CHAPTER VI

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The performance of one’s own duty without any selfish motif is the message of the *Bhagavadgītā*. The *Gītā* aims at universal welfare-*lokasaṃgraha*. Even in the modern times, the *Gītā* serves as a source of inspiration to the masses. *Bhagavadgītā* provides some sort of solace to the forlorn hearts. So the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* are relevant even in this modern age.

Action can only be channelized for purification of one’s mind. The *Gītā* states that *pravṛtti* leads to *Nivṛtti* culminating in the actionless state of *naiśkarmyasiddhi*. The interpretation of *Brahmayajña* as *Upāsana* or the action performed by the enlightened cannot be given as an example of the theory of combination, as the sense of agency necessary for both the *Sāṃkhya-yoga* and the *Karma-yoga* has completely been destroyed. Thus, Ācārya differentiates *sannyāsa* of the ignorant from the *sannyāsa* of the enlightened.

The concept of *Īśvara* plays a predominant role in *Karma-yoga*. The *Karmayogin* performs *Vedic* rituals, the *nitya, naimittika* sacrificial
rituals, by dedicating the results to Īśvara\textsuperscript{2}. From this, it is clear that Karmayogin is an ignorant person living in the world of duality. He possesses the sense of agency with a strong conviction of the existence of God as distinct from his own self.

Two types of dhyānayogin are discussed in the Gītā, niṅguṇa and saguṇa. Both are still ignorant. The former attributes qualities like immutability etc., to the attribute less Brahman and meditates. The latter worships a form with attributes.

Ācārya argues that both Karmasannyāsa and Karmatyāga do not pertain in to the Sāṃkhya-yogin who has already renounced actions as a result of the strong conviction of the existence of the non-dual Brahman\textsuperscript{3}. While considering the question whether renunciation of all action is possible, Ācārya refutes the Buddhist, nyāya-vaiśeṣika and Sāṃkhya theories of causality and affirms only the Vivarthavāda.

Ācārya proves with 50\textsuperscript{th} śloka of the 18\textsuperscript{th} chapter, the intrinsic validity of Self and the nature of the self manifestation of Self. There is neither bondage nor liberation for Self, speaking in terms of pāramārthikasatta. Ācārya points out that effort is needed for Self-realization, but effort is needed only for the prevention of regarding the non Self as Self. Elimination of avidyā can only be possible by the removal of the illusory knowledge of considering the world of duality
as the truth, without seeing its non-dual substratum. Thus knowledge of Brahman alone can remove this illusion, as in seeing the substratum rope only, the illusory knowledge of snake is removed.

The effort taken for śravaṇa, manana and nidhidhyāsa only eliminates gradually the sheaths of matter, the non Self from Self, culminating in the Self manifestation of the Self. The semblance of consciousness of Self serves as the determining factor of validity even in the process of elimination. This is the reason for stating ‘one has to realize the Self by the Self’. It is very clear that Karman of any type has no place in the final stage. This is the main reason for Ācārya’s condition of the precedence of sannyāsa to Jñāna. The result of knowledge or Jñāna is a drṣṭaphala, a visible effect that cannot be the effects the Karman which can only yield meditate adṛṣṭaphala in another embodiment. This is the fact which Ācārya established through his bhāṣya.

According to Jñāneśvara, the triple path proposed by the Bhagavadgītā has three essential dimensions. They are Karman, Jñāna and Bhakti. These three properties are mutually beneficial, interlinked and complementary. Both Karman and Jñāna are necessary to be incorporated in Bhakti in the spiritual life. When Karman and Jñāna are synthesized in Bhakti, there is no room left for any doubt that
"Karmamārga can have the mastery over Jñānamārga or vice versa. This is how Jñāneśvara concords prapaṇca and paramārtha.

Human soul is incarnated and therefore cannot even think of deserting Karman. According to Jñāneśvara, ‘Jñāna’ is not empty venture or a game of contradictions. Both Karman and Jñāna are interlinked but they are not interchangeable. Each of them is neither identified one with other nor separated one from the other. This suspicion of Jñāneśvara is timeless, i.e., it exceeds limits and barriers of differences of places, people and cultures. The truth of Jñāneśvara’s insight seems even more reserve in the context of our life today.

The Jñāneśvari is a science of the Self. It is practice-oriented. The core of the teaching of the Jñāneśvari is the symmetrical exhibition of the triple yoga, i.e., Karman, Jñāna and Bhakti, is recognized but not broke one from the other in their undertaking by an aspirant. Jñāneśvari interprets the triple path of the Bhagavadgītā as ‘Bhakti’ which is a synthesis of Karmamārga and Jñānamārga. According to Jñāneśvara, Bhakti is the religious experience which remains as a human effort (Karmamārga), but by its very nature it intends the Jñānamārga. The empirically unavailable Absolute is synthesized in Bhakti, is experienced as the intimate one.

In Jñāneśvari, there is a place for devotion to the images of God in the context of saguṇaparamātman. It is Arjuna’s ananya and
avyabhicāri bhakti that makes Lord Kṛṣṇa to become sakārā or avatārā. Concurring to Jñāneśvara, what is important to Kṛṣṇa is not his vyakta or avyaktasvarūpa, but protection of Dharma against Adharma. By taking upon the human form, the Supreme Brahman doesn’t give in to the weakness of the human body because being in the body that is not bound by it. Put differently, in Kṛṣṇa, Avatāra and Advaita are compatible without any compromise.

The hallmark of Indian thought is the spirit of yoga, unity and integration. This again is the most valid aspect which needs to be applied in approaching the two stalwarts of Gītā interpretation. Śaṅkarācārya had shouldered a stupendous task of rebuilding Indian thought on the firm bedrock and foundation of Advaita thought and Vedic supremacy. He was very successful in his mission that still no one has victoriously challenged his credentials in that successful endeavor or surpassed him in establishing Vedic authenticity in spiritual parlance.

Ācārya had in his times a much disintegrated philosophic arena confusedly pursued by a multitude of school of thoughts which were opposing one another for gaining supremacy. But his sweeping influence re established Advaita as the supreme philosophy and effaced the negative influence left by pseudo Buddhists trying to belittle the
authenticity of Vedās. He was mainly a man of the spiritually and intellectually elite class. Hence the natural superiority of knowledge dominated his works.

On the other hand, Jñāneshvara’s task was on a different plane. The Vedic authority being firmly established by Ācārya for centuries to come, it was inevitable that the message of the Vedās should be brought down to the level of the common people. It was here that Jñāneshvara left his indelible mark.

Jñāneshvara was so successful in the task to bring down to the masses the hard to digest Vedic truths in a style so simple and suited for the masses. This he gracefully realized through his inimitable style rich in similes, metaphors and examples taken from everyday life and easily striking chords with the common man. Thus while Śaṅkara lifted the so called learned to the real spiritual plane, Jñāneshvara lifted the ordinary folk to the real spiritual plane. Both can be and should be properly utilized today and in the future, both by the learners of philosophy and the teachers of philosophy.

Vedās were created by the Lord along with the universe for a special purpose. Truth is the basis of the whole universe. But Dharma, its active version is the law of the world. While Śruti or Vedās dealt mainly with the Absolute Truth, the Smṛti or Itihāsās and Purāṇās dealt
mainly with Dharma. Both are essential for humanity for their upward movement and evolution towards the Absolute.

In the same way while Ācārya tried to follow and establish the Truth aspect of spirituality, Jñāneśvara endeavored to establish the righteous way of worship to reach the Truth. To integrate them will be as useful for any aspirant as it will help the aspirant to have a healthy combination of wisdom, worship and work in their individuality.

The Vedās themselves have three portions of Jñānakāṇḍa, Upāsanākāṇḍa and Karmakāṇḍa, aimed in fulfilling this objective of integrating the three planes of actions viz. thought, word and deed. So both these Avatāric personalities should also be properly utilized in integrating an aspirant’s three planes of actions and thus evolve towards Brahma rather than try to find the difference in their different approaches towards one of the most sublime spiritual texts that has been handed over to humanity down the ages to the eternal future.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. TSG - P. 123 - 124
2. STG - P. 125
3. TSG - P. 126
4. Ibid - P. 128
5. GFA - P. 79