
अथ चतुर्थोऽध्यायः

Chapter 4

श्री भगवानुवाच

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुर्िक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥

Śrībhagavān uvāca

imam vivasvate yogam
proktavānahamavyayam
vivasvānmanave prāha
manurikṣvākave'brhavīt [1]

Translation — Shri Bhagawan said, "I expounded this eternal yoga to Vivasvat, Vivasvat expounded to Manu and Manu expounded to Ikshvaku."

Exposition — Having introduced the results of yoga, Lord Shrikrishna now explains the expedient part of yoga practice from its beginning.

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥२॥

evam paramparāprāptam
imam rājarṣayoviduḥ
sa kālene'ha mahatā
yogo naṣṭaḥ paramtapa [2]

Translation — In this way the royal sages learned this yoga which was inherited through tradition. Oh Parantapa! Yoga became extinct from the world for a long time.

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

sa evā'yam mayā te'dya
yogaḥ proktaḥ purātaṇaḥ
bhakto'si me sakhā ce'ti
rahasyam hyetaduttamam[3]

Translation — I have delivered to you the same excellent secret ancient yoga because you are my devotee and a friend.

अर्जुन उवाच

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।

कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥४॥

Arjuna uvāca

aparam bhavato janma
param janma vivasvataḥ
kathametadvijānīyām
tvamādao proktavāniti [4]

Translation — Arjuna said, “You are living at present whereas Vivasvan lived in the past. How do I believe that you had delivered this in the past?”

श्री भगवानुवाच
बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप ॥५॥

Śrī Bhagawan uvāca

bahūni me vyatītāni
janmāni tava cārjuna
tānyaham veda sarvāṇi
na tvam vettha paramtapa [5]

Translation — Śrī Bhagawan said, “Oh Arjuna! You and I have been reborn many times. Oh Parantapa¹! You don’t know any of those incarnations whereas I do.”

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥६॥
ajo'pi sannavyayātmā
bhūtānāmīśvaro'pi san
prakṛtim svāmashīṣṭhāya
sambhavāmyātmamāyayā [6]

Translation — In spite of being imperishable, unborn and the Supreme Lord of all the creatures, I manifest Myself through My maya by mastering My nature.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥
yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānirbhavati bhārata
abhyutthānamadharmaṁ
tadā'tmānam sṛjāmyaham [7]

Translation — I am manifested whenever there is a decline of virtuousness and a rise of unrighteousness.

Exposition — In this creation whenever an age befalls when the human being, the best manifestation of the consciousness of Time, immures himself in physical limitations and becomes averse to the ancient system of yoga which develops the dormant mental faculties for knowing the Time that manifests him; at this time the human gives rise to unrighteousness by his failure to undertake yoga to know the unmanifest conscious presence of the Time. In such situations, the

¹ Scourge of the foe.

unmanifest Parmeshwar, the Time, advents Itself as a super-human being, providing afflatus to Its best manifestation, the human-being, so that by awakening his latent immense consciousness through yoga he may establish himself in the unmanifest Time-conscious presence, the brilliance of all brilliance, that manifests such consciousness.

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharmasamsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge-yuge [8]

Translation — I appear from age to age to retribute the sages and to destroy the wicked and to establish righteousness.

Exposition — The ones, who follow the doctrine of yoga which is delivered by this great human being, get a direct perception of the Paramatma², the epitome of the Time, and through the medium of death they achieve liberation from the great bondage of rebirth. Such Sthitaprajna persons are called Sadhu. And those who don't take heed of the immense conscious presence that prevails with the body and cannot even imagine the unmanifest Paramatma, remain unrighteous by simply nourishing their body. Such people remain entrapped in the cycle of birth and death and being fearful of death, they are again and again destroyed by death.

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥९॥

janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā deham punarjanma
nai'ti māmetyi so'rjuna [9]

Translation — Oh Arjuna! My lives as well as deeds are divine. One, who recognizes this, is not reborn after leaving this body and he attains Me.

Exposition — Appearance of the ultimate truth, the Time, in the form of a human body as well as Its providing a hint towards Itself by means of that human body, both are divine acts. The yogi, who understands these hints and knows Its true character, no longer needs his own manifestation in the form of his body. He realizes the true character of the Time, the ultimate Supreme Being, by Its grace and attains union with It.

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥१०॥

vītarāgabhayakrodhā
manmayā māmupāśritāḥ
bahavo jñānatapasā
pūtā madbhāvamāgatāḥ [10]

² The Ultimate Soul

Translation — Free from passion, anger and love, absorbed in Me and purified by gyana-tapa, several who are surrendered to Me have attained My state of being.

Exposition — Several yogis, in the shelter of Time itself, are elevated above the feelings of love, fear and anger and by awakening their immense consciousness by yoga they become one with the immense unmanifest conscious Time.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः । ११ ।

ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāmstathai'va bhajāmyaham
mama vartmā'nuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ [11]

Translation — Oh Partha! In whichever way one surrenders to Me, I accept him in that same way. Human beings, by all means, follow a path that leads to Me.

Exposition — Yogis, who understand that it is the Time itself that manifests the visible world, remain surrendered to the Time. By realizing the immensity of the Time, such great men remain surrendered to the Time and behave only in accordance with the Time. Such wise persons know that whatever may be the mode of behavior of individuals, i.e. whether they are trying to fulfill the desires of organs confined in physical limits, or trying to know the true character of Time by awakening their dormant consciousness by rising above the physical limits, they are all following the course of the time, i.e. they meet death when the journey of life is over. Those who know the true character of death become united with the Time, the ultimate element. Those, who don't know the Time, remain in fear of death and are reborn after they meet their death.

कांक्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा । १२ ।

kāṅkṣantāḥ karmanām siddhim
yajanta iha devatāḥ
kṣipram hi māṇuṣe loke
siddhirbhavati karmajā [12]

Translation — In this world, people desiring the fruits of karma worship the gods. Fruition of karma in this mortal world is quickly realized.

Exposition — Intellect of those who cannot understand the founding element of this creation remains within the physical limits. They act with a desire of its fruit. The acts are limited, so are the fruits which are quick in coming. People, who are strongly committed to gaining enjoyment and to the satiation of the organs, worship gods for the fulfillment of their objectives. And those, who are ambitious for awakening their dormant consciousness for their establishment in the unmanifest Time-consciousness, perform yogic karma. It is a specialty of this body and the mortal world that karma performed by this body yields quick results.

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् । १३ ।

cāturvarṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam
gūṇakarmavibhāgaśah
tasya kartāramapi mām
viddhyakartāramavyayam [13]

Translation — By dividing according to character and actions, I have created four varnas³. Consider Me, the creator of those, to be free from karma.

Exposition — That ultimate truth, whether you name it imperishable Brahma or Parmeshwar or Ishwar or the Time, when It appears in the form of a human being which is Its best manifestation, It does so on the support of human bodies of four colors based on their character, actions and nature.

Creation evolves from the gross to the subtle. Shudras are at the first stage of development of the consciousness of the mind. When the soul, or, the mind, which is the same thing as one's self-being, experiences out of those several possible feelings the ones that are mostly carnal in nature, it becomes qualified for the next stage of development. Here it experiences all those passions (especially in which wealth is a main consideration) that feed the body. e.g. agriculture; cow herding, commerce etc. These are essential activities for sustaining the gross body. Vaishyas (trading class) are at the second stage of development of consciousness. When all the departments of nurturing a body are experienced consciousness reaches the threshold of rising above the physical limits. Then it is called Kshatriya (warrior class). War is one such situation through which all the feelings of sacrificing life are expressed at its best. When these devout feelings of embracing death are experienced, then the human mind, by rising above the mundane temperament, gets motivated to experience the trans-physical presence and the feeling of all the feelings, the consciousness of consciousness, the Time, the Paramatma. It may be said that it proceeds towards its final emancipation, when it is stationed at the fourth stage of its evolution. At this stage it is termed as Brahmin.

Presently we have spoiled the entire beauty of a great system like the system of four varnas by applying an extremely limited and narrow view point. Our scriptures say that these four classes viz., Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra are four principal limbs of the body. In other words, these are four principal modes of manifestation of that Immense Element. Devoid of any one of these modes, the manifestation of that Immense Truth will remain incomplete.

Traditions of wisdom have perpetually existed in India. This perpetuity of traditions was misappropriated to circumscribe the varna system to Indian soil by those sciolists who were not realized themselves but posed to be so by imitating wise persons. Such 'half-baked' scholars created several absurdities in Indian society in the name of social system. Now this is an old story. Times have changed. Now entire mankind should rise above the so called political barriers and consider themselves as global citizens. We are now living in the space age; mankind is developing an understanding that the entire humanity is a global entity rather than a national unit. When we take a global view we easily understand that what Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa said above was with reference to the entire mankind. Those who couldn't understand this, they confined this system to the Indian landscape. Rising above the Indian land and by taking a global view, the mankind will appear to have four colors – black, yellow, white and brown. No other varna prevails on the earth. The human race, which according to Indian wisdom, is manifested by the feet of Virat Purush⁴ are the Shudras. The black

³ Class, Color.

⁴ The Vast Person, Almighty

race of this globe comes in this category. This is easily understood by observing their life style, habits, mind-set, culture etc.

Agriculture, cow-herding and commerce – these jobs are natural to Vaishyas. Subdivided on the basis of characteristics, a conclusion emerges that yellow colored Mongol race is Vaishya. All over this earth no one equals the Mongol race in their dedication to agriculture, cow-herding etc. They are the Vaishyas of this globe, manifested by the stomach of the Virat Purush.

From the arms of the Virat Purush were created the Kshatriyas. Jobs and characteristics natural to Kshatriya are bravery, brilliance, courage, tact, not to withdraw from fight, to sacrifice, lordship, to produce arms and weaponry and to practice them. These properties are naturally present in the white race. Every body of the white race is a Kshatriya of this earth. A look into history reveals that most great wars fought on this globe were fought by the armies of white race and they also ruled most of the territories on this earth.

Now let's talk about the Brahmins who emerge from the mouth of the Virat Purush. Their natural inclination is towards quietude, self-restraint, purity, penance, forgiveness, simplicity of mind senses and body, piety, knowledge of scriptures, composing scriptures, experiencing the Paramatma, spreading virtuousness etc. From this view point, we find that the specific race that resides from India to Israel whose physical structure is Caucasian but who are not the whites are the Brahmins on this globe. All the religions found in the world were preached by these people. All the messiahs and the incarnations of God emerged among them. An inborn belief in God and spiritual wisdom is an innate characteristic of theirs. Regardless of their faith, whether they are the followers of Sanatan (ancient) dharma or of Islam, are Parsis or Buddhists, or are Jews or Christians, the inborn devotion towards Supreme Being which is evident in them is the natural characteristic of the Brahmins.

The current need is to dispel the feeling that varṇa system is a narrow vision of the Indian wisdom and to realize on the basis of global observation that subdivisions emerge from the creation itself and they are not man-made. The only thing is that this remains to be understood.

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ।।१४।।

na mām karmāṇi limpanti
na me karmaphale sprhā
iti mām yo'bhijānāti
karmabhirna sa badhyate [14]

Translation — I have no desire for the fruit of karma, karma does not stick to Me; one who knows Me in this way is not bonded by karma.

Exposition — The Time, the ultimate truth, that manifests Itself through a human body to provide a hint towards Itself for the ignorant, appears as being confined to the body and yet It remains beyond all the bondage of karma. And those who comprehend these hints and awaken the immense consciousness of their mind by going beyond the physical limitations are able to know the true character of the unmanifest Time. Free from all desires, they attain freedom from all bondages.

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् । १५ ।।

evam jñātvā kṛtam karma
pūrvairapi mumukṣubhīḥ
kuru karmaiva tasmāttvam
pūrvaiḥ purvataram kṛtam [15]

Translation — Even the ancient seekers performed karma with this impression. Therefore you should also perform the karma of your ancestors.

Exposition — Many of those who proclaimed themselves as scholars by studying the stories of ancient sages are quite often found to pronounce that the Brahma is real and the gross world is an illusion. While pronouncing that the entire visible world is an illusion, they place themselves at par with the ancient sages. They simply ignore that it is almost impossible to comprehend the secret of these matters without attaining that same level at which the sages made these expositions. Those, who pose as scholars by reading such statements in the scriptures, know not that those who proclaimed this statement had realized that the human mind is the support of all knowledge and that it is the human mind that can know the truth of the consciousness of the Time (or the Brahma) by awakening its immense consciousness by doing yoga by means of the body. Human body is said to be hard to acquire even for gods. This is that great field, which when ploughed by means of yoga, and wherein are sown the seeds of knowledge, then is received the fruit of the knowledge of unmanifest Time that manifests this creation.

When a yogi succeeds in awakening his entire consciousness by rising above the physical limits by practicing yoga, he finds himself competent to ponder upon the Truth that creates, fosters and then destroys. When he knows the secret, whatever is expressed by such great person, those expositions are nothing more than just a hint for the ignorant. Those who commit the fallacy of thinking of themselves as scholars by reading such hints in the scriptures actually remain involved in satiating their senses throughout their life and prate upon the concepts like Prakṛti, Puruṣa, Maya⁵, Brahma⁶, Atma⁷ etc, and they just consume themselves. A proper approach for becoming a knower by understanding the hints expressed by scholars would be to develop one's faculties and by knowing one's self being to plunge into the infinite ocean of consciousness and then experience the truth that is manifested by means of the entire visible world.

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र माहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् । १६ ।।

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः । १७ ।।

kim karma kimakarme'ti
kavayo'pyatra mohitāḥ
tatte karma pravakṣyāmi
yajjñātvā mokṣyase'śubhāt [16]

⁵ Illusion

⁶ Supreme Being

⁷ Soul

karmaṇo hyapi boddhavyam
boddhavyam ca vikarmaṇaḥ
akarmaṇaśca boddhavyam
gahanā karmaṇo gatīḥ [17]

Translation — What is karma? What is akarma⁸? This is bewildering even to the scholars. I will advise you on karma, this knowledge will bring your salvation.

One should know the form of karma; the truth of vikarma⁹ and the truth of akarma as well because the consequence of karma is inscrutable.

Exposition — What is yogic karma and what is its effect called akarma? This subject has fascinated many a scholar. Bhagawan Shrikr̥ṣṇa is explaining through Arjuna exactly that same yogic karma, the practice of which causes one's liberation from the bondage of birth that binds one with limitations. One ought to know the nature of this yoga karma. Also what one ought to know is its result called akarma, a state beyond the karma that is also termed as Samadhi. One should also very well apprehend vikarma that detains a person from this great yogic karma. The course of this yogic karma that emancipates the consciousness from physical boundaries is unmanifest in its results and is therefore described as inscrutable.

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

सः बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥१८॥

karmaṇyakarma yaḥ paśyed
akarmaṇi ca karmayaḥ
sa buddhimānmanuṣyeṣu
sa yuktaḥ kṛtsnakarmakṛt [18]

Translation — One who beholds akarma in karma and karma in akarma is an intellectual among the folks; such a yogi is the doer of all karma.

Exposition — A yogi, who performs yogic karma to awaken his dormant consciousness with a strong desire to attain its result Samadhi, becomes Nishkam¹⁰ and is established in akarma which is a result of karma. When established in akarma, he also perceives that his Nishkam state is a result of yoga-karma done in the past. Such a great person perceives karma in akarma and akarma in karma. Such Sthitaprajna men are the intellectuals who become Purna-kama¹¹ by knowing karma and akarma.

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणां तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥१९॥

yasya sarve samārambhāḥ
kāmasamkalpavarjitāḥ
jñānāgnidagdhakarmāṇam
tamāhuḥ paṇḍitam budhāḥ [19]

⁸ To be absolved of karma

⁹ Gross karma (what is subtle karma)

¹⁰ Free from desires

¹¹ One who has accomplished all his desires

Translation — He whose all enterprises are without desire and resolve, and whose karma is burnt in the fires of knowledge is called a scholar.

Exposition — Those who undertook yogic karma and received its results, became Nishkam by going beyond desires and resolve, and who, being Nishkam, achieved Samadhi and were called Sthitaprajna. Such knowers, when established in akarma, are termed wise.

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ।।२०।।

tyaktvā karmaphalāsaṅgam
nityatṛpto nirāśrayaḥ
karṇanyabhipravṛtto 'pi
nai'va kimcit karoti saḥ [20]

Translation — Without support, ever satisfied and withdrawn from the company of the fruits of karma, he does nothing even when he is inclined towards karma.

Exposition — Having taken a comprehensive experience of the immensity of their mind, such great men know the true character of the ultimate, imperishable Time that manifests the consciousness of the mind. Well aware of the state of their self-being, they know the Time and remain surrendered to the Time. They do nothing even when they are doing something; similarly they do everything even when not doing anything.

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ।।२१।।

nirāśīryatacittātmā
tyaktasarvaparigrahaḥ
śārīram kevalam karma
kurvannā'pnoti kilbīsam [21]

Translation — He, who is without hope, has won himself over and has abandoned all the attainments; he doesn't incur sin by merely doing physical work.

Exposition — Those who have realized their limitations and have risen above them by awakening their entire consciousness by doing yoga, and to whom the attraction of life is over by their having accomplished the objective of life, all their hopes cease to exist as they have already been fulfilled.

Though such Sthitaprajna great beings seem to be doing physical work during their lifetime, they are verily beyond the limitations.

यदृच्छलाभसंतुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ।।२२।।

yadṛcchalābhasamtuṣṭo
dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ
samaḥ siddhāvasiddhau ca
kṛtvā'pi na nibadhyate

22

Translation — One, who, remains satisfied in objects that come on their own, is without conflict and envy, and is even in success and failure; he is not tied to the karma that he does.

Exposition — Established in Samadhi, a Sthitaprajna appears the same whether he gains anything or not, and in situations of delight-grief, envy, success and failure as well. For him, all these conditions are expressions of one singular consciousness and therefore they are the same.

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

gatasangasya muktasya
jñānāvasthitacetasaḥ
yajñāyācarataḥ karma
samagram pravilīyate [23]

Translation — Withdrawn from attachment with their consciousness established in wisdom, the liberated beings conduct yajna whereby all their karma completely disappears.

Exposition — A yajna that is performed in a state of complete detachment by igniting the fires of yoga through the medium of the body to awaken one's entire consciousness, and, by way of which all the karma, because of their conception within the mind, are absorbed within the mind itself, that doctrine of yoga is now expounded by Bhagawan Shrikrishna.

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥२४॥

brahmā'rpaṇam brahmahavir
brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam
brahmai'va tena gantavyam
brahmakarmasamādhinā [24]

Translation — (Act of) offering is Brahma, oblation is Brahma; invoked by Brahma in the fires of Brahma is also Brahma, Brahma is the attainment of Samadhi that is an act of Brahma.

Exposition — Being a manifestation of the Brahma, the mind itself is the Brahma. Yogis who ignite the fires of yoga in their body and offer that body as an oblation to awaken the innumerable competencies of their mind and to know its Brahma-like omnipotence, experience that infinite omnipotence in their life-time and are themselves availed of the omnipotence by surpassing the physical limitation through death. They realize that this body, the fires of yoga blazing in it, the dormant consciousness, the awakened consciousness and everything else is a manifestation of the Time and is therefore akin to Brahma.

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुहति ॥२५॥

daivamevā'pare yajñam
yoginaḥ paryupāsate
brahmāgnāvapare yajñam

yajñenai'vo'pajuhvati [25]

Translation — These yogis worship only the natural yajna, and by means of yajna offer an oblation of yajna itself in the fires of Brahma.

Exposition — Yogis devoted to yoga, as a result of their practice, become aware of the immensity of their mind and also of the fact that senses are the instruments of mind for grasping the experiences. The godly persons who keep on satisfying their mind, a form of Brahma, also comprehend this. When such yogis awaken their entire consciousness, then stationed in Samadhi and delivered of their desires, they offer themselves as an oblation in the yajna of yoga practice that is performed by means of their body and attain one-ness with the ultimate Brahma.

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुहति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुहति ।।२६।।

सर्वाणिन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।

आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुहति ज्ञानदीपिते ।।२७।।

śrotrādīnīndriyāṇyanye
samyamāgñisu juhvati
śabdādīnvīsayānanya
indriyāgñisu juhvati [26]

sarvāṇīndriyakarmāṇi
prāṇakarmāṇi cā'pare
ātmasamyamayogāgnau
juhvati jñānadīpīte [27]

Translation — Some offer hearing and other senses in the fires of self-restraint and others offer sound and other objects in the fires of senses.

In the fires of yoga of self-restraint that is ignited by wisdom, the yogis offer all their mundane acts together with all their spiritual acts.

Exposition — A yogi who is eager for the fruit of Samadhi, performs a strong practice of yoga and in his effort of knowing the co-relation of the mind and the senses, he restrains his senses by mind and thereby realizes that it is the mind that grasps sound and all other objects of senses through the medium of organs. By way of this he rises above these matters. He realizes that the co-relation of the mind and the senses is supported by prana which is expressed in the form of breath. He regulates prana by means of breath and by offering the objects of senses as oblations in the fires of yoga ignited by pranayam proceeds towards attaining immensity.

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ।।२८।।

dravyayajñās tapoyajñā
yogayajñāstathā'pare
svādhyājñānayajñāśca
yatayaḥ samśītavratāḥ [28]

Translation — The other persistent ones performing yajna for wealth, or yajna for penance or yajna of yoga, or, pursuing difficult observances, they perform Jñāna-yajña by means of self-learning.

Exposition — Yogis do self-learning in accordance with the level of their consciousness, i.e. they do self-study of their self-being. Their penance is a yajna that happens through pranayam; by means of which they ignite the fires of yoga in their body. By pouring themselves as oblation, they, by knowing themselves, remain self-satisfied. Whether they are engaged in earning wealth, or doing penance or practicing yoga or are performing an observance, such persons verily perceive different aspects of the consciousness of their mind. Those who study themselves realize that whatever task one undertakes, he thereby perceives different aspects of his personality.

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेष्वपानं तथापरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणः ।।२९।।

अपरे नियताहारा प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

सर्वस्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ।।३०।।

apāne juhvati prānam
prāṇe'pānam tathā'pare
prāṇāpānagatī ruddhavā
prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ [29]

apare niyataharāḥ
prāṇānpṛaṇesu juhvati
sarve'pyete yajñavidō
yajñakṣapitakalmaṣāḥ [30]

Translation — Earnest in doing pranayam, they oblate prana in apana and apana in prana by first restraining the course of prana and apana. Delivered of their impurities by this yajna, they all happen to be the knowers of yajna.

Exposition — The course adopted by the yogis to awaken their dormant consciousness by pranayam, is mentioned as under. These expedients are bestowed only from the mouth of the Guru.

The first course of this yoga which a beginner yogi practices for liberating his consciousness from physical limitations is known as Brahma-granthi-bheda or jivha-granthi-bheda. This consists of mastering the khechari posture and an act of special pranayam in which the natural moves of prana and apana are restrained and prana is obliterated into apana and apana is obliterated into prana to bring them into equilibrium. During this course, when a yogi is able to do khechari, which means his tongue, folded backwards, enters the palate and stands erect towards the bhrumadhya, and, simultaneously pran and apan become level, he rises above the physical limitations and proceeds towards his establishment in the immensity. At this stage he is qualified for the second course of this ancient yoga.

The second course is called as hridaya-granthi-bheda or Vishnu-granthi-bheda. This includes two extraordinary pranayamas. The first one consists of sitting in khechari posture and raising apana to station it in the heart and to lower the prana from the heart and station it at the place of apana. A special act of the head and the neck is performed with this pranayam. In the second pranayam of hridaya-granthi-bheda a yogi practices to silence both prana and apana together

with a special act of the head and the neck. A yogi who is successful at this stage can have a direct darshan of Lord Vasudev, who is so called because he resides in the heart of all the creatures and contains the entire corporeal world. A yogi is then established in the consciousness of the all-pervading Void, an embodiment of Vishnu himself. When successful in hridaya-granthi-bhed, a yogi becomes fit for the practice of Rudra-granthi-bheda or muladhar-granthi-bheda. It is so called, because a yogi, through the medium of death, can directly perceive the ultimate truth, the Time, which is called Muladhar¹² because it is the basic support of all the supports.

Only those yogis become successful in this practice who have succeeded in achieving hridaya-granthi-bheda as they are already established in the consciousness of Void and can easily quieten their heart-beat. In this final course of yoga that causes a direct perception of the unmanifest Time, prana is obliterated in prana by sitting in the posture of yonimudra. This pranayama is called as 'Omkar kriya'. As a result of this, the yogis have a direct darshan of the Time, the ultimate Supreme Being, and thereby know Its true character. This 'Omkar kriya' even enables them to forsake their body by yogic strength at the end of their life.

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥३१॥

yajnaśiṣṭamṛtabhujo
yanti brahma sanaianam
nā'yam loko'styayajñasya
kuto'nyah kurasattama [31]

Translation — Oh Kurushreshtha! Those who are blessed with amṛt¹³ – the produce of the yajna, attain the Eternal Brahma. For those who are without yajna, there is not even this world, then what is there of the world beyond?

Exposition — Yogis awaken their entire consciousness by practicing this great yoga and realize the true character of death and having crossed the physical limits, they are established in the Eternal Brahma. Those who cannot do this, remain bewildered and with their limited consciousness they get consumed just for nothing in this world. When death presents itself they are verily frightened because they have no knowledge of death.

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रम्हणो मुखे ।

कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥३२॥

evam bahuvidha yajna
vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe
karmajānviddhi tānsarvān
evam jñātvā vimokṣyase [32]

Translation — Many yajnas of this kind emanated from the mouth of Brahma; consider them all as assigned karma. In this way you shall be emancipated.

Exposition — Three main stages giving step by step knowledge of this ancient yoga were enunciated by the knowers of the Brahma. These are practiced with a firm determination by the seekers of absolution after receiving advice from great

¹² Original Support

¹³ Ambrosia – nectar of immortality

persons who have realized the Brahma. Thereby they liberate their consciousness from the physical limits. They become Sthitaprajana by knowing the true character of death and become free from the big obligation of taking birth.

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।

सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ।।३३।।

śreyāndravvyamayādyajñā-
jñānayajñāḥ paramtapa
sarvam karmā'khilam pārtha
jñāne parisamāpyate [33]

Translation — Oh Parantapa! Jñān yajña is superior to yajna that is full of wealth. Oh Partha! All karma eventually ends in wisdom.

Exposition — Compared to the acts of the body and the senses that do not tend to the knowledge of the Time - the Paramatma, but instead result in ascribing physical limitations to the consciousness of the mind, the acts that take one beyond the physical limits and cause the knowledge of the unmanifest presence are superior. In fact, the result of all such karma, that frees the yogi from physical and mental boundaries and establishes him in the immensity, is wisdom.

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ।।३४।।

tadviddhi prāṇipatena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninastattvadarśinaḥ [34]

Translation — You revere them, serve them and ask them again and again and thus know it from the realized, the perceivers of truth. They will bestow knowledge upon you.

Exposition — One should endeavor to obtain an advice on this ancient yoga from a great soul, the perceiver of truth, by revering him, serving him and by asking several questions regarding this. The knowers of yogic kriya, the perceivers of truth, give an initiation of this discipline with due consideration of merit.

Whenever an average person bows before a yogi, or reveres him, the reverence is addressed not to the individual but is addressed to the perpetual expression of the knowledge that takes place through the guru-disciple tradition. An individual is only a medium of that expression.

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ।।३५।।

yajñātvā na punarmoham
evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava
yena bhūtānyaśeṣeṇa
drakṣyasyātmanyathomayi [35]

Translation — Oh Pandava! When you know this, you will never again face bewilderment. By virtue of that knowledge you will once again see yourself in all the creatures.

Exposition — After receiving a benediction of this yoga and then by practicing it, a person never faces bewilderment again. When established in Samadhi by awakening his entire dormant consciousness, he knows the Unmanifest Element that creates this entire world and he beholds no difference whatsoever between himself and all the creatures of this world. While beholding everywhere only one unmanifest truth, he beholds himself and all other creatures established in that Singular Truth.

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥३६॥

api cedasi pāpebhyāḥ
sarvebhyāḥ pāpakṛttamaḥ
sarvam jñānaplavenai'va
vrjinam samtariṣyasi [36]

Translation — Even if you are a greater sinner than all other sinners, you will very well overcome all sins by means of knowledge.

Exposition — Even if a beginner has been confined to physical limitations and has had a fixation only for sensuous enjoyment, if he firmly determines to liberate his consciousness from physical limitations and to attain Samadhi, and practices this ancient yoga, he can awaken his dormant consciousness. By concentrating his awakened consciousness on the truth of the Time, he can know Its true character and can be released of all his sins which are associated with a narrow mentality.

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥३७॥

yathai'dhāmsi samiddho'gnir
bhasmasātkurute'rjuna
jñānāgnih sarvakarmāṇi
bhasmasātkurute tathā [37]

Translation — Oh Arjuna! Just as a blazing fire reduces firewood to ashes, the fire of wisdom reduces all karma to ashes.

Exposition — Yogis who have ignited the fires of yoga in their body and have poured all their desires as an oblation into it, awaken their immense consciousness and become free from the physical boundaries. They are established in a state of 'akarma' as a result of yogakarma and are elevated above all desires and karma.

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥३८॥

na hi jñānena sadṛśam
pavitramiha vidyate

tatsvyayam yogasamsiddhah
kālenā'tmani vindati [38]

Translation — There is indeed nothing in this world that purifies like wisdom. Accomplished by means of yoga, one knows this within himself in due course of time.

Exposition — In this world there is nothing that purifies like wisdom. A yogi attains this knowledge by igniting the fires of yoga in his body and by knowing the secret of life and death by awakening his entire dormant consciousness.

श्रद्धावॉल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ।।३९।।
śraddhāvāllabhate jñānam
tatparaḥ samyatendriyaḥ
jñānam labdhvā parāṁ śāntim
acireṇā'dhigacchati [39]

Translation — He, who has controlled his sense organs, is dedicated and is eager to know, such a person soon attains the ultimate peace.

Exposition — Adherer of this discipline of yoga, a sadhak, is always intent on his practice. By experiencing the immensity of the mind, he is able to know the unmanifest truth of Time that is beyond that. Such Jitendriya¹⁴, after clearing all his doubts becomes calm.

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ।।४०।।
ajñāścā'sraddadhānaśca
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati
nā'yam loko'sti na paro
na sukham saṁśayātmanah [40]

Translation — Ignorant, undevout and skeptical individuals especially perish. A doubtful one has neither this world nor the world-beyond, nor the happiness.

Exposition — Individuals, to whom the body and the senses are foremost, remain under the fear of death all their lives due to their limited intellect. In spite of hearing the discourses of the wise, they remain deluded by sensuous objects that induce doubt in them. They can neither earn any grace for themselves through yogakarma nor can they gain full satisfaction from sensuous objects in their life. They live a life afflicted by skepticism and just pass away.

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।
आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ।।४१।।
yogasamnyastakarmāṇam
jñānasamchinnasamśayam
ātmavantam na karmāṇi

¹⁴ One who has conquered his passions or subdued his senses.

nibadhnanti dhanamjaya [41]

Translation — Oh Dhananjaya! One, all of whose karma have been released and whose doubts have been vanquished by knowledge, karma does not bind such a self-realized person.

Exposition — One who is established in a state of akarma by becoming Nishkam as a result of yoga, has gained the knowledge of the immensity and has all his doubts about life and death removed, becomes free from self-attraction, and by remaining surrendered to the Time, he becomes one with It.

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

चित्त्वेन संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

tasmādajñānasambhūtam
hṛtstham jñānāsinā'tmanah
chittvai'nam samśayam yogam
ātistho'ttiṣṭha bhārata [42]

Translation — Oh Bharat! Get up. Tear off the doubt of mind caused by ignorance by the sword of wisdom by getting established in yoga.

Exposition — Lord Shrikrishna hints at those who live in doubts and addresses Arjuna, "Don't consider yourself limited within the body, tear apart all the doubts of your mind by the sword of wisdom and practice this ancient yoga to attain the wisdom."

Thus ends the fourth chapter named Jnana Yoga in the Upanishad of the Shrimadbhagavad Gita, Brahma-Vidhya (the discipline of knowing the Absolute), the yogic scripture, and the dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna.