

PATH OF RENUNCIATION WITH KNOWLEDGE

KARMA-YOGA IS AN ANCIENT FORGOTTEN COMMANDMENT

Lord Krishna said: I taught this Karma-yoga, the eternal science of right action, to King Vivasvan. Vivasvan taught it to Manu. Manu taught it to Ikshvaku. Thus handed down in succession the saintly Kings knew this science of proper action (Karma-yoga). After a long time this science was lost from this earth. Today I have described the same ancient science to you, because you are my sincere devotee and friend. This science is a supreme secret indeed. (4.01-03)

Arjuna said: You were born later, but Vivasvan was born in ancient time. How am I to understand that You taught this science in the beginning of the creation? (4.04)

THE PURPOSE OF INCARNATION OF GOD

Lord Krishna said: Both you and I have taken many births. I remember them all, O Arjuna, but you do not remember. (4.05)

Though I am eternal, immutable, and the Lord of all beings, yet I manifest Myself by controlling the material Nature using My own divine potential energy (Maya). (See also 10.14) (4.06)

Whenever there is a decline of Dharma (Righteousness) and a predominance of Adharma (Unrighteousness), O Arjuna, then I manifest Myself. I appear from time to time for protecting the good, for transforming the wicked, and for establishing world order (Dharma). (4.07-08)

The one who truly understands My transcendental appearance, and activities of creation, maintenance, and dissolution attains My Supreme Abode and is not born again after leaving this body, O Arjuna. (4.09)

Many have become free from attachment, fear, anger, and attained salvation by taking refuge in Me, by becoming fully absorbed in My thoughts, and by getting purified by the fire of Self-knowledge. (4.10)

PATH OF WORSHIP AND PRAYER

With whatever motive people worship Me, I fulfill their desires accordingly. People worship Me with different motives. (4.11)

Those who long for success in their work here on the earth worship the celestial controllers. Success in work comes quickly in this human world. (4.12)

DIVISION OF LABOR IS BASED ON THE APTITUDE OF PEOPLE

I created the four divisions of human society based on aptitude and vocation. Though I am the author of this system of the division of labor, one should know that I do nothing directly and I am eternal. (See also 18.41) (4.13)

Works do not bind Me, because I have no desire for the fruits of work. The one who fully understands and practices this truth is also not bound by Karma. (4.14)

The ancient seekers of salvation also performed their duties with this understanding. Therefore, you should do your duty as the ancients did. (4.15)

ATTACHED, DETACHED, AND FORBIDDEN ACTION

Even the wise ones are confused about what is action and what is inaction. Therefore, I shall clearly explain what is action, knowing that one shall be liberated from the evil of birth and death. (4.16)

The true nature of action is very difficult to understand. Therefore, one should know the nature of attached action, the nature of detached action, and also the nature of forbidden action. (4.17)

A KARMA-YOGI IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE KARMIC LAWS

The one who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, is a wise person. Such a person is a yogi and has accomplished everything. (See also 3.05, 3.27, 5.08 and 13.29) (4.18)

A person, whose desires have become selfless by being roasted in the fire of Self-knowledge, is called a sage by the wise. (4.19)

The one who has abandoned selfish attachment to the fruits of work, and remains ever content and dependent on no one but God, such a person $\frac{3}{4}$ though engaged in activity $\frac{3}{4}$ does nothing at all, and incurs no Karmic reaction. (4.20)

The one who is free from desires, whose mind and senses are under control, and who has renounced all proprietorship, does not incur sin $\frac{3}{4}$ the Karmic reaction $\frac{3}{4}$ by doing bodily action. (4.21)

A Karma-yogi $\frac{3}{4}$ who is content with whatever gain comes naturally by His will, who is unaffected by pairs of opposites, and free from envy, equanimous in success and failure $\frac{3}{4}$ is not bound by Karma. (4.22)

All Karmic bonds of a Karma-yogi $\frac{3}{4}$ who is free from attachment, whose mind is fixed in Self-knowledge, and who does work as a service to the Lord $\frac{3}{4}$ dissolves away (4.23)

The Spirit shall be realized by the one who considers everything as a manifestation, or an act, of the Spirit. (Also see 9.16) (4.24)

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICES OR SACRIFICES

Some yogis perform the service of worship to celestial controllers, while others study scriptures for Self-knowledge. Some restrain their senses and give up their sensual pleasures. Others perform breathing and other yogic exercises. Some give charity and offer their wealth as a sacrifice. (4.25-28)

Those who are engaged in yogic practices, reach the breathless state of trance by offering inhalation into exhalation and exhalation into inhalation as a sacrifice (by using short breathing Kriya techniques). (4.29)

Others restrict their diet and offer their inhalations as sacrifice into their inhalations. All these people are the knowers of sacrifice, and are purified by their sacrifice. (4.30)

Those who perform selfless service obtain the nectar of Self-knowledge as a result of their sacrifice and attain the Supreme Being. O Arjuna, even this world is not a happy place for the non-sacrificer, how can the other world be? (See also 4.38, and 5.06). (4.31)

Many types of spiritual disciplines are described in the Vedas. Know that all of them are the action of body, mind, and senses prompted by the forces of Nature. Understanding this, one shall attain Nirvana or salvation. (See also 3.14) (4.32)

ACQUIRING TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE IS A SUPERIOR

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Acquiring transcendental knowledge is superior to any material sacrifice $\frac{3}{4}$ such as giving charity. Because, purification of mind and intellect that eventually leads to the dawn of transcendental knowledge and Self-realization is the sole purpose of any spiritual action. (4.33)

Acquire this transcendental knowledge from a Self-realized master by humble reverence, by sincere inquiry, and by service. The empowered ones, who have realized the Truth, will teach you. (4.34)

After knowing the transcendental science, O Arjuna, you shall not again become deluded like this. With this knowledge you shall see the entire creation within your own higher Self, and thus within Me. (See also 6.29, 6.30, 11.07, 11.13) (4.35)

Even if one is the most sinful of all sinners, one shall yet cross over the ocean of sin by the raft of Self-knowledge alone. (4.36)

As the blazing fire reduces wood to ashes; similarly, the fire of Self-knowledge reduces all bonds of Karma to ashes, O Arjuna. (4.37)

TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE IS AUTOMATICALLY REVEALED TO

A KARMA-YOGI

Verily, there is no purifier in this world like the true knowledge of the Supreme Being. One discovers this knowledge within, naturally, in course of time when one's mind is cleansed of selfishness by Karma-yoga. (See also 4.31, and 5.06, 18.78). (4.38)

The one who has faith in God, is sincere in yogic practices, and has control over the mind and senses gains this transcendental knowledge. Having gained this knowledge, one quickly attains supreme peace or liberation. (4.39)

The irrational, the faithless, and the disbeliever (atheist) perishes. There is neither this world, nor the world beyond, nor happiness for the disbeliever. (4.40)

BOTH TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND KARMA-YOGA ARE NEEDED

FOR NIRVANA

Work does not bind a person who has renounced work $\frac{3}{4}$ by renouncing the fruits of work $\frac{3}{4}$ through Karma-yoga, and whose confusion with regard to body and Spirit is completely destroyed by the application of Self-knowledge, O Arjuna. (4.41)

Therefore, cut the ignorance-born confusion with regard to body and Spirit by the sword of Self-knowledge, resort to Karma-yoga, and get up for the war, O Arjuna. (4.42)