

CHAPTER V

If you have an eye on the fruits of your actions, you are liable to be affected by worry, anxiety and restlessness. The question may arise: if the fruits have to be given up, how can one manage to live? But why this weakness of heart, this nervousness? He who has assured, “*Yoga-kshemam vahamyaham*” (I will absolutely take care of your worldly and spiritual needs), will certainly look after that. He will give the wherewithal and the means. After all, you have to consider, “Is a happy life important or is liberation from the circle of life and death more important? Happy living is only of short duration. The joy of liberation is eternal, unshakeable.

On this point many commentators have exercised their intelligence and written differently. Many have said that the giving up of *Phala* or fruit is advised because there is no right or authority for the doer to desire the fruit.

This is a great blunder. The Lord has said in the Geetha, “refuse the fruit” (*maa phaleshu*), that is to say: the deed yields results, but the doer should not desire the result, or do it with the result in view. If Krishna’s intention was to say that the doer has no right for the fruit, He would have said, “It is fruitless” *na phaleshu*, (*na*, meaning no). So, if you desist from karma, you will be transgressing the Lord’s Command. That will be a serious mistake.

When man has a right for engaging in karma, he has a right also for the fruit; no one can deny this or refuse his right. But the doer can, out of his own free will and determination, refuse to be affected by the result, whether favourable or unfavourable. The Geetha shows the way: “Do—and deny the consequence.” The desire for the result of your action is a sign of *Rajo Guna*. The giving up of action since you cannot benefit by the fruit is a sign of *Thamo Guna* (dullness, ignorance). To engage oneself in karma, to know that the result will follow, and yet, not to be attached to it or getting concerned with it—that is the sign of *Sathwa Guna* (pure).

The Karma Yogi who has learnt this secret of “Karma combined with *Phalathyaga*” should have *Samabuddhi* (equanimity), more than *Sangabuddhi* (mind attached to the world). For, the *Sangabuddhi* draws him into attachments and entanglements. “This karma is mine, its results are due to my endeavours. I am the person entitled to it,” such are the thoughts which bind the doer. Krishna advises that one should rise above this *Sangabuddhi*. He declared that

Samathwam (unruffled equanimity) is the genuine Yoga. (*Samathwam yogamuchyathe*).

In the second chapter, Krishna has made clear, in a general way, four principal points: the Saranagathi principle, the Sankhya teaching (path of knowledge), the Yoga attitude and the Sthithaprajna (steady wisdom individual) nature. We have noted the first three already. Now about the fourth:

Krishna taught Arjuna the nature and characteristics of the Sthithaprajna (steady wisdom individual) when Arjuna questioned him. Arjuna prayed “O Kesava!” and when that appellation was used, Krishna smiled. For He knew then that Arjuna had understood His splendour. Do you ask how? Well, what does Kesava mean? It means, “He who is Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, the *Thrimurthi* (Trinity).” Through Krishna’s Grace, Arjuna had reached that stage of realisation.

When Arjuna prayed that Kesava must tell him the true characteristics of a Sthithaprajna, He replied, “Partha! He will be free from all desire. He will be stable in the knowledge and awareness of the Atma only.”

Now, there are two processes in this: To give up all the promptings of desire in the mind is the negative process; to implant joy, ever-present joy therein, is the positive aspect. The negative process is to remove all the seedlings of wrong and evil from the mind. The positive process is to grow, in the field cleansed thus, the crop of attachment to God! The cultivation of the crop you need is positive, the plucking of the weeds is the negative stage. The pleasures the senses

draw from the objective world are weeds, the crop is the attachment to God. The mind is a bundle of wishes. Unless these wishes are removed by their roots, there is no hope of destroying the mind, which is a great obstacle in the path of spiritual progress. When the yarn that comprises the cloth is taken out, one by one, what remains of the cloth? Nothing. The mind is made of the warp and woof of wishes. And when mind vanishes, the Sthithaprajna is made.

So, the first thing to be conquered is *Kama*, the demon of desire. For this it is unnecessary to wage a huge war. It is also unnecessary to use pleasing words to persuade the desire to disappear. Desires will not disappear for fear of the one or for favour of the other. Desires are objective, they belong to the category of the “seen.” With the conviction that, “I am the seer only, not the seen,” the Sthithaprajna releases himself from attachment. By this means he conquers desire. You must watch the working of the mind, from outside it. You should not get involved in it. That is the meaning of this discipline.

The faculty of the mind is as a strong current of electricity. It has to be watched from a distance and not contacted or touched. Touch it, you are reduced to ashes. So too, contact and attachment give the chance for the mind to ruin you. The farther you are from it, the better. By skilful methods, you have to make the best use of it, for your own welfare.

The bliss which the Sthithaprajna is immersed in does not arise from external objects, he has no need of them

either. Ananda is in everyone, as part of his very nature. Those with pure consciousness find the highest bliss in the realisation of their own reality, the Atma. That joy is Swasampaadyam (self-earned, so to say). It is known only to the individual, it is self-evident.

Since Arjuna had not known this, Krishna had to clarify it in simple terms in the 56th, 57th and 58th slokas. Joy or grief can be met with in three forms: *Aadhyaathmika* (sufferings due to mind, psyche), *Aadibhouthika* (sufferings due to elements) and *Aadidaivika* (suffering due to demi-gods). It is well known that sins bring grief as a retribution and meritorious deeds bring joy as reward. So advice is given to avoid sins and perform meritorious deeds. But the Sthithaprajna (a steady-wisdom individual) knows neither the pain of grief or the thrill of joy. He is not repulsed by one or attracted by the other. He will not retreat before pain or run forward towards pleasure. Only those who are ignorant of the Atma will exult or droop, when stricken with joy or grief.

The Sthithaprajna will be ever engaged in *Manana*, or contemplation and rumination. He is called *Muni* (One who has controlled the mind and is established in silence). His intellect is steady, because the senses do not harry it. One point has to be understood here. Conquest of the senses is essential for sadhana (spiritual practice); but that is not all. So long as the objective world continues to attract the mind, one cannot claim complete success. That is why Krishna says, “Arjuna! Establish mastery over the senses. Then you

need have no fear, for they become serpents with the fangs removed.” But there is still danger from thoughts and impulses which draw you outwards. Desire has no limit, it can never be satiated.

So along with the mastery of the senses, one must establish mastery of the mind also. That is the sign of a Sthithaprajna (a steady-wisdom individual), and not a *Gathaprajna* (a no-wisdom individual). Where does the Gathaprajna go? To perdition and nowhere else.

The upward path, the higher stage—that is for the Sthithaprajna. Of these two masteries, if the mind is subdued, that alone is enough. It is not necessary then to conquer the external senses. If the mind has no attachment with objects, the senses have nothing to cling on to. They perish by inanition. Love and hate are both starved out of existence. The bonds of the objective world are cut, though the senses may yet be affected by it. For him who has been blessed by an awareness of the Atma, how can anything worldly bring grief or joy?

As the stars fade into invisibility when the sun rises, so too, when the Sun of Knowledge or Jnana rises, grief, agitation and ignorance vanish.

Man has three chief instruments: the mind, the intellect, and the senses. It is when these three work in unison and co-operate with one another that either ‘immersal in the flux’ or ‘liberation in the knowledge of the Atma,’ is realised. Krishna anticipated that Arjuna will be puzzled to know what

will happen “when which operates with which.” So He himself provided the answer. “Arjuna,” He said, “when the mind co-operates with the senses, you enter into the flux called *samsara* (change). When it subordinates itself to the intellect, you attain the knowledge of the Atma. One path leads to *Samsara-praapthi* (worldly fulfillment); the other, to *Atma-praapthi* (fulfillment of the soul). The intellect must resolve, the mind must carry out the resolution so made. That is the correct procedure.”

The *Indriyas* or senses have to be fully destroyed. That is the hallmark of a Sthithaprajna. So when all beings are experiencing night, the Sthitha-prajna would keep himself awake. When all beings are awake, the Sthithaprajna would be asleep. The literal meaning of this is that what is night for one is day for the other. But that would sound absurd. It would mean the Sthithaprajna is a person who sleeps during the day and keeps awake at night.

The inner meaning of this statement is very profound. Ordinary men are vigilant in affairs that concern the senses that arise out of this world. Wakefulness for them is the care they bestow on worldly pursuits. But the Sthithaprajna is unconcerned with these very things. He is, so to say, asleep. What does sleep mean? It means the happiness resulting from inactivity of the senses. And vigilance? It means yielding to the senses, and catering to them. When ordinary men are pursuing the senses and their demands, the Sthithaprajna is asleep. This can also be put in other words: Forget the *Atmasthanithi* and you relapse into

Dehasthanithi, from the Atma conscious-ness stage you fall into the body consciousness stage.

This is what happens to the ordinary man. He sleeps in the Atma stage and wakes into the Dehasthanithi. The Sthithaprajna’s case is different. He sleeps in the Deha-consciousness and wakes in the awareness of the Atma. He will not awake even by mistake, in the sensory world, the world where the ordinary man is most vigilant! This is the inner meaning. It is far from the literal meaning, which, if taken as true, would entitle thieves, watchmen and others to the name Sthithaprajna! For all these keep awake at nights and sleep during the day! Only those who have given up traces of desire and become mere instruments can achieve *Shanthi* (peace). Krishna ends the description of the Sthithaprajna with an emphasis on “*Kaama naa-thyaga*” the giving up of Desire.

To man sorrowing on the battlefield of life, bewildered by the attractions and the distractions, not knowing where to turn and which road to take, Madhava taught this Sankhya Yoga (II chapter). The other chapters are like commentaries on the teaching in this chapter. “Arjuna! Prepare yourself for giving up the mind, for being merged in your own Self. Withdraw the mind from the *sabda* (sound), *sparsa* (touch), *roopa* (form), *rasa* (taste), *gandha* (smell) categories, the Five Elements. Then you become a Sthithaprajna,” said Krishna. In this Second chapter He elaborated (in the 11th

to the 38th sloka) on the *Atma Thathwa* (Atma Principle), in a simple easily understandable style.

Then from the 39th to the 75th sloka, He taught the Dharma-Karma (righteous action) attitude that is essential for attaining the Godhead, an attitude that is based on the Karma Yoga (Yoga of action) which itself is embodied in the Samatha-buddhi (equanimity), already prescribed.