

SAMNYĀSA AND TYĀGA

By Sri Janardana

Of the very many yogic concepts requiring careful study, analysis, understanding, and application before one can successfully tread the superb path of the one Greatest Yoga for all time to its end, **Saṁnyāsa** and **Tyāga** demand our closest attention and enquiry, because they are the two vital and potential agencies through whose aid alone the empyrean heights of the said **Yoga** can be reached.

By the term **Greatest Yoga**, it is of course meant **Adhyātma Yoga** or **Śuddha-Yoga** or **Brahma-Yoga** or **Rāja Yoga**, above which there is no **Yoga** higher at all, to recover and restore the lost knowledge of which, the **Īshwara** incarnates from time to time. It is not superfluous to remind ourselves here, that this **Rāja Yoga** has nothing in common with the **Ashtāṅga Yoga** of **Patañjali**, which has been mistakenly—let us not state mischievously—termed **Rāja Yoga**. The end, which this **Adhyātma Yoga** advocates, even as a starting point of aspiration, is the direct contacting of the One **Īshwara** in the fourth plane technically known as **Turīya** or **Vyaktam** or **Yogam**, eulogized in the scriptures as **Paramātma**, **Vāsudeva**, **Satchidānandarūpa**, the One Source of all cosmic emanations and processes, by Whom those processes and emanations are sustained, and in Whom they all ultimately converge. It is a sublime **Unity**, the magnificent **Fullness** and **Richness** of which our limited vision can hardly comprehend, but can be progressively striven for, achieved, and also lived to its perfection.

The **Gīta** declares, *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati*—meaning, one who is established in **Brahma-bhūta**, that is the **Paramātmic** state, becomes cheerful, grieves not, nor desires anything. This **Paramātmic** state is the very **core** of **Adhyātma Yoga**. Obviously, to reach this exalted and eternal height in life, one has to pass through the preliminary stages, the fundamental one being the mastery of one's own life in this world process. And it is in reference to this, that **Saṁnyāsa** and **Tyāga** become a primary necessity.

The **Gīta** gives out the definition of **Saṁnyāsa** thus: *kāmyānām karmaṇām nyāsam saṁnyāsam kavayo viduḥ*—Meaning, **Saṁnyāsa** is a renunciation of the **kāmyakarmas** or actions done with a desire for their fruits, as the **wise** know it. Similarly, the definition of **Tyāga** is given as: *sarvakarma-phala-tyāgam prāhus tyāgam vicakṣaṇāḥ*—Meaning, **Tyāga** is a renunciation of the fruits of all actions, as the **discerning** declare. It has to be borne in mind that these definitions are not to be taken as meaning the giving up of all actions, for the Lord himself declares: *niyata-sya tu saṁnyāsaḥ karmaṇo nopapadyate*—meaning, renunciation of **niyata-karma** is improper.

1. The Distinction Between Saṁnyāsa and Tyāga

While a **Saṁnyāsin** is one who renounces **kāmyakarmas**, the **Tyāgin** is he who renounces the **fruits** of all **karmas**. In the sphere of **Śuddha Dharma**, **Saṁnyāsa** is deemed to be the path of

Jñānins—the men of knowledge, and **Tyāga** the path of **Bhakti** and **Karma**—devotion and action. Hence **Samnyāsa** is declared to be **Jñāna-pradhāna**—governed by knowledge, and **Tyāga Bhakti** and **Kriyā-pradhāna**—governed by devotion and action. These two are to be simultaneously adopted and practised by the student of **Adhyātma Yoga**. It is because of this absolute necessity of their being simultaneously pursued, the **Gīta** stresses their importance in an exclusive chapter and a full treatment is given thereto. The **Samnyāsīn** is sometimes termed **Kevala Jñānīn**—exclusive man of knowledge, because his aspiration is governed by an exclusive adherence to **Jñāna** as an end in itself; and the **Tyāgīn** is known as **Kevala Bhakta** and **Karmāṭha**—exclusive devotee and man of action, for his adherence is to **Bhakti** and **Karma** alone as ends in themselves. Such exclusiveness in the pursuits of **Jñāna**, **Bhakti**, and **Karma** is termed **Kevala** and the resultant **Yoga** is **Kevala Yoga**. This **Kevala Yoga** is not considered as the highest in **Śuddha Dharma**; and so **Samnyāsa** and **Tyāga** also are held to be not complete in themselves, unless they are supplemented and transcended by **Śuddha-Yoga**.

The **Śuddha-Samnyāsīn**—the **Jñānīn** of **Śuddha Dharma**—is one who is governed not merely by an adherence to **Jñāna** but is also supplemented by **Bhakti** and **Karma** as well. He is known as **Jñāna-Yogī**. Similarly, the **Śuddha-Tyāgīn**—the **Bhakta** and **Karmāṭha** of **Śuddha Dharma**—is not exclusively governed by **Bhakti** and **Karma**, but is supplemented by **Jñāna** as well. He is known as **Bhakti** and **Karma-Yogī**. To this class belongs the **Karmāṭha** whose chief characteristic is the giving up of the **fruits** of all his actions, good or bad, high or low, in the spirit of dedication to the One **Īshwara**, and himself also as a willing **Agent** in the scheme of world life. The **Śuddha-Yogī** thus transcends the **Kevala** attitude in life. This attitude of **Śuddha** is achieved by an adherence to the doctrine of **Samatva** or **Equability** in all conditions in life. And this **Samatva** is achieved by **Karma-Yoga** which is defined as: *Siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*—meaning, **Yoga** is declared to be **Equanimity** in success and failure.

2. Śuddha Samnyāsa and Śuddha Tyāga

The **Śuddha Samnyāsīn** is one who has renounced desire for the **fruits** of his actions and at the same time is not remiss in the performance of his legitimate duties. The **Śuddha Tyāgīn** is one who performs his actions as **niyata-karma**, and dedicates the **fruits** thereof to **Īshwara**. The **Samnyāsīn** and the **Tyāgīn** are not different in **Śuddha Dharma**. Both are deemed **Yogīs** and **Sāṅkhyas** and are declared to be not two but one. *Samnyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca niḥśreyasa-karāv ubhau*—meaning, **Samnyāsa** and **Karma-Yoga** both lead to liberation. The essential element is the mental attitude. This mental attitude is achieved by **Bhavana**—ideation or visualization—which is done daily by all **Śuddha** students. This **Bhavana** consists in the one **Saṅkalpa**—resolution—of **Brahm** to become many, and which is constantly affirmed in the mind by the devotee with love: *Sarvaṁ tat kalvidaṁ Brahm, Sarvaṁ Brahma swabhāvajam, Sarvaṁ āvaśyakam*—meaning, everything is verily **Brahm**, everything is of the nature of **Brahm**, and everything is a necessity. By this **Bhavana**, the aspirant gets firmly established in the **Samatva**

state and overcomes **Ahaṁkāra**—the **I-ness** and **Mamañtva**—**Mine-ness** in life. This constitutes the foundation of **Karma-Yoga**.

The **Śuddha Saṁnyāsa** and **Śuddha Tyāga** are the preliminary steps for entering **Śuddha-Yoga** proper. These two, therefore, are known as **Yoga-Garbhātva**—**Yoga** yet in the womb. They are the twin agencies, therefore, by which the **Jīvatman** is weaned from its bondage to **Prakṛti** or **matter**, and made to ascend to **Ātmic** consciousness. It is in this sense that **Saṁnyāsa** is to be understood as **Jñāna-pradhāna** and **Tyāga** as **Bhakti** and **Kriyā-pradhāna**. In **Jñāna-pradhāna**, the knowledge acquired must naturally be pure; and in **Bhakti** and **Kriyā-pradhāna**, the **Bhakti** and the **Kriyā** practised must be **pure**.

3. The Pure Knowledge, Devotion, and Action

Jñāna (knowledge) is of two kinds: **Śuddha** and **Aśuddha** (pure and impure). That knowledge which is free from **guṇas**—**Sattva**, **Rajas**, and **Tamas**—is **Śuddha-Jñāna**. All other **Jñāna** is **Aśuddha**. The knowledge that **Brahm** is the one and only cause of all creation, and that there is no other cause, is **Śuddha-Jñāna**. Other knowledge that posits a different cause is **Aśuddha**. It is also the knowledge of **Tatwa**—principles—of which the universe is made up of, and an adherence to the three **Mahāvākyas** already cited. In **Śuddha Saṁnyāsa**, therefore, there is a renunciation of **Aśuddha-Jñāna** and an adherence to **Śuddha-Jñāna**.

Bhakti (devotion) also is of two kinds: **Śuddha** and **Aśuddha**. The devotion that is directed to the one **Īśhwara** in the fourth plane—**Turiya**—and in the spirit of **ekāgra**—one-pointedness—is **Śuddha-Bhakti**. That devotion which is directed to the lower planes and with an egoistic attitude is **Aśuddha-Bhakti**. In **Śuddha Tyāga**, therefore, there is a renunciation of **Aśuddha-Bhakti** and an adherence to **Śuddha-Bhakti**.

Kriyā (action) also is of two kinds: **Śuddha** and **Aśuddha**. The actions that are performed in the spirit of **Samatva** and as **niyata-karma**—legitimate duty—and with the sole aim of dedication of the fruits thereof to **Īśhwara** is **Śuddha-Kriyā**. All other actions are **Aśuddha**. In **Śuddha Tyāga**, therefore, there is a renunciation of **Aśuddha-Kriyā** and an adherence to **Śuddha-Kriyā**.

4. The Path of the Śuddha Yogi

The **Śuddha-Yogi** is thus one who is established in **Śuddha Jñāna**, **Śuddha Bhakti**, and **Śuddha Kriyā** in a spirit of **Samatva**. He adopts **Śuddha Saṁnyāsa** and **Śuddha Tyāga** as aids, for overcoming **Prakṛtic** bondage and attaining **Ātmic** consciousness. All **niyata-karmas** fall into three classes: **Śārīram**—bodily, **Vāñmayam**—verbal, and **Mānasam**—mental. It is an adherence to this **niyata-karma** in a spirit of **Tyāga** that constitutes **Karma-Yoga**.

The **Karmāṭha** is not to be understood as one who is engaged in the ceaseless activities of the world, without pause or rest. His activities are regulated and limited to what is legitimately due from him in life, and that too in a spirit of dedication of the fruits thereof. He must know that to whom the fruits are dedicated is the One **Īśhwara** only, and no one else. The **Śuddha** student,

who has adopted **Saṁnyāsa** and **Tyāga** as aids, must also constantly hold in his mind the three **Mahāvākyas** as his only ideal in life, and to live up to them without fail in all his actions. This is the sure means for attaining **Śuddha-Yoga**.

The whole of **Karma-Yoga** in the **Gīta** is based on the idea of **Pañca-kāraṇa**—the five causes of all actions—namely:

1. **Adhiṣṭhāna**—the base or the body.
2. **Kartā**—the doer, that is the **Jīvatman** in the body.
3. **Karaṇa**—the instruments, that is the five senses.
4. **Vividhās ca pṛthak ceṣṭā**—the various separate functions of **Prāṇa** (life-force).
5. **Daivam**—the **Īśhwara** or **Paramātma**, the General Cause.

These five are the causes of all actions, high or low, done by the **Jīvatman** in the body—*Nyayam vā viparītam vā pañcaite tasya hetavaḥ*. Hence to posit and take refuge in the exclusiveness of the Spiritual Cause—**Ātman**—for the workings in the World for a given purpose is just rank ignorance of truth—*Tatrivam sati kartāram ātmānam kevalam to yaḥ paśyaty akṛta-buddhitvān na sa paśyati durmatih*. It is merely a claim to be lazy.

The **Karma-Yogi**, who has mastered the workings of these five causes, being chastened by **Saṁnyāsa** and **Tyāga**, achieves **swatantra**—freedom, and engages in actions suitable to himself in accordance with time and place, dedicating the fruits of his actions and himself to **Īśhwara**, the General Cause. To him, the Divine contact is a living reality, the objective Representative of which is **Bhagavan Śrī Nārāyaṇa** at **Badarī**, who, abiding in the exquisite form of **Devī-Prakṛti** particles, conducts the governance of this World in the same way **Paramātma** does, as the **Īśhwara** of the entire **Cosmos**, and as such nothing that takes place in this World is beyond His notice. The **Yogis**, **Jñānins**, **Devotees**, and the **Great Ones** of **Śuddha Dharma Maṇḍalam** offer their adorations to Him only, and receive their inspiration from Him in the discharge of their functions which naturally have the hall-mark of excellence, being divinely directed.

It is this Plank of **Karma-Yoga** that is the basis for the higher realms of **Adhyātma-Yoga**, reached in the fullness of time, after one realizes that he has completed his duties in this world process.

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