

THE KARAMA YOGA IN BHAGAVAD GITA

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Commencing in chapter two, verse eleven Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna that he is lamenting for what should not be grieved for. A pattern has been set in motion that gives a sense of discrimination between the soul and the physical body and has been instructed as a way to attain *moksa* or liberation. So *jnana yoga* or a requisite mentality towards the soul has been taught, now learn how to apply this in respect to requisite activities in *karma yoga* as was explained beginning in chapter two, verse thirty-nine. Although *jnana yoga* and *karma-yoga* have been explained in detail, the relationship between the two has not been established as to which is superior and which is subordinate. In regard to discrimination and the cultivation of spiritual knowledge and being informed that they lead one to *moksa* or liberation; Arjuna came to the conclusion that Lord Krishna valued this path to be superior to *karma yoga* or the path of actions. But if this was true then Arjuna was bewildered because he did not understand why Lord Krishna was urging him to engage in a ghastly, horrific war by repeatedly telling him to arise and fight

The ultimate purpose of the Bhagavad-Gita is to show in a clear and lucid manner that one-pointed loving devotion to the Supreme Being who is glorified and proclaimed in the Vedas is the singular and paramount goal to be attained by all human beings specifically and for all living beings in general. Who is proclaimed in the Upanisads as the singular goal to achieve by the aspirants for *moksa* or liberation from material existence. Who is declared in the Puranas as being destitute of all defiling characteristics such as *avidya* or nescience. This Supreme Being who is possessing boundless and unlimited magnificent and glorious attributes. *Bhakti yoga* or loving devotional service is exclusively only in relation to the Supreme Lord Krishna or any of His authorised *avatars* or incarnations as revealed in Vedic scriptures. In order to achieve full success in *bhakti yoga* it is essential to achieve *atma tattva* or realisation of one's eternal soul. The *atma* or soul is one's eternal nature beyond all material conceptions and is a necessary

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preliminary step. *Atma tattva* is ultimately attained by *jnana yoga* or the cultivation of spiritual knowledge from the Vedic scriptures which is generated by *karma yoga* or the performance of prescribed Vedic activities without attachment. These prescribed Vedic activities are established on the foundation that the *atma* is eternal and can never be modified or destroyed as delineated so clearly by Lord Krishna in chapter two.

Brahma has stated that the acquisition of *paravidya* or the knowledge required to attain the Supreme Being is known as *bhakti* or loving devotion and that *dahara-vidya* or that this method of meditation is required to realise the Supreme Being, who resides within the etheric region of the heart. In the Chandogya Upanisad it is given that the realisation of the *atma* within one's own heart is the first ancillary step by the God aspirant to attaining realisation of the Supreme Being Himself. Then the incorporeal and non-material reality of the *atma* and its eternal nature beyond the consciousness of waking, sleeping and dreaming is completely transcended. Thus does the phenomenal nature of the *atma* emerging from within the physical body, radiant in ineffable light shining in its natural and wonderous effulgence. In the Katha Upanisad this subject is also well elucidated as given in the following description: By perceiving *paramatma* which is the Supreme Soul existing simultaneously within all beings and then by discrimination obtained after realisation of the individual *atma*. The enlightened one delivers themselves from attraction and repulsion, joy and grief and all other dualities. Communion with the Supreme Soul is communion with the Supreme Being which is the goal to be attained through the discrimination derived directly from *atma tattva*. This confirms that *atma tattva* or realisation of the soul is an essential ingredient and constituent component of the Supreme Being which is attained by *bhakti* or loving devotion. Another example is: Knowing the magnificent and all- pervading nature of *paramatma* the Supreme Soul, the enlightened one no longer grieves or laments which reveals the natural potency of the *atma* to relieve one of all mundane dross due to the influence of the material existence.

The eternal soul known as the *atma* is not gainable merely by hearing about it. Nor is it obtainable by discoursing about it nor is it attainable by meditating exclusively on it. The *atma* is attainable solely to those whom the *atma* alone elects to attain it. Whomsoever the *atma* selects as an act of sovereign grace alone the *atma* reveals itself to such a one. Who is such a one? It is none other than that person who has discriminatory wisdom as their charioteer, who has the reins

of their mind controlling the steeds of the senses, who has the actual competence to achieve *moksa* or liberation and attain the coveted goal of loving devotion to the Supreme Lord.

So in conclusion what we have just presented in essence form is the ultimate purpose of the Bhagavad-Gita. From chapter three along with chapters four, five and six the path for the aspirant is given beginning with the very first question in this chapter. The means of cognition and the method of realisation along with the meditation required to achieve it will be delineated and forthcoming.

So in review chapter one introduced the setting in which Arjuna's grief and lamentation arose as an apparent cause for spiritual instructions from the Supreme Lord Krishna. Then in order to remove this grief and lamentation in chapter two Lord Krishna reveals the eternal nature of the soul, the discrimination between body and the soul, karma yoga, the path of actions without attachment, jnana yoga the cultivation of spiritual knowledge and the restraint of the senses, taking refuge of the Lord, equanimity of mind and the attainment of moksa or liberation have all been delineated. Thus the essence of Srimad Bhagavad-Gita has been presented in chapter two in a condensed form. The remaining sixteen chapters should be understood to be an extension of the topics discussed in chapter two.

Here in this verse Arjuna is thinking that he was blamed earlier in chapter two, verse 11 for lamenting for those who should not be grieved for. He was subsequently tutored in jnana yoga, the path of knowledge to alleviate this error. Now Lord Krishna is presenting a way to alleviate this error from the point of view of karma yoga, the path of actions without attachment. In chapter two, verse thirty-nine he is told he has the right to perform actions but not to desire the fruit of action. In chapter two, verse forty-seven and forty-eight he is instructed not to be attached to inaction and perform duties with equanimity, respectively. Then in chapter two, verse fifty-three he is told how the mind becomes in this state. Then from verse fifty-five until the end of the chapter two Lord Krishna gives the proofs to show the superiority of the cultivation of spiritual knowledge which leads to the ultimate truth in the last verse of this chapter where once one having attained even at a second before death attains liberation from the material existence. But in spite of these instructions Arjuna was still being instructed to arise and fight. These

seemingly contradictory instructions caused some confusion in Arjuna's™ mind that he was anxious to have the omniscient and omnipotent supreme Lord Krishna dispel.

Although Arjuna was bewildered he could still understand that Lord Krishna valued the cultivation of spiritual knowledge as being superior to activities without attachment and he could also understand that if Lord Krishna was ordering him to fight this must be also for his betterment as well, The Lord did not specify which path Arjuna was qualified for as yet and thus Arjuna was in a dilemma and needed a clear, definitive instruction that would end his confusion. Arjuna is humbly requesting this with the underlying request that the most merciful and compassionate Supreme Lord should not bewilder the mind of one who is His surrendered devotee.

Hari Om! Previously it has been spoken that self-realisation of the soul is the gained by the means of spiritual knowledge. Lord Krishna after substantiating the cessation of activities with words of wisdom He now redirects Arjuna's attention to the performance of actions. In chapter two, verse 49 the resplendent Lord Krishna had endorsed that cultivation of spiritual knowledge is by far superior to fruitive activities. So Arjuna is questioning why he is being urged to perform savage activities in warfare which is bereft of righteousness, if the attainment of wisdom is superior to performing actions.

Now the summation begins.

Hari Om! Wisdom and equanimity have been discussed. Now *karma yoga* the yoga of actions is being specifically explained in this chapter. Far inferior is action in the search of enquiry. Here the word *yoga* attached to *karma-yoga* is being utilised as a means of acquiring wisdom in the performance of actions.

What Arjuna is trying to ascertain from Lord Krishna is if the cultivation of spiritual knowledge is superior to performing physical activities for the attainment of liberation and if so then why should one engage in horrendous activities like war and killing. It is well known that *jnana yoga* or the cultivation of spiritual knowledge is the means to accomplish self-realisation of the soul. *Karma yoga* or performing physical activities without attachment leads one gradually to *jnana yoga*. This path of spiritual knowledge can be attained by withdrawing all the senses along with

the mind from the objects of the senses. If this is the case then Arjuna is wondering why he is not being instructed in the cessation of all physical activities; but instead he is being encouraged to fully use his mind and senses to engage in all of the violent and horrific activities that accompany warfare. Feeling confused by the conflicting instructions of withdrawing the senses and the performance of actions, Arjuna now wants a single, unequivocal instruction to determine for certain exactly what course he should embark to achieve the highest good.

We see Lord Krishna stating in chapter two, verse 31 that "There is no greater good fortune for a ksatriya warrior than to engage in a war for righteousness. So the superiority of actions has also been praised by Him. Due to the praising of both *jnana yoga* and *karma yoga* in a seemingly equal manner some conflict arises in Arjuna's mind and he became confused. But still he is clear enough to understand that the Lord being compassionate is never really perplexing to His devotees; but it may appear so because of a lack of clarity. So Arjuna can perceive he is being seemingly bewildered and this is the underlying meaning of the verse. So Arjuna is beseeching Lord Krishna to clarify definitively which is the superior path of the two that gives blessedness and leads to final beatitude being *moksa* or liberation.

The Supreme Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna that he is looking at *jnana yoga* and *karma yoga* as two independent paths but He informs him that He has not stated this point of view. Lord Krishna has taught that both can give unadulterated devotion to the ultimate truth. Which yoga is superior or subordinate to the other is not a question as they each can attain the desired goal. They are two different paths to a singular destination suited to the ambiances of different aspirants. Lord Krishna, the omniscient one has explained very clearly in chapter two of the two classes of aspirants in the human race being the sinless of pure mind and the sinful of impure mind. Lord Krishna has explained that for purified minds *jnana yoga* or the yoga of knowledge is appropriate as in chapter two verse sixty-one states: the self controlled one sits in meditation on Him. But for minds not yet purified *karma yoga* or the yoga of action is more suitable as in chapter two verse thirty-one states there is no greater fortune for a ksatriya warrior than a righteous war. Therefore in respect to the two paths they are actually two stages of the same path separated only by purity and impurity of mind. You have already been taught the requisite state of mind conducive to realisation of the soul in *jnana yoga* now learn of it from the point of view of *karma yoga*.

Even though *jnana yoga* or the yoga of knowledge may appear to be superior to him, anyway due to Arjuna's ineligibility he is only qualified for *karma yoga*, the yoga of actions. Hence *karma yoga* is being recommended for him. The Supreme Lord Krishna states *loke* in this world there exists two types of humans who follow these two paths. Those who renounce the ordained activities of family life and society, to fully contemplate and meditate on the ultimate truth like Sanaka referred to by the word *sankhyanam* and those who adhere to the ordained guidelines of family life and society and yet glean knowledge like King Janaka referred to by the word *yoginam*. Both types are firmly situated in righteousness. Even though those who are eligible for *karma yoga* perform actions for the protection and benefit of the worlds as willed by the Lord are also deemed as *yogis*, men of equanimity. Lord Krishna is informing Arjuna that he is ineligible to perform activities of renunciation like Sanaka and others but he is eligible to perform auspicious activities for the benefit of the world like King Janaka and others. This is the purport of this verse.

It is observed that by following the will of the Supreme Lord Krishna through authorised disciplic succession and the ordained injunctions of the Vedic scriptures many rulers situated as *yogis* became men of knowledge although performing countless actions. An example of this is King Priyavrata who was emperor of the entire universe engaging in unlimited material activities in total knowledge as given in Srimad Bhagavatam V.I.XXIII

Now begins the summation.

The method which promotes spiritual knowledge is known as *jnana yoga*. Other methods are those which promote actions. The demi-gods as well as the renunciates are known as *sankhyas* because in them spiritual knowledge predominates actions. The demi-gods by dint of additional attributes even though engaged in the actions of universal management are more dominant in spiritual knowledge. Men of action even though possessing spiritual knowledge because of the predominance of activities are known as *yogis*. Without either spiritual knowledge or selfless actions neither could attain *moksa* or liberation. No being can even for a moment exist without performing actions and without spiritual knowledge one's actions will never benefit one's existence and lead it to the ultimate truth. This has been revealed in the Brahma Vaivartaka Purana.

The word *nishta* means deep faith, abidance in this under direction of authorised guru leads to liberation without fail. Actions performed under such authorised guidance causes an increase of bliss and a decrease in inauspicious actions. The scriptural statements of the Vedas such as: not by actions and not by progeny, are not contradictory. If contrarily statements like : not by abstention of action had been made then there could be occasion for contradiction. In the same way a similar approach towards *jnana yoga* and *karma yoga* should be accepted. In this verse the emphasis of the two paths is that spiritual knowledge must be inherent in both indicating that *jnana yoga* is more suitable for *moksa*.

Lord Krishna is telling Arjuna that he has not clearly understood what has been previously spoken by Him. He tells Arjuna that in this world abounding in diversity there are two paths for two types of humans. *Jnana yoga* the path of knowledge and *karma yoga* the path of actions each suited to the capacities and qualifications of the type concerned. Not all humans in this world are born with the ambition for *moksa* or liberation. Neither are all humans able to embark upon the path of knowledge directly. But all humans must engage in actions at all times they cannot stop but they must perform these actions unattached without desiring any reward, perfecting them in the process as factual activities of divine worship. Then in fact all actions become divine activities as revealed forthcoming in chapter XVIII. verse forty-six worshipping God by one's actions. Performing actions in this way humans evaporate the inauspicious qualities lurking in their minds and hearts and the senses give up their turbulence and become calm and peaceful. It has already been established in chapter II. verse forty-seven that there must be no anticipation of rewards as the reason for performing activities. When this platform has been attained then after one has risen in wisdom beyond the turmoils of the quest of satisfying one's sense with sense objects then *jnana yoga* the cultivation of spiritual knowledge is appropriate. In chapter II. verse fifty-five Lord Krishna has stated when one gives up all desires, to confirm this point. *Sankhya* refers to spiritual knowledge or spiritual wisdom. Those who possess this are called *sankhyas* as real spiritual knowledge is the knowledge that leads to realisation of the *atma* or soul, firmly resides within them. Those who are ineligible not fit for this course due to their own inherent qualities are the *yogis* who are eligible for *karma yoga* the path of actions. So it can be seen that there is not even the slightest contradiction when it was asserted that for one who is beguiled by the objects and distractions of the phenomenal world, *karma yoga* is suitable for them and for

those who are not beguiled and able to renounce these objects and distractions are suited for *jnana yoga* the cultivation of spiritual knowledge.

It will next be shown that even if a wish for *moksa* or liberation arises still one may not be fully competent to experience the cultivation of knowledge by *jnana yoga*.

Lord Krishna's reply begins with O sinless one inferring that Arjuna is fit to be instructed. But as you are doubting understand that the Lord did not prescribe two unrelated paths, karma yoga the yoga of actions and *jnana yoga* the yoga of knowledge. Lord Krishna states that in this world these are the two paths aspirants can take which lead to moksa or liberation. But they both depend upon qualification as *jnana yoga* is suitable for one type of human being and karma yoga is suitable for another type. What has been presented in the previous chapter was from the point of view of *jnana yoga*.

There is a distinction to be found regarding qualification as there are yogis who have also cultivated knowledge while performing activities and realised the atma or soul by dint of their actions. Their minds becoming pure by meditation directly worshipping the Supreme Lord within their heart without desire for rewards as Lord Krishna states in chapter II verse sixty-one beginning with *tani sarvani* controlling all the senses. But those aspirants who have not acquired spiritual knowledge must purify their minds by the yoga of actions without desiring any reward. Then selfless actions like these can be utilised to cultivate the desire for spiritual knowledge. Lord Krishna states in chapter II verse forty-seven that we have the right to perform actions but not to desire the fruits.

One should not assume that the distinctions in qualification is merely the differences between the aspirants because one may have an entirely different nature according to the situation. An example of this is a person overcoming death in the form of negligence by performing actions designated to overcome nescience as given in the *Isavasopanisad* II the text states: overcoming death with nescience one attains liberation through knowledge which means removing the impurities of the mind with knowledge which is caused by nescience and attain liberation. Following this line of reasoning the purport is that one is not qualified for *jnana yoga* as long as the desire for liberation is present. Only when the mind has become purified and is completely

free from all desires by performing karma yoga without any desire for reward does one become qualified. So for this reason the Supreme Lord Krishna has presented this twofold spiritual path.

In closing it should be understood that one who without performing karma yoga in their present life but is situated in jnana yoga cultivating spiritual knowledge, their purity of mind should be considered as a result of performing karma yoga in their previous birth and this is how they were able to attain jnana yoga so easily. Thus there is no contradiction in the presentation of the two in any way.

Therefore until the light of knowledge dawns within a completely purified mind prescribed actions in the Vedic scriptures must be performed for purification by the different castes in various stages of life called *varna- asrama*. This is what Lord Krishna is explaining here. Otherwise due to a lack of purity in the mind spiritual knowledge will not manifest. This is the purport. In the Brihad IV.IV.XXII it states: The renunciates realising the Supreme Lord became liberated. So it can be understood that renunciation leads to *moksa* or liberation. But there might arise the question that if *moksa* is the result of renunciation then what is the need for actions? Apprehending such a doubt the verse states *na ca sannyasanad eva* meaning not only by renunciation. The import is that renunciation alone is not sufficient in itself to attain *moksa* if there is not sufficient spiritual knowledge accompanying it.

The actions Lord Krishna is referring to in this verse are the ordained actions prescribed in the Vedic scriptures. By the abstention of ordained actions or by the renunciation of ordained actions one will not ever be able to achieve *moksa* or liberation. By the cultivation of spiritual knowledge only is liberation possible. This is the purport. Why is this so? Because of the word *purusah* in the verse meaning person. The jiva or living entity is enclosed in a subtle body along with a corporal body. If by abstention of action *moksa* was possible then it would be available to inanimate things as well. Neither by the abstention of actions or the absence of reactions from the renunciation of actions will liberation come into effect.

The effects we are experiencing in the present life are reactions both positive and negative caused by our innumerable actions in previous lives. It is not that all the reactions have been terminated at birth, Males up to the end of 14 years and females up to the end of 10 years

complete their life span of the effects of prior activities from past births. Living entities are capable of innumerable actions even in a single lifetime and each of these actions may be the cause of a future birth or even result in many future lives. Contrarily by performing even a single action one can receive a human life which is the culmination and conclusion of all one's remaining lives. Thus accumulation of actions can never end indefinitely.

The Brahma Purana states that: The primordial world is eternal and so are the effects of actions.

Therefore how can there be release from actions without realisation of the Supreme Lord? If the primordial world came about by accident without any relationship with casual actions then how could there be any relationship between human beings and the primordial world? The state of being liberated can only be achieved by one who is completely free from all desires including the desire for liberation. All desires are manifesting as appropriate and inappropriate actions. Factually it is the absence of desires that result in the state of liberation. Actions performed without desire for rewards with spiritual consciousness contribute to the fulfilment of liberation. When fulfilment is achieved one attains the ultimate consciousness and liberation is automatically included. By performing actions in this manner a living being becomes verily a being of non-action. Renunciation is relinquishing the desire for rewards attached to appropriate actions as Lord Krishna explains later in chapter XVIII verse two *kamyam karmanam nyasam* meaning the renouncing of fruitive activities. Performing actions in spiritual consciousness without desire leads to liberation. For one who has become effulgent, purified by actions performed in spiritual consciousness, renunciation appears in their heart. Only one with a pure heart, free from desire and attachment is known as one situated in spiritual knowledge. Just as one seeing delightful things in a dream does not let that interfere for a moment the pleasures of daily life. For such a one there is no clarity in the principles nor faith in the Vedic injunctions.

A counterpoint may be raised that if the absence of desire for reward is the means for moksha then why not give up actions altogether giving no opportunity for the fruits to manifest. This opinion is neutralised in the verse by *na ca sannyasanad eva* meaning not only by renunciation. So it should be understood that not by mere absence of desires or even the absence of actions that liberation can be achieved but the performance of actions without desire for reward is the essential ingredient to understand.

It should be understood that renunciation is primarily for deep meditation and reflection of the resplendent Supreme Lord. This way is not suitable for those in the grihasta ashram or householder life with wife and children and who must be engrossed daily in so many material functions to provide for their family. But in later life when the children are grown the householder who by dint of actions has acquired a meditative mind can also become eligible for renunciation and please the Lord. The Supreme Lord is exceedingly pleased by those who practice renunciation. In the Narayanakshara Kalpa it is said that: Among all initiations the one that is made in the stage of renunciation is the topmost and most pleasing to the Supreme Lord. The demi-gods and many well known great and pious kings of yore in India while performing myriadâ€™s of actions for universal management and world order always kept their minds focused on the Supreme. Therefore even when they were engaged in activities their minds never wavered from Him and the Supreme Lord Krishna was pleased.

It has been established that activities prescribed in the Vedic scriptures performed without anticipation of rewards are conducive for spiritual development. Without this inner consciousness one is not qualified for jnana yoga or the cultivation of spiritual knowledge. Many may wish for moksa or liberation and attempt to renounce the world prematurely but they do not reach perfection only by such renunciation. This is verified in the verse by the words na eva sanyasanat meaning not merely by renunciation. So it should be understood that without purity of mind and adequate spiritual knowledge a person even though appearing to be a renunciate actually has not properly qualified themselves for jnana yoga in spite of appearances.

Neither by not performing the activities prescribed in the Vedic scriptures nor by abandoning them once they were begun does one attain the qualification to perform *jnana yoga* the cultivation of spiritual knowledge. This is because that actions when performed as worship for the Supreme Lord for His satisfaction alone with no desire or expectation for any reward leads to perfection and without this consciousness one is not qualified for *jnana yoga*. For in *jnana yoga* exclusive attention is devoted to *atma-nistha* deep faith in knowledge and meditation of the soul. This is only possible for one who has relinquished all desires and expectations fully. It is not possible for one who is still mired in the pursuit of fruitive activities, burdened with sins from previous lives and for one who has never worshipped Lord Krishna with love and devotion with no anticipation of reward.

The renunciation of actions factually means not being attached to them. It does not mean actually giving them up, as that is impossible. Nobody neither a wise man or a fool under any circumstances can refrain from actions for a moment. The reason Lord Krishna is stating is that all are compelled to act forced by one's likes and dislikes influenced by one's attachments and aversions arising out of *prakriti*, material nature and designated by one's past life activities.

That it is impossible to renounce every single action one makes is what's being clarified here

Now begins the summation.

Actions are spoken of as two-fold in the Paingī scripture. Actions that are dependent upon a cause and actions which are independent of any cause. The actions that are dependent upon a cause are due to the influence of *prakriti*, material nature. Independent actions are only manifesting from the Supreme Lord. Therefore the words *karyate he avasah* means to perform activities fully dependent, this dependence is on the Supreme Lord Krishna. The scriptures also further clarify that *ah* means the all pervasive Brahman.

Ramanuja's Commentary

No living being in the material existence can remain inactive even for a moment without initiating or pursuing some activity or another. If one should steadfastly determine to perform absolutely nothing, still one would be compelled into action by the qualities of the the three *gunas* being *sattva* or goodness, *rajas* or passion and *tamas* or ignorance, all from *prakriti*, material nature. The effects of these have sprung into existence from one's past life activities. Thus by adhering to *karma yoga* the yoga of actions without desires one's accumulated sins will gradually dissolve and then mastery over the *gunas* and *prakriti* is achieved. At this time the mind has become pure and one becomes qualified for *jnana yoga*. Otherwise as Lord Krishna states anyone attempting to pursue *jnana yoga* in lieu of this is a charlatan and all their attempts is merely a charade.

It should not be speculated that one is entitled to the fruits of one's actions simply because it is impossible to fully renounce all actions. To emphasize this point Lord Krishna states *vimudh-atma* meaning one ignorant of the soul. A fool or a wise person can appear inactive without

engaging in worldly affairs or Vedic activities. So the sense here is that prakriti, material nature is propelling one to act based on the effects of one's past actions which are attached to the root of the physical and subtle body. Therefore the conclusion is that one should first purify themselves by performing karma yoga which is actions without desires as prescribed in the Vedas which destroys sins which hinder spiritual development before embarking on the path of jnana yoga the cultivation of spiritual knowledge.

. Here Lord Krishna reveals the words of Prajapati or Brahma the creator of the forms and categories of material beings and the arranger of the material manifestation. Here it states that one desiring liberation should perform selfless actions with the thought of appeasement and propitiation to the Supreme Lord. Now Lord Krishna is inferring that he teaches this knowledge of propitiation to His devotees only. This is because Brahma has given facility for beings other than the devotees to worship in appeasement lesser gods such as the demi-gods. Thus after Brahma created mankind he instructed the three twice born classes of brahmins, ksatriyas and vaisyas to perform selfless actions in the spirit of worship of the Supreme Lord and this will be for you sacrifice. Sacrificing the desires for reward and attachment to the results and in this way mankind will flourish and prosper. The actual understanding is that this spirit of sacrifice performed with faith according to one's status and stage in life will bequeath all auspiciousness in this life and the next life. Such instructions for such wishfulfilling actions and the confusion that might arise to due to them from statements of non-attachment earlier in this chapter in verses four, seven and seventeen as well as referring to delighting in the atma or soul in this chapter in verses three and nineteen is emphasising different approaches to the same goal based on qualification so there is no contradiction.

The word *manavah* means men. It is derived from Manu the father of mankind, who wrote the Manu Samhita which are the guidelines for the human race. Thus all mankind as the descendants of Manu are followers of Vedic scriptures. The great personalities like Manu contemplating and reflecting on the Vedas determine what is the main import of the Vedas, which is precisely the formulated will of the Lord act accordingly to this inner directive.

There are persons who although unable to practice the prescribed injunctions enjoined in the Vedic scriptures still have faith and believe in the tenets inculcated therein. There are others who

although not fully understanding and believing still do not doubt the veracity and authority of the Vedic scriptures.

All these three classes of mankind shall be redeemed and delivered from the vast aggregate of past sins accumulated since time immemorial that keeps one locked in bondage to the material existence. Lord Krishna uses the words *te api* meaning they also to emphasise that these even those not fully believing if they remain passive and do not blaspheme they are also entitled to absolution from past sins which is the cause of bondage and gradually attain *moksa* or deliverance from the cycle of birth and death.

The next verse tells the fate of the blasphemers and non-observers of this edict.

Dedicate thy mind and all activities to the Supreme Being in the heart represented by the eternal *atma* or soul within all living beings. The word *nirasih* means desireless. Being free from desires and free from hankering for the rewards of all actions while evicting all vanity. The word *nirmamah* means without a sense of ego. Prohibiting all ego constructs of I-ness and my-ness and relieved from the fever of mental delusion, discharge the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures according to your qualification at once as a matter of duty without attachment. In this Lord Krishna is instructing the warrior prince Arjuna how he should fight his enemies.

The words *adhyatma-cetasa* means with the mind absorbed in the *atma* within the heart. One's thoughts should be focused on the nature of the soul, its attributes and qualities as delineated previously in chapter two, verses 13 - 25. There are many scriptures that reveal some of the attributes of the *atma*. In the Taittiriya Upanisad we find: Enveloped within the interior of the heart, the ruler of all beings, the eternal Supersoul, the origin of all. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanisad we find: He who is residing in the *atma*, He who is interior to the *atma*, He whom the *atma* knows not, He whom the *atma* knows not, He who rules from the interior of the *atma*, He who is the indwelling monitor, He who is the giver of immortality, He whose body constitutes the *atma* of all living beings, He who is the knower of all and is the inner guide to all.

Therefore we see that by inference that the Supreme Lord Krishna is revealing that since He is the *atma* within all living beings and that also the *atma* within all created beings constitute His eternal, transcendental body and derive all their energy from Him; then it is natural that one

should dedicate all their actions to Lord Krishna, the Supreme Being as an act of *yagna* or worship.

One should very reverently reflect that one's *atma* is a part of the Supreme Lord and therefore He is within me and I am within Him. The Supreme Lord Krishna is the Lord and Master of all. It is He alone who causes acts of *yagna* to be performed by me to Him and therefore I am His instrument. Therefore no conceptions of I-ness or my-ness, or authorship can be accepted by me for any actions that are performed. Thus I will be free from the fever of mental delusion fuelled by the fire of illusion.

The *Paramapurusa* is the Supreme Being and *Sarveshvara* is the Supreme Controller. In the Svetavatara Upanisad VI.VII we find: Let us take complete shelter of the Omnipotent Supreme Lord, the Supreme Lord over all lords, the Supreme Ruler of all rulers, the Supreme Master of all masters. The word *isvaratva* means lordship and the word *niyantritva* means ruler and the word *patitva* means master denoting the relationship between the Supreme Lord and His servitors. In the Narayana Upanisad we find: He is the Supreme Lord of the universe. In the Brahma Samhita V.I we find *isvarah parama krishna* which means that Lord Krishna is the Supreme Controller.

Arjuna was also reflecting on how he would become free from the myriad's of sins about to be committed by him in the battle for all the warriors he would be slaying. Now he is being instructed to cheerfully begin the fray performing his prescribed duties as *yagna* or worship in *karma yoga* or the path of prescribed Vedic activities without attachment according to the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures. By dedicating oneself according to the edicts of the Vedic scriptures one is actually worshipping the Supreme Being and the person who performs their activities in this ordained manner is automatically exempt from all reactions as the Supreme Being Himself accepts their actions of offerings as His own and accepting complete responsibility of His surrendered devotee factually frees them from bondage. Thus the quintessence of all the Upanisads has been duly given.

Lord Krishna is revealing the eternal truth that He is the *atma* or soul within all beings in existence, be they human, animal, aquatic, plant, demi- gods or any other species of life that was not cloned. He is the maintainer, sustainer and monitor of all beings through the medium of the

atma and all of its impulses come from Him. All souls emanate from the Supreme Lord and because of Him are completely spiritual and eternal. All the souls of all the living beings in creation everywhere in creation as a total aggregate comprise the form of the Supreme Lord's eternal, transcendental spiritual body. Whoever does not avail themselves and conformably act to this eternal truth, or take this eternal truth seriously in earnest, or who deems unnecessary and not worth the effort, this person should be understood to be completely destitute of knowledge and unable to evolve spiritually and are incapable of achieving *atma tattva* or knowledge of the soul become lost. Spiritual intelligence is what determines the light of knowledge in the material existence. In the absence of spiritual knowledge, darkness and ignorance prevails and knowledge becomes erroneous and defective. Thus it has been illustrated that doership transpires due to the union of *prakriti* or material nature and the physical body being influenced by the *gunas* or modes of goodness, passion and nescience and this is dependent ultimately upon the Supreme Lord.

Reflecting in this manner it can be ascertained that *karma yoga* or the path of performing prescribed Vedic actions is appropriate for one performing *jnana yoga* or the path of cultivating Vedic knowledge as well. *Karma yoga* is appropriate on account of it being easy to perform, exempt from the danger of failure and requires no assistance from other methods in its application. Contrarily *jnana yoga* is difficult to practice, susceptible to failure and must perform some *karma yoga* anyway in order to maintain health and vigor which is essential for body maintenance if one is to perform any yoga at all. Also it has been pointed out how it is necessary for a person of distinction situated in Vedic wisdom to set an example to inspire the common man for the benefit and welfare of the world.

What difficulties and dangers are fraught for the performers of *jnana yoga* are now explained in the remainder of this chapter.

That person situated in *jnana yoga* or the cultivation of Vedic wisdom is very knowledgeable with the Vedic declarations regarding the distinct difference between the *atma* or soul and *prakriti* or material nature. Such a person is also completely aware of the fact that the *atma* should be the sole object of their contemplation and meditation. But despite this knowledge it is seen that due to the deep influence of *samskaras* or impressions from past life activities, they are

carried along by their subsequent nature which forces them to be act in the current of their natural tendencies and they find themselves preoccupied with various material pursuits enjoying assorted material sense objects. The reason is that living entities become indoctrinated and content with whatever relationship they establish in their environment. In other words whatever habits they form from their association with *prakriti* they continue to maintain and persistently follow. With the overpowering influence of these deep rooted habits how can the words of the Vedic scriptures impose restraint on such a person? One is helplessly carried away by the forceful current of past life actions and impressions.

If everyone must act according to their nature and no living being is void of their nature then the purpose of teaching the Vedic scriptures by the spiritual master could be deemed futile and unnecessary. To clarify this point Lord Krishna repeats the word *indriyasya* twice to emphasise that for all the senses. Attraction to sweet tastes to the tongue which are pleasurable or the aversion to foul smells of the nose which are unpleasurable are all fixed and automatically happening in accordance with *samskaras* or past life latent impressions in regard to all the senses. One who is fortunate to hear through the ears the holy words of the Vedic scriptures from the spiritual master should never come under the influence of attraction and aversion because they are two great obstacles on the path of *moksa* or liberation from material existence. These two obstacles take an aspirant from the path leading to *moksa* and deviate them to the false path of desires, attachment and the enjoyment of sense objects and are exactly like two bandits who guide a traveller down a dark road and then rob them of all their wealth. Contrarily when a policeman sees a traveller in the clutches of a bandit he rescues him and guides him the correct way; similarly the spiritual master teaching the Vedic scriptures rescues an aspirant from being under the influence of the dualities of attraction and aversion and guides them in the right path of offering one's actions as *yagna* or worship to the Supreme Lord which is the best and surest way to attain *moksa*. So teaching the Vedic scriptures by the spiritual master is never futile to the contrary it is highly beneficial and essential.

The objects of the senses are perceived through the sense organs. For example hearing is perceived by the ears through sound, seeing is perceived by the eyes through sight, smelling is perceived by the nose through smells and so on. For each of the senses one has affection and the desire to enjoy through them. But the same senses operate depending upon attraction or aversion

to sense objects. For sense objects that are pleasing one has attraction for pleasure and for sense objects that are displeasing one has aversion to displeasure. All these habits are conditioned from ancient predilections of past life reminiscences. Such dualities of attraction and aversion obstructs one who would want to succeed in *jnana yoga* by subjugating their sense. These dualities which can be understood as different degrees of love and hate, hold a person in an iron grip and forcefully drive them to commit actions that are in conformance with the attributes of one of the three *gunas* of goodness, passion or nescience which one's nature adheres to from past life impressions. Thus one is being constantly diverted from the real purpose of human existence, that of *atma tattva* or realisation of the soul and their precious human life is wasted pursuing sense objects

The *jivas* or the subatomic living entity existing as consciousness within every living being is certainly not the doer of any action. The Supreme Lord Krishna through the medium of *prakriti* or material nature is the doer. *Yagna* or worship adoring Him is verily the essence of all actions. Even the *yagna* offered to Him is only possible His mercy and grace alone and not otherwise. Devotion to the Supreme Lord is its own reward and bequeaths His mercy and grace perpetually. Performance of *yagna* to the Supreme Lord Krishna is exclusively the ordained activity to be performed for all human beings, as well as to any of His authorised incarnations such as Rama, Vishnu or Narasimhadeva as revealed in the Vedic scriptures. Only the Supreme Lord alone is an independent performer of actions. All beings are impelled by Him but He is impelled by nothing. Dependence upon Him and Him alone is the ordained action. The actions of the *jivas* are fraught with modifications due to being constantly influenced by the *gunas* known as the modes of goodness, passion and nescience. It is stated in the Brahma Tarka that one should always understand the performance and non-performance of actions as differentiated between the Supreme Lord, the *jiva* and *prakriti*. In the Shabda Nirnaya *prakriti* or material nature is to be understood in some instances as the *jivas* inclination, in other instances as the *gunas* and yet in special cases because of His creation potency the Supreme Lord Himself can be so understood. By inclination the *jiva* is three fold consisting of the best, the worst and the intermediate. The best are the *devas* or demi-gods, the worst are the *asuras* or demons and the humans are intermediate. There will never be any change in the disposition or modification in the inclinations of any of the three. The *devas* will always act noble and godly, the demons will

always act ignoble and ungodly and humans will always show qualities vacillating between both. Some humans due to receiving spiritual association will exhibit the noble qualities of the *devas* and other humans receiving degraded influences will exhibit the ignoble qualities of the *asuras*.

The *jivas* who are *devas* are qualified for *moksa* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death, the *jivas who are* intermediates are qualified for primordial life and the *jivas* who are *asuras* are only qualified for eternal darkness. The redemption of each is achieved only by each following there positive inclination. In the absence of a positive inclination the path of the three continues endlessly. Because there is eternal continuity in our primordial world by the will of Lord Krishna the cycle is endless. The knowledge of the *asuras* who are degraded is always distorted. The knowledge of the mortal human intermediates is mixed, influenced by the three *gunas*. The knowledge of the essential principles and conclusions of the Vedic scriptures and devotion for Lord Krishna is reserved for the demi-gods and the higher order of human beings such as Vaisnava's and brahmana's and liberated yogis.

All *jivas* being subservient to the Supreme Being each perform activities according to their natural attributes. *Paramatma* or the supersoul within monitors the actions performed by every *jiva* according to each's natural inclination. The deluded believe that they are the cause and sole performer of all their actions; but those situated in spiritual Vedic wisdom are aware that the senses are energised by the will of the Supreme Being and interact with the three *gunas* within the *prakriti* totally dependent upon Him. These *jivas* realising they have no independent actions exceedingly please the Supreme Being by there devotion.

The deluded *jivas* by the influence of their own attributes consider themselves to be knowledgeable and independent from the Supreme Being. The deluded do not consider that their actions or attributes are dependent on anything except themselves. Being unqualified by their ignorance they never become illuminated with the light of wisdom. In the Prakasa Samhita it is stated : That the deluded of impure minds can never conceive the truth of the ultimate reality and attain perception of the Supreme Being residing within. The deluded possibly could be convinced about it in their minds with strong arguments founded in logic; but never in their hearts so deluded by *maya* or illusion are they.

The misinformed make attempts for *atma-tattva* or soul realisation but due to their ignorance of the true nature of the *atma* or soul and because of their acute identification with the physical body and the senses they are obstructed in their attempts by the influences of the three *gunas* being the mode of goodness, passion and nescience. Such a person is quickly brought under the control of the *gunas* by their association with sense objects and cannot divert these natural tendencies towards *atma-tattva*. Thus they are not qualified for *jnana yoga* or the cultivation of knowledge but are only competent for *karma yoga* or performing prescribed Vedic activities.

The person situated in Vedic wisdom in *jnana yoga* after observing the meager capacities of the ignorant masses with their sluggish understanding should not attempt to convert them to *jnana yoga* from their easy to perform path of *karma yoga*. This is because it would be dangerous for the ignorant to give up the path of *karma yoga* to follow the path of *jnana yoga* when they are in no way qualified to do so. Leaving the path of *karma yoga* and unable to follow the path of *jnana yoga* they would have nothing and be at a loss in their lives. The conclusion is that one situated in Vedic wisdom and is a prominent leading figure in society should also perform prescribed Vedic activities in *karma yoga* even though such a person is a knower of *atma-tattva*. By acting in this way and performing Vedic activities without attachment lesser men will follow his example and perform in a like manner.

It has been shown earlier in this chapter that even for *jnana yogis* the path of *karma yoga* is preferable, hence persons of Vedic wisdom who are leaders in society should also tread the path of *karma yoga* as beacons of light for the masses in the world. The method of performing *karma yoga* by understanding that the *atma* is distinct from the physical body and thus ascribing the activities of the senses to be from the influences of the *gunas* has been thoroughly described.

One should contemplate and reflect on the *atma* and its essential nature which is purely spiritual. The *atma* performs no material activity but has association with actions through the *gunas* due to the conjunction with *prakriti*. Thus in association with *prakriti* there is doer ship with the *atma* and without association there is none. The next verse will explain the relationship between the senses and the *gunas* in regards to the Supreme Lord who is omniscient and omnipresent. *Paramatma* who is the Supreme Soul of all living entities evidenced by the fact that every

individual soul constitutes His eternal, transcendental, spiritual body and are His eternal parts and parcels.

Whosoever without first unburdening themselves of all their sins, who without having first gained mastery of their senses and without having first achieved self-control of the mind. If such a person pretends to strive for *atma-tattva* or self-realisation of the soul, with their thoughts dwelling on sense objects due to attachment for them instead of focusing on the eternal soul.

Then the conduct of such a one is duplicitous and false and they are a charlatan. Any person acting in this way is only deceiving themselves by their own deception and surely will never succeed in realising the eternal soul.

If actions themselves are dependent upon the organs of the senses such as eyes, nose, ears etc., then how can one practice to control them. One who is able to restrain their body from sense objects still may find their mind attached to sense objects. This is due to impurities caused by passion and desires from past lifetimes. Such a person is called a charlatan. The sense is that the mind cannot be free from attachment to sense objects because of an absence of perfection in karma yoga by performing actions without desire thereby destroying the myriads of sins collected from time immemorial. Until and unless this has been achieved knowers of the Vedic scriptures call such a one a hypocrite or charlatan and all the efforts of such a charlatan although appearing as a renouncer is of no use for moksha or liberation.

Controlling the senses by strength of mind, utilising them to assist in achieving *atma tattva* by performing the prescribed duties given in the Vedic scriptures according to the natural attributes found within their character by the natural disposition of their natural impulses, then that person although performing *karma yoga* the yoga of actions is superior to the performer of *jnana yoga* the yoga of cultivating knowledge inasmuch as falsely performing *jnana yoga* with duplicity is far inferior to performing *karma yoga* with sincerity.

The word *nityatam* can refer to eternal, regular or even daily. An act is eternal if it is connected to the *atma* which is the eternal soul. Actions merely connected to *prakriti* or the material nature are a persistent inheritance from one's past activities in the unknown past. Thus to perform actions comes easily as a natural phenomena and not subject to the inherent dangers of possessing an impure mind or the lack of sense control associated with *jnana yoga*, the cultivation of spiritual knowledge. Therefore Lord Krishna is urging Arjuna to perform *karma*

yoga or actions without attachment as in his case it is superior to cultivating knowledge. *A-karma* is non-action which implies cultivating knowledge by the abstention of activities. But it is known that it is not possible to completely achieve the actionless state. Even for the followers of *jnana yoga* the path of *karma yoga* is superior because in *jnana yoga* one must follow a path one is naturally not accustomed, is difficult to practice, fraught with the risk of dominant senses and also which does not flow as an inherent tendency like the path of *karma yoga* where actions follow the natural locomotion of the body in the course of daily activities.

Further it will be shown that even one who is liberated by *atma-tattva* realisation of the eternal soul; still may be involved in so many activities, performing actions without attachment or as a matter of duty. Thus even *atma-tattva* can be connected to material activities transforming them to spiritual activities. Hence *karma yoga* can be superior in this way. What can be inferred about the superiority of *karma yoga* over *jnana yoga* will be evident to one who is actually engaged in practising *jnana yoga*.

But an alternative argument could be alright suppose one is determined to abstain from all actions, then how does one expect to maintain their bodily existence which depends on eating and sleeping and washing and exercising etc. and by which the body is very helpful and useful in practising *jnana yoga*. The maintenance of one's physical body is absolutely essential to complete the course charted in life until one achieves their goal. The way in which one maintains their body is by actions such as labour by rightful means to acquire funds for performing worship to God by offerings of food which are subsequently imbued with spiritual potency and by partaking of the remnants of such foods solely for bodily sustenance each day maintain their bodies.

In the Chandogya Upanisad VII.XXVI.II we find: It is by the purity of food that one's mind becomes purified. When the mind is purified one attains access to the eternal soul dwelling within the heart.

Thus if one desires to desist from all activities how will their mind become purified and how will their bodily needs be maintained? Thus it is obvious that one who practices *jnana yoga* in order to maintain their bodily existence must still continue performing the daily and occasional duties

prescribed in the Vedas until they reach their goal. The same as if one practised *karma yoga*. Also in *karma yoga* the contemplation of *atma-tattva* is also included in the conceptions that I am not my body performing actions and I am not the actual doer of any actions. So for all these reasons *karma yoga* is preferably recommended to *jnana yogis*.

So the conclusion is for Arjuna to desist and practice *karma yoga*.

But if it is still postulated that actions such as the acquiring of funds involves the my-ness of this is my money and the I-ness of I have earned this by the strength of my mind and the power of my faculties and that these efforts must cause bondage Lord Krishna refutes this argument in the next verse.

Living entities are bound to the material existence by their actions. This bondage by actions is spoken of very clearly in the Vedic scriptures. Here Lord Krishna states *yagna-arthat* meaning actions that are performed as an offering for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord without desiring reward are the only actions which are free from bondage. This is the purport. Lord Krishna also states *mukta-sangah* meaning free from attachment which is the qualifying statement. Inappropriate are actions that crave desires due to attachment. Appropriate are actions that are free from desires and attachment. All actions should be performed as a sacrifice to the Supreme Lord and no sacrifice should ever be performed with an intention for reward. These statements and others are given in the Upanisads.

Now begins the summary.

The statements of living entities being bound to material nature by their actions refers to actions which are contrary to divinity and righteousness as delineated in Vedic scriptures. *Jaya* is a name given to the resplendent Supreme Lord and this name means glory. According to the *Barkashruti* in the word *Jaya* the *Ya* signifies *yagna*. Therefore *yagna* is the performance of the prescribed activities given in the Vedic scriptures for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord.

One on the path of *jnana yoga* knows from the Vedic scriptures that *moksa* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death can never manifest itself until first attaining *atma-tattva* or soul realisation. When such is the case for persons of wisdom what can be said for persons of meagre intelligence. The word

kama-rupena means in the form of lust. This indicates that only with great pain and difficulty is lust ever fulfilled. The word *duspurena* means never satisfied. This indicates that *kama* or lust is an eternal adversary. Even the position of *Indra* in the heavenly realms is born of this *kama* that is to be the king of all the celestials; yet even while trying to achieve the position of *Indra*, the position of *Brahma* is sought because *kama* is never satisfied and it is more exalted to be the ruler of the material worlds than the king of the celestials and so forth and so on. The word *analena* means like a fire which denotes the burning fire of *kama* which is never satisfied and insatiable. It is said that *kama* covers the *atma* as smoke covers fire, As dust prevents one from seeing a reflection in the mirror this *kama* prevents one from perceiving their *atma* and as the womb imprisons the embryo it is *kama* which keeps a person imprisoned in the material existence. This is Lord Krishna Here Lord Krishna illustrates the inimical nature of *kama* or lust with three lucid examples concluding that discriminatory knowledge of even basic right and wrong and even common sense is completely neutralised by the influence of *kama* causing one to act in base and degraded ways. The ignorant though are always pursuing *kama* because they derive pleasure while enjoying the sense objects afterwards when they feel the pain of the reaction they are forced to accept they may see *kama* as an enemy. The person situated in Vedic wisdom sees *kama* as an enemy from the beginning even while contemplating enjoying the action and later if they actually consummate the action then they know a painful reaction is forthcoming. Thus for those of Vedic wisdom *kama* is known as being an eternal enemy. 's meaning By revealing the locations of where *kama* or lust is stationed Lord Krishna is indicating the means to defeat *kama*. As desire arises from contact with sense objects by seeing, hearing, touching etc. the mind is agitated and a determined effort to enjoy arises and lust manifests itself from within the mind completely overpowering the intellect and the discriminatory faculties and a person is controlled and deluded, forced to be a slave of their sense..

The Supreme Lord Krishna is the maintainer and energiser of everything in creation. His authorised avatars and expansions are His parts and parcels. All other Gods without any exception are mere subsidiaries of His expansions and these other gods descend downwards from Brahma. Demons and *asuras* or those possessing no inner light are continuously being degraded by *kama* and mixed with their arrogance arouse great evil. The demoniac are the most deluded and degraded of all living beings. The least influenced by *kama* like smoke covering fire are the noble and righteous beings. The next more influenced by *kama* like dust covering a mirror are those of mixed natures sometimes aware of their actions and sometimes not. The most influenced by *kama* like an embryo imprisoned in the womb are the are demonic who are great evil doers. Like *Agni* or fire *kama* is also all devouring that is why it called

analena or fire. Therefore *kama* residing in the senses it can be restrained and destroyed only by the weapon of Vedic wisdom. *Kama* envelopes the mind and intellect prior to *atma tattva* or soul realisation; but even after *atma tattva* is achieved it has been seen that *kama* is so powerful that it is able to exert its influence as *kama* is never satiated and thus vigilance is still required before *moksa* or complete release from the material existence has been attained.

For obvious reasons the performance of one's own *dharma* or righteous duties according to *karma yoga* or actions performed according to prescribed Vedic injunctions is the best course to follow even if they do not possess great virtues. One's own duties are easy and natural to discharge in *karma yoga* and unattended with risk. Whereas that person performing *jnana yoga* or the path of cultivating Vedic knowledge which is most excellent; but who is beguiled by *prakriti* or material nature finds it extremely difficult to achieve success. Although the path of *jnana yoga* is shorter than the path of *karma yoga* there are many dangers accosting the path of *jnana yoga*. The path of *karma yoga* is performed by one most easily as it naturally befits the person performing it. Even if death comes before one has the opportunity to fulfill life's purpose and attain *moksa* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death, still one's progress is not impeded by any obstacle even death as one's merits are applied to the next life and they are born in a situation where they can easily pick up the thread from where they left off in the last life and continue on. Whereas one who although beguiled by *prakriti* attempts to practice *jnana yoga* anyway is surrounded by danger and obstacles on their path which deter one from easily adopting and putting into practice the cultivation of Vedic wisdom.

Lord Krishna is explicitly confirming that the root cause and great impeller of sins is *kama* or lust known to forcefully compel one's senses to race impetuously towards objects of the senses. But *kama's* subordinate *krodha* or anger is also the cause of many evils like violence. When lust is impeded and desires are frustrated it is anger that replaces lust in another form. Hence *krodha* is also a form of *kama* and both arise out of *rajas guna* or the mode of passion. This suggests that by increasing *sattva guna* or the mode of goodness the effects of *rajas guna* can be decreased and subsequently the power of desires is less. Because controlling desires one controls lust and controlling lust one controls anger. There is no other way. Thus one should not miss that they are interconnected and try to control each separately. But *kama* is extremely difficult to control once it has been activated because it is insatiable and it does not become tranquil after even enjoying wealth, pleasure of the flesh, kingdoms and even the whole world; to the contrary its desires increase exactly as a fire increases when oil is poured on it, it rages out of

control and so it is an extremely evil propensity and when impeded it explodes into anger destroying all in its path like a horrific forest fire.

The five senses are the main impediments to spiritual development and are arranged in a hostile formation against it. As long as the senses are primarily occupied in the pursuit of pleasure and delight in sense objects the realisation of the atma or soul will never manifest. Yet the mind although fickle is capable of controlling the senses but if the mind is also inclined to enjoy the senses and is filled with thoughts of the same then realisation of the atma will also never manifest. But the intellect is superior even to the mind as it possesses the discriminative faculty. This means that the mind may be tranquil but if the intellect is inclined towards the channels of sense activities then there will be a perversion in one's intelligence and no possibility again for realisation of the atma. To show the order of gradation is Lord Krishna's intention. A question may be posed what if all three being the senses, the mind and the intellect were tranquil and passive? The unvarying answer is that *kama* or lust which arises from desires, covertly resides deep within the heart and is always craving for sense gratification. This *kama* is so powerful that it will assert its mastery over them all and domineering them will have them fully pursuing the objects of the senses for sense gratification in the phenomenal world obscuring the light of knowledge and the realisation of the atma. That which is the most powerful with its domain in the spiritual phenomena is the atma and is designated by the pronoun *sah*.

The method of destroying the great enemy known as *kama* or lust is learned through the knowledge of Vedic scriptures received by the words of the spiritual master. Controlling the five senses is the key step allowing one to benefit from this Vedic knowledge. Without restraint of the senses one has no possibility of conquering *kama*. The senses are superior to the physical body, the mind is superior to senses, the intellect is superior to the mind and the *atma* or soul is superior to the intellect. *Moksa* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death is not possible from studying various verses in diverse Vedic scriptures in different contexts. In the *Gunopasamhara* section of Brahma Sutras it is stated that the Supreme Lord should be meditated upon after recollecting in the mind the entire range of attributes and qualities possessed by the Supreme Lord. In the Vedas which are *apaurusaheya* which means not of human origins and also in the Mahabharata and Garuda Purana it is stated that: Whatever attributes have been revealed in the Vedic scriptures regarding the Supreme Lord Krishna and His authorised

incarnations and whoever is able to actually perceive Him realising these attributes in their hearts, in such persons alone does *bhakti* or devotion become established and never to others.

Therefore the Supreme Lord Krishna should be understood to be superior to everything as He existed before the creation of everything. One who fully understands this and acts in accordance with this understanding is eligible for *moksa* and never others. The previous verse is not referring to the living being because the words *bhudher yah paratas tu sah* mean: that which is superior to the intellect is the *atma*. This is because the desire for sense gratification is overcome by *atma tattva* or soul realisation and also without perceiving the Supreme Being how will the living being expect to overcome *kama*. Thus it is clear that knowledge pertaining to the Supreme Lord is what is important. The word *atmanam* means the mind and the word *atmana* means the intellect and they are for realising the *atma*.

Now begins the summation.

Among living beings the demigods are superior to humans. Indra is the chief of the demigods. Shiva the presiding deity of the mind and ego is superior to Indra. Above Shiva is Brahma the presiding deity of the intellect and discrimination. Superior to Brahma are all the *avatars* expansions of Lord Krishna in the spiritual realms and superior to them is the Supreme Lord Krishna Himself. There is nothing equal or superior to Krishna. Knowing the order of gradation and destroying the powerful enemy of *kama* at the very root one becomes qualified for *moksa* and attain the spiritual worlds of Lord Krishna which are imperceptible to the vision and conception of humans. An important purpose of Vedic scriptures is to show the order of gradation. The function of the higher deity cannot be performed by a lower deity. To show their area of predominance they each have their respective places and assigned function. In some cases a deity on a lower level is seen to be relegating the duties of a higher level; but this can be understood in the same way that a son sometimes relegates the duties of a father. The Shabda Nirnaya states: traditionally the use of such similes repeatedly are able to convey the conclusive meaning for comprehension. The Brahma Tarka states: that where similar examples are repeated the similarity of their meanings is understood and becomes conclusive from continuous hearing.

. Conclusion

Lord Krishna establishes the fact that one should try to their utmost to destroy the powerful enemy known as kama or lust. Knowing that kama is the mightiest enemy one must by withdrawing the senses, keeping the mind steady and the intellect resolute in sattva guna the mode of goodness then slay this enemy kama which will attack your mind and senses in various ways causing one to fall into delusion before one becomes powerless to resist. Kama is extremely difficult to overpower and is tenacious and formidable yet if one dedicates all actions to Lord Krishna with their mind fixed on Him they can overcome it. So knowledge of Vedic wisdom and meditation on the Supreme Lord are combined the pancha to neutralise kama from its location in the senses, mind and intellect and then destroy the great enemy known as kama. This path of selfless action unattached without conception of rewards should be practiced according to one's capacity and knowledge as a means of gradually achieving renunciation.

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