

# KARMA YOGA

—TUMULURU KRISHNA MURTY

## I. Goal of Mankind

### (1) Knowledge

Swami Vivekananda says 'the Goal of Mankind is knowledge. That is the ideal placed before us by the Eastern philosophy. Pleasure is not goal of man, but knowledge. Pleasure and happiness come to an end. It is a mistake to suppose that pleasure is the goal.' (1)

### (2) Nature of man

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says that 'your nature is happiness—Ananda—Pleasure is nothing but an interval between two sorrows. Do not seek for transient and temporary pleasure.'

### (3) What is the goal

'The Vedas lay down four goals before man : Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. These have to be pursued in pairs. Dharma and Artha together and Kama and Moksha together.' (2)

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'As all rivers have the sea as their goal, Jivis have Brahman as their goal. Permanent joy can never be received by the 'conscious' jiva from 'material' objects. Moksha is the acquisition of permanent joy; it is called the attainment of Brahman. *Fixed exclusive devotion to Godhead can come to those who have no attachment to the wild phantasmagoria of nerve and form, which is called the 'world'. That alone is Atma-jnana.* He is the real Vedanthi who sees the world as instrument for escape from its coils.' (3)

'He who delves deep into the unity of the Jiva and the Brahman has certainly discovered the goal of life.' (4) 'The ocean is the goal of all waters, so too all tastes find their goals in the tongue; all forms realise themselves in the eyes; all sounds are for the ear; all resolutions have the mind as their goal; that is to say, the entire *Jagath* merges in Brahman.' (5)

'Whoever subdues his egoism, conquers his selfish desires, destroys his bestial feelings and impulses and gives up natural tendency to regard the body as the self, he is surely on the path of Dharma; he knows that the goal of Dharma is the merging of the wave in

the sea, the merging of the Self in the Overself.' (6)

'Through Viveka and Vichara, one achieves Vijnana, one is able to grasp the Truth, to realise the Atman, to know the Atman. That is the ultimate goal of all life, the stage that is beyond the Past, Present and Future.

'God is the goal of life.' (8)

'The greatness depends upon Sraddha and success achieved in it in 'Anushtana' and 'Nishtha.' Therefore, 'Awake, Arise and stop not till the goal is reached.' 'Uththishtha, Jagratha, Prapya varnan-nibhodhatha.' But one need not march towards the goal. It is not some place where you have to go. It is just the opening of the eye, the removal of the veil, the waking from the dream, the lighting of the Jnana Deepa. (9)

The secret of good karma is, do karma as an act of worship, a dedicatory rite offered to the source of all energy and intelligence. And never take the consequence to heart. By this means, one can approximate to the Divine Principle, which is beyond activity. That Divine Principle is the very core of man. Becoming aware of the Truth is the 'goal of life'; it is the source of strength which is unfailing and irresistible.' (10)

#### (4) How to reach this goal ?

The goal can be reached by Karma, Bhakthi and Jnana Margas. All these paths lead us to this goal.

'Siva, Parvathi and Ganapathi can

interpreted as symbols of Karma, Bhakthi and Jnana margas to the goal.' (11)

II. What is this knowledge when it is said that the goal of mankind is knowledge ?

#### (1) Knowledge is inherent

Knowledge is inherent in man. No knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside. What we say a man 'knows' should in strict psychological language, be what he 'discovers' or 'unveils'. What man 'learns', really what he discovers taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge.

#### (2) Knowledge exists in the mind

Swami Vivekananda says that all knowledge exists in the mind. He gives the example of Law of Gravitation discovered by Newton. It was in his mind; the time came and he found it out. 'All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind; the infinite library of the Universe is in your mind.' 'All knowledge, secular and spiritual is in the human mind.' 'Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out.' (12)

#### (3) Knowledge of Brahman or Atma alone is Knowledge

The knowledge of the Atma or the knowledge that relates to Brahman alone is knowledge and that is what Veda says. Everything else cannot come under the description of knowledge. Mere recitation of the mantras contained in the Veda cannot

be called knowledge. True education is that which connotes Karma Yoga with Brahma Yoga.' (13)

#### **(4) Inquiry is the method**

'Knowledge is acquired by uninterrupted and relentless inquiry (vichara). One should constantly be engaged in the Inquiry of the Nature of Brahman, the reality of 'I'. (14)

#### **(5) Freedom is won by knowledge**

"Jnaanaad eve thu Kaivalyam.' By knowledge alone can freedom be won." (15)

### **III. Mind is responsible for all knowledge. What is the nature of the Mind ?**

#### **(1) Mind is bundle of desires**

'The mind is bundle of wishes and unless these wishes are removed by their roots, there is no hope of destroying the mind, which is a great obstacle in the path of spiritual progress.' (16)

#### **(2) Mind causes both bondage and liberation**

"'Manaeva manushyanaam kaaranam bandha mokshayoh', for men, it is the mind that causes bondage and grants liberation." (17)

#### **(3) Subject it to intellect, it disintegrates**

'The mind is the source of delusion ; it deludes and binds. If the mind is subjected to the intellect, then it disintegrates and disappears, leaving the field clear for illumination

that reveals, that 'we and they are but HE or IT.' As long as the world is seen as manifold, sadhana to over come the faulty visions is essential." (18)

#### **(4) Remove it by its roots**

"The mind spins a cocoon for the Jivi to be imprisoned in. Karma which is activity of Maya or ignorance encloses the individual in its grip ; it is the husk that makes the paddy seed grow and yield more paddy plants and more grains of paddy. Remove the husk and there is no sprouting. The husk, karma, makes the Jivi sprout and undergo and penance of vasanas and samskaras. You reward and punish as the result of your own activities. You make your own future by your thoughts and desires and deeds." (19)

### **IV. Will of man**

"All actions that we see in the world, all the movements in human society, all the works that we have around us, are simply the display of thought, the manifestation of the will of man machines or instruments, cities, ships or men of war, all these are simply the manifestation of the will of man and this will be caused by character, and character is manufactured by karma. As karma is so the manifestation of the will." (20)

### **V. What is karma ?**

#### **(1) Definition**

"The word 'karma' is derived from the Sanskrit 'kri' to do all action is karma. Technically, this word also means the effects of

actions. In connection with metaphysics, it sometimes means the effects of which our past actions were the causes. But karma yoga we have simply to do with the karma as meaning work." (21)

**(2) You are doing Karma from birth to death every moment**

'Men have to be doing some one karma or other from the moment of waking to the moment of sleeping ; that is to say, from birth to death. They cannot sit quiet without doing karma. Whoever he may be, he has no means of avoiding this predicament! But each one has to understand clearly which kind of karma he has to be engaged in.' (22)

**(3) Karma is inevitable**

Nahikascit ksanam api  
jatu tisthaty akarmakrt  
karyate hy avasah karma

sarvah praktijair gunaih B.G. III-5

For no one can remain even for a moment without doing work ; everyone is made to act helplessly by the impulses born of nature.

'It is inevitable ; one has to do some karma or o'her ; Not for a single moment can one free himself from karma.' (23)

**(4) Everything we do leaves a mark on us**

Speaking that all knowledge exists in the mind and the suggestion is the friction which brings fire that exists in a piece of flint, Swami Vivekananda says 'that all our

feelings and actions—our tears and our smiles, our joys and griefs, praises and blames etc., have been brought out from within ourselves by so many blows. The result is what we are. All these blows taken together are called karma—'work action.' Everything we do, physical and mental is karma, and it leaves its mark on us.' (24)

**(5) It is the result of our past action**

We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be. We have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in the future can be produced by our present actions, so we have to know to act. (25)

**(6) How are Jivis born**

Jivas are born in the world as a result of the good or bad contained in the various actions in which they got involved during their previous lives. One who is associated with good actions will always have God with him as an unfailling companion. (26)

**(7) Causes for our birth**

There are three reasons for man to be born. One is sin, the second is unfulfilled desire or some experience, and the third is lack of knowledge or ignorance.

In this world, for all the good and bad our own actions are responsible. The cause for your birth is your own karma. Whether you do good or bad, all that makes you take

birth again and again and experience the consequence of your own karma. (27)

## VI. Types of Karma

### (1) Two types of karma

There are two types of karma. 1. Sensory or binding karmas, or Vishaya karmas. 2 Karmas that liberate or sreyokarmas. Through Vishaya karmas, no happiness and peace of mind can be gained. The sreyo-karmas yield progressive joy and auspiciousness with each single act. They give bliss to the soul, or Atmananda; and are not concerned with mere external joy.

Vishaya karma includes all activity in relation to exterior objects, and usually resorted to with a desire for the result. This craving for the consequence leads one to the morass of 'I' and 'Mine' and the demon of lust and greed. If one has no interest in the result or consequence, then not only can one be victorious over the feelings of 'I' and 'Mine' and greed and lust.

Sreyokarma or liberating karma is so pure, faultless, unselfish and unswerving. Its characteristic is the importance given to the idea of nishkarma. Karma, action without any thought of fruits thereof. The practice of that discipline involves the development of Sathya, Dharma. Santhi and Prema: Truth, Justice, Peace and Love. If one takes up this path with discipline of the name of the Lord, it will give the fullest satisfaction. The best means of this is Dhyana. (28)

### (2) Desirable and undesirable Karmas

Whatever work is prescribed in the Vedas is desirable and one should accept it as worth performing, Whatever is not prescribed in the Vedas is forbidden. One who forgets to differentiate between work that should be done and work that should not be done is a sinner. (29)

### (3) Karma, Akarma and Vikarma

Karmano hy api boddhavyam  
boddhavyam ca vikarmanah  
akarmanas ca boddhavyam  
gahana karmano gatih

B.G. IV-17

One has to understand what action is and likewise one has to understand what is wrong action and has to understand about inaction. Hard to understand is the way of work.

Karmany akarma yah pasyed  
akarmani ca karma yah  
sa buddhiman manusyeshu  
sa yuktah krtsnakarmakrt

B.G. IV 18

He who is in action sees inaction and action in action, he is wise among men, he is a yogin and he has accomplished all his work.

'If there is a wick and oil, the lamp will continue so long as the wick is there and so long as the oil is there. These three components are called Karma, Akarma

and Vikarma. Karma here stands for the wick, and Vikarma stands for the oil and if the wick and the oil are there, we can get the jyothi but if either of them is exhausted, the jyothi would disappear and the disappearance of jyothi is called Akarma or disappearance of all action'. (30)

**(4) For the sake of the world —  
Sahaja Karma**

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba explains that Sun who is the visible manifestation of the Lord, the source of Time, the father of Time, the source of all life, plant and animal a great Thyagi, a great yogi performs His duty without a thought of reward as He feels it is His Mission, His purpose and not as His Service in fostering the world with patience He puts up with all that extreme heat for the sake of the world and humanity.

Karmanai va hi samsiddhim  
asthita janaka dayah  
lakosamgraham eva pi  
sampasyam kar tum arhasi

B.G. III - 20

It was even by works that Janaka and other attained to perfection. Thou shouldst do works also with a view to the maintenance of the world. Janaka and others have set examples to others.

Yad-yad acarti sresthas  
tad-tad eve taro janah

sa yat pramanam kurute  
lokas tad anuvartate

B.G. III - 21

Whatsoever a great man does, the same is done by others as well. Whatever standard he sets, the world follows.

Na me partha sti kartavyam  
trisu lokesu kimcana  
na navaptam avaptavyam  
varta eva ca karmani

B.G. III—22

There is not for me, O Partha (Arjuna) any work in the three worlds which has to be done nor anything to be obtained which has not been ordained ; yet I am engaged in work.

Bhagwan Sri Krishna says to Arjuna that 'If I stop from work for one moment the whole Universe will die, I have nothing to gain from work. I am the one Lord but why do I work ? Because I love the world.' God is unattached because he loves ; the real love makes us unattached.

**(5) Result of one's karma**

'The result of one's karma is so invincible that one can never escape it.' (31)

**(6) Janmantara Karma**

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba says that in spite of listening to all religious preachings and reading all, if one's conduct and mind have not changed, even an inch, it simply means that stagnation is the result of our

Janmantara karma. Ravana, inspite of his good teaching from Guru, having a good wife and a strong army, he did not change his methods which simply means is the result of his own Janmantara karma. (32)

### VII. Origin of Karmas

Karmas originated from Vedas and yagnas and from Yagna rain, and from rain grew food and from food came all the living beings. If the whole of creation is to move smoothly, each one has to keep on doing work even though God has no need to do any karma and has no compulsion, still He is engaged in Karma.

### VIII. Law of cause and effect

'According to Karma-Yoga the action one has done cannot be destroyed until it has borne fruit; no power in nature can stop it from yielding its result. If I do an evil action, I must suffer for it, there is no power in this Universe to stop or stay it. Similarly if I do a good action there is no power in this Universe which can stop its bearing good result. *The cause must have its effect; nothing can prevent or restrain this.* (48)

Karma also implies causation. Any work, any action, any thought that produces an effect is called a karma. Thus the law of Karma means law of causation, or inevitable cause and consequence.' (49)

By planting seeds of a lemon tree, you cannot expect to grow mangoes and vice versa. By doing a bad deed you cannot

expect to get a good result. The kind of seeds you sow will determine the nature of the crop they will yield. Every action will have a reaction, reflection and resound.

### IX Varnas created by God.

Caturvarnyam maya srstam  
guna karma vibhagasah  
tasya kartaram api mam  
viddhi akartaram avyayam

B.G. IV—13

The fourfold order was created by Me according to the divisions of quality and work. Though I am its creator, know Me to be incapable of action or change. (I am the doer so far as they are concerned, I am still a non-doer.' (34)

### X. Four Roads to salvation

Krishna said that there are four roads which are used by mankind to salvation : (1) Karma-atheetha. beyond karma, unaffected by Karma; (2) Nishkaama karma, karma without any desire for the fruit thereof, karma unaffected by any craving for the result therefrom; (3) Sakaama karma with the ambition to reap and enjoy its fruit and (4) karma bhrasta, karma that knows no restraint.

The first group, the karma atheethas are jivan-mukthas, all their karmas have been burnt up by the fire of jnana; their impulses for action have been scorched by the wisdom they have gained. They have no further need for injunction and prohibition. They need no

sadhana like Dana (charity), Dharma (virtuous living), Thapas (austerity). All that they do or feel or think will be Divine, holy, virtuous beneficial to mankind. They merge on the falling away of the bodily raiment without delay in Brahman. Such jivis are described as having Kaivalyamukthi, Brahmaapraapti or Sad-yomukthi.

The second group, the adepts at Nishkama-karma. These are Mumukshus alert on the path of liberation, who are intent on attaining it. They perform each act as a step in the realisation of the Lord. So they can never do anything bad ; they do not look forward to the result ; they leave it to the Lord to give it or withhold it. They are not prompted by worldly motives or even by the desire to gain heavenly pleasure. Their aim is just this ; Liberation from the bondage of the objective world. They win the Grace of the Lord in proportion to the steadiness of their faith and practice.

The third group which believes in Sa-kama-karma, performs all acts through the desire for the fruit thereof. Since they have an eye on the successful earning of the fruit, they will engage themselves only in acts that are approved by the sastras ; they will not do any sinful or prohibited act. They will equate each act with the merit it will confer, the happiness it will ensure, the heaven it will win. Such men when they depart from this world will enter the lokas (supra-mundane worlds) they have sought and worked for, and having stayed there as long as their

merit entitles them, they have to return to earth.

The fourth group is not guided by any rules of conduct. They have no norms, no discrimination between virtue and vice, right and wrong, proper and improper. They have no horror or hell, no conception of heaven no dread of the devil, no reverence for God, no respect for the Sastras, no vision of Dharma. They are best pictured as beasts in human form. The majority of humans are members of this unfortunate group, strive for momentary pleasure, short-lived happiness, temporary joy and evanescent comfort. Men are more like caterpillars which move from leaf to leaf, fixing their foreparts on a new leaf, before releasing their hindparts from the leaf on which they were resting till then. That is to say, man by his acts in this life decides on his birth, where and how it will be, even before leaving this world. The new place is ready for him, his foreprints are already there ; it is only after settling this that he relieves himself of the hold on this world. Men of this category move around in wheel of birth and death. (35)

## XI. What is Karma Yoga ?

### (1) Definition

Karma Yoga is a compound word consisting of two components—'Karma' and 'Yoga'. Good action approved by the scriptures is donated by the karma and evenness of mind is known as 'Yoga'.

Yogasthah kuru karmani  
sangam tyaktva dhanamjaya  
sidhyasiddhyoh samo bhutva  
samatvam yoga ucyate

B.G. II—48

Fixed in yoga, do they work. O winner of wealth (Arjuna), abandoning attachment with an even mind in success and failure, for evenness of mind is called Yoga.

Sankara says 'Yoga is evenness of mind in success or failure, possessed by one who is engaged in performance of his proper duties, while his mind rests in God'.

## (2) Essentials of Karma Yoga

- (i) Man has only a right to perform action.

'Man has but the right to perform action, to ask for the fruits thereof, he has none. God alone can dispense the fruits of man's action.'

Karmany eva-dhikaras te  
ma phalesu kadacana  
ma karmaphalaheturbhur  
ma te sango stv akarmani

B.G. II—47

Your right to work only but never to the fruit thereof. Be not instrumental in making your actions bear fruit; nor let your attachment be to inaction.

- (ii) Understand you are an instrument

'Nimmithatmaatram bhava savyasachi |  
Arjuna | You are only instrumental in the

propagation of My Message. You are just an instrument in My Hands,' proclaimed Krishna to Arjuna. (37)

- (iii) Free from shackles

Karmajam buddhiyukta hi  
phalam tyaktva manisinah  
janmabandhavinirmuktah  
padam gacchanty anamayam

B.G. II—51

The wise who have united their intelligence (with the Divine) renouncing the fruits which their action yields and freed from the bonds of birth reach the sorrowless state.

Yoga samnyastakarmanam  
jnanasamchinna samsayam  
atmavantam na karmani  
nibadhnanti dhanamjaya

B.G. IV—41

Works do not bind him who has renounced all works by yoga, who has destroyed all doubt by wisdom and who ever possesses his soul, O winner of wealth (Arjuna).

Tasmad ajnanasambhutam  
hrtstham jnansina tmanah  
chittvai nam samsayam yogam  
atistho thistha bharata

B.G. IV—42

Therefore having cut asunder with the sword of wisdom this doubt in thy heart is born of ignorance, resort to yoga and stand up, O Bharata (Arjuna).

(iv) **Skill in action**

Buddhiyukto jahati ha  
ubhe sukrtaduskarte  
tasmad yogaya yujyasva  
yogah karmasu kausalam

B.G. II—50

Endowed with equanimity, one sheds in this life both good and evil. Therefore strive for the practice of this yoga of equanimity. Skill in action lies (practice of this) yoga.

(3) **Understand clearly the duties**

(i) **Have faith**

Our first duty is not to hate ourselves, because to advance we must have faith in ourselves first and then in God. He who has no faith in himself, can never have faith in God.

(ii) **Resist evil**

Therefore the only alternative remaining to us is to recognise that duty and morality vary under different circumstances, not that man who resists evil is doing what is always and in itself wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may even become his duty to resist evil. (38)

‘Having the power, if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a grand act of love ; but if we cannot resist, and yet at the same time try to deceive ourselves into the belief that we are actuated by motives of the highest love, we are doing the exact opposite.’

‘The karma yogi is the man who understands that the highest ideal is non-resistance, and who also knows that the non-resistance is the highest manifestation of power in actual possession, and also what is called the resisting of evil is but a step on the way towards manifestation of this highest power, namely, non-resistance. Before reaching this highest ideal, man’s duty is to resist evil ; let him work, let him fight, let him strike straight from the shoulder. Then only when he has gained the power to resist, will non-resistance become a virtue.’ (39)

Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical ; and when you have succeeded in resisting, then will calmness come.

(iii) **Endeavour to accomplish**

Hence every man should take up his own ideal endeavour to accomplish it. Our duty is to live upto one’s own highest ideal and strive at the same time to make the ideal as near as possible to the truth.

(4) **Asrams**

According to the Hindu scriptures, the life of every individual has its peculiar duties apart from what belongs in common to universal humanity. The Hindu begins life as a student (Brahmacharya) ; then he marries and becomes a householder (Gruhastha) ; in old age he retires (Vanaprastha) ; and lastly he gives up the world and becomes a Sannyasin (Sanyas). To each of these stages

of life certain duties are attached. No one of these stages is intrinsically superior to another. These four stages of life in India have in later times been reduced to two—that of the householder and of the monk. (40)

#### (5) Sacrifice or Thyaga

'Sacrifice yourself for the others'.

Swami Vivekananda gives the example of the birds how they had sacrificed for the welfare of others, (to honour the guests) as householders and of the sannyasin who renounced the world never looked at beauty and money and power, and states that 'each is great in his own place, but the duty of the one is not duty of the other'. (41)

Sreyan Svadharmo vigunah  
paradharmat svanusthitat  
Svadharme nidhanam sreyah  
paradharmo bhayavahah.

B. G. III—35

Better is one's own law though imperfectly carried out than the law of another carried out perfectly. Better is death in (the fulfilment of) one's own law for to follow another's law is perilous.

Swami Vivekananda gives an illustration of the idea of self-sacrifice in the story of the mangoose, trying to turn the other half of its body in gold by rolling its on the floor, in great sacrifice performed by the five Pandava brothers after the battle of Kurukshetra. (42)

"'Na Karmana no prajaya dhanena tyagena ka amrut-atvamanasu'. Immortality can be attained, not by ritual deeds, not by birth, nor by wealth but, only by sacrifice and renunciation. This is the declaration of the Vedas. The seva is the first step for the sacrifice. Seva is the highest Sadhana. God Himself comes down to serve mankind and lead it to the ideals it has ignored. Therefore, consider how delighted God will be when man serves man". (43)

'Karma Yoga means that even at the point of death to help any one without asking questions'. (44)

#### (6) Work through freedom

Work through freedom and work through love The word 'Love' is difficult to understand and love never comes until there is freedom. There is no true love possible in the slave. Selfish work is slaves work. Even act of love brings happiness, there is no act of love which does not bring peace and blessedness as in reaction. (45)

#### (7) Work is worship and ethics and religion

Look upon every work as worship. Work is worship and duty is God. All religious and all methods of work and worship lead us to one and the same goal. Karma Yoga is a system of ethics and religion intended to attain freedom through unselfishness and by good works. (50)

**(8) Hate none**

advesta sarvabhutanam  
maitrah karuna eva ca  
nirmamo nirahamkarah  
samadukhasukhah ksami.

B.G. XII-13

He who has no ill will to any being, who is friendly and compassionate free from egoism and self sense, even minded in pain and pleasure and patient.

Do not injure any being, not injuring any being is virtue, injuring any being is sin. (46)

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba calls this Ahimsa puspa i.e. the union of thought word and deed. Non-injuring any one.

**(9) Illumination through duty—(Vyadha Gita)**

You get illumination by doing your duty. Swami Vivekananda narrates the story of Vyadha (the lowest class of people in India who used to as hunters and butchers) and women who did their duty with cheerfulness and wholeheartedness and as a result they become illumined, clearly showing that the right performance of the duties of any station in life without attachment to results, leads us to the highest realisation of the perfection of the Soul. (47)

“No duty is ugly, no duty is impure and duty is seldom sweet”.

**(10) Service**

Service to man is service to God. ‘Manava Seva is Madhava Seva’. Through action alone did king Janaka and other enlightened persons attained perfection as he was not perturbed by the events of the world.

**(XII) Nishkama Karma**

One should engage in activity with a mind in the midst of fortune, good and bad.

Arjuna : Every Karya (Deed) or Karma (Activity) has a beginning and an end. But Nishkama karma (desireless karma) has no such. That is the difference between the two. When Karma is done with a view to the gain therefrom, one has to suffer the loss, the pain and even the punishment. But Nishkama Karma frees you from them all.

Desire the fruits of karma and you get both again and again, caught up in that desire ; give up that desire ; you are liberated from the flux. The practice of this type of renunciation ends the state of bondage. The main point is to stick to the goal. The goal is karma, not karmaphala. (51)

If you have an eye on the fruit of your actions, you are liable to be affected by worry, anxiety and restlessness.

Refuse the fruit (na phaleshu) that is to say, the deed yields the results, but the doer should not desire the result, or do it with the result in view. If Krishna’s intention was to say that the doer has no right for the

fruit. He would have said : "It is fruitless 'na phaleshu' (na meaning no). So if you desist from karma, you will be transgressing Lord's Command : That will be a mistake.

When man has a right for engaging in karma, he has a right for the fruit, no one can deny this or refuse his right. But the doer can, out of his own free will and determination refuse to be affected by the result, whether favourable or unfavourable. The Gita shows the way : "Do.....and deny the consequence". The desire for the result of your action is a sign of Rajoguna, the giving up of action since self cannot benefit by the fruit is a sign of Thamoguna. To engage oneself is karma, to know that the result will follow and yet not to be attached to it or getting concerned it—that is the sign of Sathwa-guna. (52)

Yuktah Karmaphalam tyaktva  
Santim apnoti naisthikim  
ayutkah kamakarena  
phale saktto nibadhyate.

B. G. V—12

The soul earnest (or devoted) attains to peace well founded by abandoning attachment to the fruits of works, but he whose soul is not in union with the Divine is impelled by desire and is attached to the fruit (of action) and is (therefore) bound.

**(XIII) Samathwam : is the mark of Yogi**

The Karma Yogi who has learnt this secret of "Karma combined with Phalathyaga"

should have Samabuddhi more than Sangabuddhi. For the sangabuddhi draws him into attachments and entanglements. This Karma is mine ; its results are due to my endeavours. I am the person entitled to it. Such thoughts which bind the doer. Krishna advises that one should rise above this Sangabuddhi. He declared that Samatwam is the genuine Yoga (Samathwam Yogamuchyathe). (52)

**(XIV) Sthitaprajna**

**Reach the state of Atma-jnani and sthitaprajna**

The Atmajnani is not bound by the results of karma, it is only those who indulge in karma without the awareness of the Atma (their real self, unaffected by what they do or feel or think), they do get bound. Like the person who has learnt the swimming, the jnani can safely wade into sea of worldly activity. If you do not know swimming, but yet enter the sea the water will swallow you up and death is sure. (53)

The ideal man is he who in the midst of the greatest silence and solitude, finds the intensest activity and in the midst of the intensest activity finds the silence and solitude of the desert. He has learnt the secret of restraint ; he has controlled himself.

Action or work relates to the world. The world in turn related to God. So Krishna propounded that all actions must be performed with the intention of pleasing God. This type of action is characteristic feature of a Sthitaprajna or a person who has metal

equipoise. A Stithaprajna performs actions firmly established in the Atma. The primary quality of a Stithaprajna is to control the senses. (54)

#### (XV) What is Karma Sanyasa

Karma Sanyasa Yoga means renunciation of worldly taints (Vasanas) and desires and rising above attachment and hatred; and Yoga means union with the Desire while performing action transform into worship. (55)

#### (XVI) Swadharma

Swadharma is karma and that all karmas done not as Dharma but with a view to earn Atma-jnana are Vikarmas. Whatever the karma, if it is done in the darkness and confusion of Ajnana, however hard you may have exercised your abilities during the activity, its results can only be worry, grief and travail. It can never result in equanimity, balance or calm. Man has to win karma in Akarma and Akarma through karma .....that is the hall mark of the wise. (56)

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#### (XVII) KRISHNA'S Advice

Therefore,

mayi sarvani Karmani  
samnyasya dhyatmacetasa  
nirasir nirmamo bhutava  
yudhyasva vigatajvarah.

B. G. III—30

Dedicating all actions to ME with your mind fixed on ME, the self of all freed from hope and the feeling of mine and cured of mental fever, fight.

#### (XVIII) KRISHNA Promises Liberation

Finally Krishna exhorts

Sarvadharmam parityajya  
mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tva sarvapapebhyo  
mokshayishyami ma sucahi.

B. G. XVIII—66

'That resigning and abandoning all your duties to ME, the All powerful and All Supporting Lord, take refuge in ME above, I shall absolve and release thee from all evils and sins, worry and grieve not.

## **ANAASAKTI YOGA**

Krishna regarded King Janaka as an ideal person because he ruled his kingdom with this sense of Anaasakti and detachment, and thereby attained perfection. There are some people who have only outward vision. There are others who have developed inward vision. Outward vision sees only the illusory world outside. The inward vision transforms the mind and fills the heart with sacred feelings. In order to gain the inner vision, this Anaasakti has to be developed.

(D.B.G.-p. 230)

Compared to ordinary actions which are done thinking of yourself as the doer, actions done without desire for the fruits, that is Nishkaama Karma, will be much greater. Anaasakti Karma, that is action with complete desirelessness, performed impersonally with total indifference, and without any attachment, is even greater than Nishkaama Karma. But, when the action is offered completely to the Lord, when it becomes Yagna or sacrifice, it is even more sacred than all these. Thus, Krishna commanded Arjuna to offer all his acts to the Lord. When Arjuna reached this state of evolution, that is, when Arjuna began to offer his acts to the Lord, Krishna began to teach him Gita.

(D.B.G:-p. 233)

What Gita teaches is Anaasakti Yoga, the yoga of disinterestedness or impersonal action, in which you remain totally indifferent to any personal interest in the work that you do and in the results that accrue from it. It means working with full concentration to the limits of your capacity for excellence, but orienting all your actions to the service of God and remaining established in God-consciousness.

Anaasakti Yoga goes even beyond the practice of the Nishkaama Karma which has been emphasised in the second chapter of the Gita. Nishkaama Karma is the stage in which all your actions are performed without desiring or expecting any fruit from your labours. You will not be able to reach the stage of Nishkaama Karma as long as your Vaasanas which have arisen from past actions are unfavourable for spiritual progress. You must first remove the bad qualities, which are associated with bad actions, by replacing them with good qualities, which are associated with good actions. Then when you are firmly established in the stage of selfless service where you perform only good actions, you can go on to the stage of Nishkaama Karma, where you renounce the fruits of all your actions. From there you will normally rise to the stage of Anaasakti Yoga.

(D.B.G.-p. 236)

You have to convert your activities into Karmas, which are useful to others. You have to perform actions, which are ideal, and you have to practice such ideal actions without any selfish motive. Only then can your actions be considered Satvic in nature. Once they become Satvic then they may be classified as Nishkaama Karma. No ordinary person will be able to perform actions completely without desire. You will have to orient your actions and your desires towards the purpose of seeking and experiencing God. When that sacred orientation becomes the basis of all your activities, then such Karma belongs to the Yoga of Anaasakti. That is the highest level of action and leads you straight on the path of your goal. But involved herein will be the spell of Maya or illusion.

You should endeavour to perform all your actions selflessly and disinterestedly, offering them to God, without expecting to reap any of the fruits. That is Anaasakti Yoga. Using your intellect to plan out an action where fruits would benefit, someone else, as was the case for the grandfather planting a tree that was enjoyed by future generations of his family, can be called Buddhi yoga. In Buddhi Yoga you inquire into the consequences of your actions, and thereby base your actions on the reasoning power of your intellect. Intellect goes far beyond the narrow selfish considerations of the lower mind and the senses. But even here there is still a tinge of selfishness. When you are completely free from all selfishness, totally indifferent to the results, acting effectively with full concentration, but without any attachment or desire, and offering all your actions to God, then you are practicing Anaasakti Yoga. That is far superior to Buddhi Yoga. Anaasakti Yoga is not easily accessible to ordinary people. But that does not mean that you should give up trying to attain it. With whole-hearted effort and God's grace, seemingly impossible things can be achieved. If you persist in your efforts then with practice you will be able to reach this high level of Anaasakti Yoga in your all activities. To succeed in this, the inner vision must be developed. In order to firmly establish that inner vision you must keep a particular principle constantly in mind, which is this, that no matter how hard you search, whether it be in this physical world or the world of your dreams and imaginations, or any other world, all you will ever see wherever you look will be combinations and variations of the five elements, either in their gross or subtle forms. They are the only things you will ever be able to find anywhere. There can never be anything else; there is no such thing as a sixth element. But these five elements are all reflections of the unlimited effulgence of God. They are His aspects; their basis is the one divine principle. By performing all your actions consciously regarding everything in the world as the sacred manifestations of the divinity, your actions automatically become offerings, to God. By keeping such lofty ideas in view while performing your actions, you effectively turn your vision from the limited outer vision to the liberating inner vision, and thus become a sacred human being. Constantly reflecting, in this manner, on the divinity that is everywhere, is the best way to develop the inner vision that will establish you in Anaasakti Yoga.

(D.B.G.-p. 239/242)