of actions. The results we get are not only of actions that we have done knowingly/unknowingly today but also what we have done knowingly or unknowingly yesterday of our life. Also it is true that we do not get the results when we want but when the Lord deems fit to grant us the same.

Those who conduct actions in the spirit of "Krishnarpanamastu" and follow the principle of "Karmanyevadhekaraste" also realise that He is the Lord and controller of all the worlds and a friend of all and thereby live in constant "Peace". They attribute all good results to Him and offer the benefits to Him but take responsibility for ills of their life on their own head and do not blame the Lord for the same. This is the secret of experiencing the "Peace."

It is not that the seeker gets to see the Lord but experiences "The Peace" which is non descriptive form of the Lord.

Thus completes the fifth chapter, " Karma Sanyasa Yoga" in the Srimad Bhagawadgita which is a Upanisad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga sastras in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.