

Bhagwat Geeta, Class 158 – Chapter 12 Bhakti Yoga Verses 10 and 11

Bagawan Krishna presents the important teaching of bhakti yoga. Bakti yoga is not a particular sadhana, but it is the name of the entire range of sadhana everyone should go through. Bagawan Krishna starts with the highest level, he starts with the fifth and final step is jñāna yoga sadhana, which is closer to moksha. This is nirguna savanna manana nidhithyasanam. jñāna yoga is the name of bhakti yoga at the highest level. This form of bhakti yoga is difficult for many, then they should practice the fourth level, which is saguna eeswara upasana. Saguna eeswara is viśvarūpa eeswara, which is ashta murti eeswara. Ashta Moorthi of virad or viswa roopa Eeswara represented by:

- Five elements are panca bootha are five Moorthy.
- Surya stands for all stars and is the sixth.
- The moon stands for all planets and is the seventh.
- All the living beings are the eighth.

Ishta roopa upasana itself uplifts you to viśvarūpa upasana which will lift you to nirguna brahma upsana.

If mind is not subtle enough to conceive viśvarūpa eeswara, then practice eka roopa. Chose a personal god and practice eka rūpa upsana which Krishna calls abyāsaḥ yoga. A person with raga dwesha will find it difficult to visualize viśvarūpa eeswara, then that person can practice abyāsaḥ yoga or ishta devata upasana. By ishta devata upasana one can not directly achieve moksha, but one can indirectly attain moksha, ishta devata upasana will lift devotee to nirguna eeswara upasana and bringing to liberation. Ishta devata upasana is paramparā

karanam, that is indirect means of achieving liberation.

Upsana is mental activity and implies withdrawing all sense organ and a mental activity. Upsana is a introverted activity and is possible only when a person is ready to withdraw from mental activity. If a person is extrovert or rājo guna pradhāna that person will find it difficult to practice upsana.

Verse 10

If you are incapable of abyāsaḥ yoga also, be devoted to My works. Even by doing works for My sake, you will attain liberation.

If a person is not ready for eka rūpa upsana, then commit to karma yoga or activities. The activities can be classified as:

1. Niṣkāma karma: Activities dedicated to the service of the society; this will purify spiritually and qualify you for ishta devata upasana. For example, trees produce fruits for themselves but for others also. River flows through the plains for the benefit of other living beings, not for itself. Niṣkāma karma will lead to liberation indirectly by making the mind ready for eka rūpa to aneka rūpa to arupa or nirguna brahman.
2. Sakama karma: But many of us have many worldly desires and not ready for niṣkāma kara, then practice sakama karma. Sakama karma is fulfilling legitimate worldly desires but dedicate that karma also to lord and enjoy the results as a prasadam from the lord. Don't call the results of sakama karma palam your accomplishment. After this, you can start practicing niṣkāma karma.

Verse 11

If you are not able to do this also, then, taking to My

worship, renounce the results of all actions with self-restraint.

Niṣiddha Karma like himsa (killing insects) etc. Some of these are inevitable.

In rare cases, niṣiddha karma is also ok, says Sankarachariyar. That is why some tamasic activities are mentioned in shastras. That is why some tamasic rituals are mentioned in scriptures.

When a person does sakama karma, he expects a worldly benefit out of it. You dedicate that result to eeswara, do not take it as the result of your efforts. Then selfish actions will have the capacity to purify the mind. Dedicate the results of all the karmas – kama karmas and niṣiddha karma to the lord.

If we practice sakama karma for a length of time, then we can transcend to niṣkāma karma. We will grow out of petty desires and life will become niṣkāma karma pradhāna karma yoga.