

# VI. The Yoga of Meditation

## Summary of Sixth Discourse

Sri Krishna emphasises once again that the Yogi or Sannyasin is one who has renounced the fruits of actions, not the actions themselves. The performance of actions without an eye on their fruits brings about the purification of the mind. Only a purified mind, a mind free from desires, can engage itself in constant meditation on the Atman. Desire gives rise to imagination or Sankalpa, which drives the soul into the field of action. Therefore, none can realise permanent freedom and tranquillity of mind without renouncing desires.

The lower self must be controlled by the higher Self. All the lower impulses of the body, mind and senses must be controlled by the power of the higher Self. Then the higher Self becomes one's friend. He who has perfect control of the body, mind and senses and is united with God, sees God in all objects and beings. He sees inwardly that there is no difference between gold and stone, between friends and enemies, between the righteous and the unrighteous. He is perfectly harmonised.

Sri Krishna proceeds to give various practical hints as to the practice of meditation. The aspirant should select a secluded spot where there is no likelihood of disturbance. He should arrange his meditation seat properly and sit in a comfortable posture, with the head, neck and spine erect but not tensed. He should fix his purified mind on the Atman by concentrating between the eyebrows or on the tip of the nose.

The practice of Brahmacharya is absolutely necessary if one is to succeed in meditation. The conservation and transformation of the vital fluid into spiritual energy gives immense power of concentration. Fearlessness, too, is an essential quality on the Godward path. It is faith in the sustaining protection and Grace of God.

The aspirant is advised to practise moderation in his daily habits—in eating, sleeping, recreation, etc. Extremes are to be avoided as they hinder the practice of meditation. Living a life of such moderation, and gathering up all his forces and directing them towards meditation upon the Atman, the aspirant gradually transcends the senses and intellect and merges himself in the blissful Atman. He finds that the bliss of the Atman is incomparable, that there is no gain greater than the Self. Having thus attained perfect union with the Self, the Yogi no more descends into ignorance or delusion. He does not relish any more the pleasures of the senses.

Lord Krishna again emphasises that the concentration of the mind on the Atman should be like a steady flame in a windless place. This ultimately leads to the vision of the Lord in all beings and creatures. Arjuna is doubtful whether it is at all possible to engage the mind steadily on the higher Self, as its very nature seems to be one of restlessness. Krishna assures him that the practice can succeed through Vairagya (dispassion) and constant effort.

Arjuna wishes to know the fate of the aspirant who fails to realise the Supreme in spite of his faith and sincerity. Krishna tells him that the accumulated power of his Yogic practices will assure him a better birth in the future, with more favourable conditions for Sadhana. The aspirant will then be compelled to carry on his Yogic practices with greater vigour and faith and will finally achieve God-realisation.

Krishna concludes that the Yogi—one who has attained union with the Supreme Lord—is superior to the ascetics, to the men of book knowledge and the men of action, as the latter have not transcended ignorance and merged in the Self.

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*Sri Bhagavaan Uvaacha:*

*Anaashritah karmaphalam kaaryam karma karoti yah;  
Sa sannyasi cha yogee cha na niragnirna chaakriyah.*

The Blessed Lord said:

1. He who performs his bounden duty without depending on the fruits of his actions—he is a Sannyasin and a Yogi, not he who is without fire and without action.

*Yam sannyasamiti praahuryogam tam viddhi paandava;  
Na hyasannyastasankalpo yogee bhavati kashchana.*

2. Do thou, O Arjuna, know Yoga to be that which they call renunciation; no one verily becomes a Yogi who has not renounced thoughts!

**COMMENTARY:** Lord Krishna eulogises Karma Yoga here because it is a means or a stepping stone to the Yoga of meditation. In order to encourage the practice of Karma Yoga it is stated here that it is Sannyasa.

*Aarurukshormuneryogam karma kaaranamuchyate;  
Yogaaroodhasya tasyaiva shamah kaaranamuchyate.*

3. For a sage who wishes to attain to Yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same sage who has attained to Yoga, inaction (quiescence) is said to be the means.

*Yadaa hi nendriyaartheshu na karmaswanushajjate;  
Sarvasankalpasannyasasee yogaaroodhas tadochyate.*

4. When a man is not attached to the sense-objects or to actions, having renounced all thoughts, then he is said to have attained to Yoga.

*Uddharedaatmanaatmaanam naatmaanamavasaadayet;  
Atmaiva hyaatmano bandhuraatmaiva ripuraatmanah.*

5. Let a man lift himself by his own Self alone; let him not lower himself, for this self alone is the friend of oneself and this self alone is the enemy of oneself.

*Bandhuraatmaa'tmanastasya yenaatmaivaatmanaa jitah;  
Anaatmanastu shatrutwe vartetaatmaiva shatruvat.*

6. The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by the Self, but to the unconquered self, this self stands in the position of an enemy like the (external) foe.

*Jitaatmanah prashaantasya paramaatmaa samaahitah;  
Sheetoshna sukha duhkhesu tathaa maanaapamaanayoh.*

7. The Supreme Self of him who is self-controlled and peaceful is balanced in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.

*Jnaana vijnaana triptaatmaa kootastho vijitendriyah;  
Yuktah ityuchyate yogee samaloshtaashmakaanchanah.*

8. The Yogi who is satisfied with the knowledge and the wisdom (of the Self), who has conquered the senses, and to whom a clod of earth, a piece of stone and gold are the same, is said to be harmonised (that is, is said to have attained the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi).

*Suhrinmitraary udaaseena madhyastha dweshya bandhushu;  
Saadhushwapi cha paapeshu samabuddhirvishishyate.*

9. He who is of the same mind to the good-hearted, friends, enemies, the indifferent, the neutral, the hateful, the relatives, the righteous and the unrighteous, excels.

*Yogee yunjeeta satatamaatmaanam rahasi sthitah;  
Ekaakee yatachittaatmaa niraasheeraparigraha.*

10. Let the Yogi try constantly to keep the mind steady, remaining in solitude, alone, with the mind and the body controlled, and free from hope and greed.

*Shuchau deshe pratishthaapya sthiramaasanamaatmanah;  
Naatyucchritam naatineecham chailaajinakushottaram.*

11. In a clean spot, having established a firm seat of his own, neither too high nor too low, made of a cloth, a skin and kusha grass, one over the other,

*Tatraikaagram manah kritwaa yatachittendriyakriyah;  
Upavishyaasane yunjyaadyogamaatmavishuddhaye.*

12. There, having made the mind one-pointed, with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled, let him, seated on the seat, practise Yoga for the purification of the self.

*Samam kaayashirogreevam dhaarayannachalam sthirah;  
Samprekshya naasikaagram swam dishashchaanavalokayan.*

13. Let him firmly hold his body, head and neck erect and perfectly still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking around.

*Prashaantaatmaa vigatabheer brahmachaarivrate sthitah;  
Manah samyamya macchitto yukta aaseeta matparah.*

14. Serene-minded, fearless, firm in the vow of a Brahmachari, having controlled the mind, thinking of Me and balanced in mind, let him sit, having Me as his supreme goal.

*Yunjanneva sadaa'tmaanam yogee niyatamaanasah;  
Shaantim nirvaanaparamaam matsamsthaamadhigacchati.*

15. Thus, always keeping the mind balanced, the Yogi, with the mind controlled, attains to the peace abiding in Me, which culminates in liberation.

*Naatyashnatastu yogo'sti nachaikaantamanashnatah;  
Na chaatiswapnasheelasya jaagrato naiva chaarjuna.*

16. Verily Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much, nor for him who does not eat at all; nor for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who is (always) awake, O Arjuna!

*Yuktaahaaravihaarasya yuktacheshtasya karmasu;  
Yuktaswapnaavabodhasya yogo bhavati duhkhaaha.*

17. Yoga becomes the destroyer of pain for him who is always moderate in eating and recreation (such as walking, etc.), who is moderate in exertion in actions, who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness.

*Yadaa viniyatam chittamaatmanyevaavatishthate;  
Nihsprihah sarvakaamebhyo yukta ityuchyate tadaa.*

18. When the perfectly controlled mind rests in the Self only, free from longing for the objects of desire, then it is said: "He is united."

**COMMENTARY:** Without union with the Self neither harmony nor balance nor Samadhi is possible.

*Yathaa deepo nivaatastho nengate sopamaa smritaa;  
Yogino yatachittasya yunjato yogamaatmanah.*

19. As a lamp placed in a windless spot does not flicker—to such is compared the Yogi of controlled mind, practising Yoga in the Self (or absorbed in the Yoga of the Self).

**COMMENTARY:** This is a beautiful simile which Yogis often quote when they talk of concentration or one-pointedness of mind.

*Yatroparamate chittam niruddham yogasevayaa;  
Yatra chaivaatmanaa'tmaanam pashyannaatmani tushyati.*

20. When the mind, restrained by the practice of Yoga, attains to quietude, and when, seeing the Self by the Self, he is satisfied in his own Self,

*Sukhamaatyantikam yattad buddhi graahyamateendriyam;  
Vetti yatra na chaivaayam sthitashchalati tattwatah.*

21. When he (the Yogi) feels that infinite bliss which can be grasped by the (pure) intellect and which transcends the senses, and, established wherein he never moves from the Reality,

*Yam labdhwaa chaaparam laabham manyate naadhikam tatah;  
Yasmin sthito na duhkkena gurunapi vichaalyate.*

22. Which, having obtained, he thinks there is no other gain superior to it; wherein established, he is not moved even by heavy sorrow,—

*Tam vidyaad duhkhasamyogaviyogam yogasamjnitam;  
Sa nishchayena yoktavyo yogo'nirvinna chetasaa.*

23. Let that be known by the name of Yoga, the severance from union with pain. This Yoga should be practised with determination and with an undespending mind.

*Sankalpaprabhavaan kaamaan styaktwaa sarvaan asheshatah;  
Manasaivendriyagraamam viniyamy samantatah.*

24. Abandoning without reserve all the desires born of Sankalpa, and completely restraining the whole group of senses by the mind from all sides,

**COMMENTARY:** The mind is so diplomatic that it keeps certain desires for its secret gratification. So one should completely abandon all desires without reservation.

*Shanaih shanairupamed buddhyaa dhritigriheetayaa;  
Aatmasamstham manah kritwaa na kinchidapi chintayet.*

25. Little by little let him attain to quietude by the intellect held firmly; having made the mind establish itself in the Self, let him not think of anything.

*Yato yato nishcharati manashchanchalamasthiram;  
Tatastato niyamyaitad aatmanyeva vasham nayet.*

26. From whatever cause the restless, unsteady mind wanders away, from that let him restrain it and bring it under the control of the Self alone.

*Prashaantamanasam hyenam yoginam sukhamuttamam;  
Upaiti shaantarajasam brahmabhootamakalmasham.*

27. Supreme bliss verily comes to this Yogi whose mind is quite peaceful, whose passion is quieted, who has become Brahman, and who is free from sin.

*Yunjannevam sadaa'tmaanam yogee vigatakalmashah;  
Sukhena brahmasamsparsam atyantam sukham ashnute.*

28. The Yogi, always engaging the mind thus (in the practice of Yoga), freed from sins, easily enjoys the infinite bliss of contact with Brahman (the Eternal).

*Sarvabhootasthamaatmaanam sarvabhootaani chaatmani;  
Eekshate yogayuktaatmaa sarvatra samadarshanah.*

29. With the mind harmonised by Yoga he sees the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; he sees the same everywhere.

*Yo maam pashyati sarvatra sarvam cha mayi pashyati;  
Tasyaaham na pranashyaami sa cha me na pranashyati.*

30. He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, he does not become separated from Me nor do I become separated from him.

**COMMENTARY:** The Lord describes here the effect of oneness.

*Sarvabhootasthitam yo maam bhajatyekatwamaasthitah;  
Sarvathaa vartamaano'pi sa yogee mayi vartate.*

31. He who, being established in unity, worships Me who dwells in all beings,—that Yogi abides in Me, whatever may be his mode of living.

*Aatmaupamyena sarvatra samam pashyati yo'rajuna;  
Sukham vaa yadi vaa duhkham sa yogee paramo matah.*

32. He who, through the likeness of the Self, O Arjuna, sees equality everywhere, be it pleasure or pain, he is regarded as the highest Yogi!

*Arjuna Uvaacha:*

*Yo'yam yogastwayaa proktah saamyena madhusoodana;  
Etasyaaham na pashyaami chanchalatwaat sthitim sthiraam.*

Arjuna said:

33. This Yoga of equanimity taught by Thee, O Krishna, I do not see its steady continuance, because of restlessness (of the mind)!

*Chanchalam hi manah krishna pramaathi balavad dridham;  
Tasyaaham nigraham manye vaayoriva sudushkaram.*

34. The mind verily is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding, O Krishna! I deem it as difficult to control as to control the wind.

**COMMENTARY:** The mind ever changes its point of concentration from one object to another. So it is always restless. It is not only restless but also turbulent and impetuous, strong and obstinate. It produces agitation in the body and in the senses. That is why the mind is even more difficult to control than to control the wind.

*Sri Bhagavaan Uvaacha:*

*Asamshayam mahaabaaho mano durnigraham chalam;  
Abhyaasena tu kaunteya vairaagyena cha grihyate.*

The Blessed Lord said:

35. Undoubtedly, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the mind is difficult to control and restless; but, by practice and by dispassion it may be restrained!

*Asamyataatmanaa yogo dushpraapa iti me matih;  
Vashyaatmanaa tu yatataa shakyo'vaaptumupaayatah.*

36. I think that Yoga is hard to be attained by one of uncontrolled self, but the self~controlled and striving one attains to it by the (proper) means.

*Arjuna Uvaacha:*

*Ayatih shraddhayopeto yogaacchalitamaanasah;  
Apraapya yogasamsiddhim kaam gatim krishna gacchati.*

Arjuna said:

37. He who is unable to control himself though he has the faith, and whose mind wanders away from Yoga, what end does he meet, having failed to attain perfection in Yoga, O Krishna?

*Kacchinnobhayavibhrashtash cchinnaabhramiva nashyati;  
Apratishtho mahaabaaho vimoodho brahmanah pathi.*

38. Fallen from both, does he not perish like a rent cloud, supportless, O mighty-armed (Krishna), deluded on the path of Brahman?

*Etanme samshayam krishna cchettumarhasyasheshatah;  
Twadanyah samshayasyaasya cchettaa na hyupapadyate.*

39. This doubt of mine, O Krishna, do Thou completely dispel, because it is not possible for any but Thee to dispel this doubt.

**COMMENTARY:** There is no better teacher than the Lord Himself as He is omniscient.

*Sri Bhagavaan Uvaacha:*

*Paartha naiveha naamutra vinaashas tasya vidyate;  
Nahi kalyaanakrit kashchid durgatim taata gacchati.*

The Blessed Lord said:

40. O Arjuna, neither in this world, nor in the next world is there destruction for him; none, verily, who does good, O My son, ever comes to grief!

*Praapya punyakritaam lokaanushitwaa shaashwateeh samaah;  
Shucheenaam shreemataam gehe yogabhrashto'bhijaayate.*

41. Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and, having dwelt there for everlasting years, he who fell from Yoga is reborn in the house of the pure and wealthy.

*Athavaa yoginaameva kule bhavati dheemataam;  
Etaddhi durlabhataram loke janma yadeedrisham.*

42. Or he is born in a family of even the wise Yogis; verily a birth like this is very difficult to obtain in this world.

*Tatra tam buddhisamyogam labhate paurvadehikam;  
Yatate cha tato bhooyah samsiddhau kurunandana.*

43. There he comes in touch with the knowledge acquired in his former body and strives more than before for perfection, O Arjuna!

*Poorvaabhyaasena tenaiva hriyate hyavasho'pi sah;  
Jijnaasurapi yogasya shabdabrahmaativartate.*

44. By that very former practice he is borne on in spite of himself. Even he who merely wishes to know Yoga transcends the Brahmic word.

**COMMENTARY:** One who had fallen from Yoga is carried to the goal (which he intended to reach in his previous birth), by the force of the impressions of his past Yogic practices, though he may be unconscious of it and may not be willing to adopt the course of Yogic discipline due to the force of some evil Karma.

*Prayatnaadyatamaanastu yogee samshuddhakilbishah;  
Anekajanmasamsiddhas tato yaati paraam gatim.*

45. But, the Yogi who strives with assiduity, purified of sins and perfected gradually through many births, reaches the highest goal.

*Tapaswibhyo'dhiko yogee jnaanibhyo'pi mato'dhikah;  
Karmibhyashchaadhiko yogee tasmaad yogee bhavaarjuna.*

46. The Yogi is thought to be superior to the ascetics and even superior to men of knowledge (obtained through the study of scriptures); he is also superior to men of action; therefore, be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna!

*Yoginaamapi sarveshaam madgatenaantaraatmanaa;  
Shraddhaavaan bhajate yo maam sa me yuktatamo matah.*

47. And among all the Yogis, he who, full of faith and with his inner self merged in Me, worships Me, he is deemed by Me to be the most devout.

*Hari Om Tat Sat  
Iti Srimad Bhagavadgeetaasooapanishatsu Brahmavidyaayaam  
Yogashaastre Sri Krishnaarjunasamvaade  
Aatmasamyamayogo Naama Shashtho'dhyaayah*

Thus in the *Upanishads* of the glorious *Bhagavad Gita*, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the sixth discourse entitled:

### **“The Yoga of Meditation”**

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