

॥ Shri Hari ॥

## **The Yoga of Division (Vibhag Yog)**



Tvameva Maata Cha Pita Tvameva  
Tvameva Bandhusa Sakhaa Tvameva  
Tvameva Vidyaa Dravinam Tvameva  
Tvameva Sarvam Mama Deva Deva

**Swami Ramsukhdas**

## The Yoga of Division (Vibhag Yog)

Bhagavad Gita says -

Prakritim purusham chaiva vidhyanaadee ubhaavapi  
(Gita 13:19)

"Understand that Prakriti and Purusha are both eternal".

The purport is that everything in primordial matter / nature (*Prakriti*) is of one class and the Spirit (*Purusha*) is of another class. The body and the world belong to the category of primordial matter/nature (*Prakriti*), while the individual soul (Self, *Atma*) and cosmic Soul (*Paramatma*, Supreme Consciousness) belong to the category of The Spirit (*Purusha*). Just like matter (*Prakriti*) and The Spirit (*Purusha*) are eternal, similarly, the wisdom that reveals the distinction between the two is also eternal. Therefore, if one observes the two through wisdom, both these categories appear disconnected having absolutely nothing in common. Matter/Nature (*Prakriti*, the world) is unreal, inert and rooted in misery, while The Spirit (*Purusha*) is the essence of reality as consciousness and bliss.

The world (*Prakriti*) is momentary, ever changing and constantly involved in actions while The Spirit (*Purusha*) is eternal, never changing and never involved in actions. The world is never attained and The Spirit (*Purusha*) is ever attained. Bhagavan Shri Krishna describes this discrimination between the two right from the beginning in the Gita as body and it's indweller - *Shareera* and *Shareeree* or *Deha* and *Dehee*, etc. (*Purusha*, upon acceptance of the ego, is often identified as *Jeeva* or soul, *kshetrajna* or knower of the domain, *shareeree* or *dehee* or the indweller in the body, etc.). Therefore, clear appreciation of the distinction between the two is extremely essential for a spiritual seeker. The seeker should attain the clarity of this at once. Because, the bondage is actually the ignorant consideration of the body and the soul as the same while

clear appreciation of the distinction between the two is, in fact, the *Mukti* (liberation). *Bhagavaan* says -

Kshetrakshetragnyayorevamantaram gnyaanachakshushaa  
Bhutaprakritimoksham cha ye viduryaanti te param  
(Gita 13:34)

"One who realizes with the light of knowledge and discrimination (*vivek*) the distinction between the *kshetra* (field, macrocosm) and *kshetrajna* (the knower of the field, the one who pervades the same) and clearly understands the self as very different from the world (*prakriti* along with it's evolutes) attains The Absolute, The Supreme (*Paramatmatatva*)."

All the activities, whatsoever they are, belong only to the category of *Prakriti* (Nature/Primordial Matter). Hence, it is said in *Bhagavad Gita* that all the actions are carried out only through the *Prakriti* (Nature)

**Prakrityaiva cha karmaani kriyamaanaani sarvashah (Gita13:29)**

Those actions delivered through *Prakriti* (Nature, the world) are themselves sometimes considered as those executed by the natural qualities and attributes of the world (*Guna-s*) and sometimes as those executed by the senses (*indriya-s*). Just as every action is actualized in all respects only by the attributes (qualities) of nature of the world

**Prakriteh kriyamaanaani gunaih karmani sarvashah (3:27)**

The natural qualities themselves dwell in the nature of the world

**Gunaa guneshu vartante (3:28)**

There cannot be any doer other than the modes of nature

**Naanyam gunebhyah kartaaram yadaa drashtaanupashyati (14:19)**

The senses themselves dwell in their sense objects

**Indriyaaneendriyaartheshu vartante (5:9) etc.**

The purport of all these is that the domain of actions is in *prakriti* (nature, world); not in The Self (*Purusha*). Therefore, the *Prakriti* can never be inactive even for a moment while the *Purusha* is absolutely independent of all actions. Thus, it is told in *Bhagavad Gita* that, a *Sankhya Yogi* who has attained realization knows that I do nothing.

Naiva kinchit karomeeti yukto manyeta tattvavit (5:8)

The Self neither does anything nor does It sponsor any doing

Naiva kurvannakaarayan (5:13)

This Self remains independent of everything and is not entangled in any activity in spite of being in the body

Shareerastho'pi kounteya na karoti na lipyate (13:31)

Whoever observes (as well as experiences) The Self as the non-doer he/she alone realizes The Reality

Yah pashyati tathaatmaanamakartaaram sa pashyati (13:29)

The ignorant who thinks The Self to be the doer cannot understand (anything) right since his/her intellect is corrupt

Tannaivam sati kartaaramaatmaanam kevalam tu yah

Pashyatyakritabuddhittvaanna sa pashyati durmatih (18:16); etc.

All the actions that are carried out through body, speech and mind are executed only within the *Prakriti*. There can't be any trace of activities in The *Purusha* (The Self). The trees in a jungle are consummated, nurtured and consumed by the nature. The same cosmic energy of the macrocosm that is working in the jungles is verily working in this consumable body as well. Every transaction such as eating and drinking, sleeping and waking, etc. are perpetually happening on their own in the nature. For example, the food is not digested by any external agency but by itself. A child grows on its own in its mother's womb. The states of the body change on their own. The house becomes old on its own. It rains on its own. The river flows on its own. In the same way, all the

activities such as eating and drinking carried out by the body proclaimed to be one's own also occur on their own. Therefore, a seeker's sentiments at all times should be that the activities are going on all around, but I am not doing anything whatsoever towards the same '**Naiva kinchitkaromi**', because, the domain of actions is completely different.

The activities continue on its own in this world. There is absolutely no doer at all of those activities. Neither the *Paramaatmaa* (Supreme Self) is the doer, nor the *Jeevaatmaa* (individual self, soul). Where is the necessity of doer-ship for the action that happens on its own? Activity is natural in Nature (*prakriti*) and non-action is natural in The Absolute (*Purusha*). But, when the Self becomes one with the ego that is part of nature (*prakriti*, world), it accepts the actions happening in the world as happening in his own Self, thus beginning to believe that 'I am the doer'.

**Ahankaaravimudhaatmaa kartaahamiti manyate (Gita 3/27).**

The purport is that It does not become the doer but just projects, believes and accepts the doer-ship on Itself. As soon as it imbibes the doer-ship, the natural laws and limitations (and conformance to scriptures) are projected on it and it is bound to become the enjoyer (and sufferer) of the results of the actions. In reality, there is no trace of doer-ship in one's self (*Swayam, Atma*). The doer-ship is entirely in its own separate category. Till today, whatsoever actions might be delivered through the gods, humans, animals, birds, angels, demons, etc. in all the various forms of births - none of these actions could ever reach The Self. Similarly, the corresponding bodies also could never become The Self. The reason is, the action, as well as the body (matter, substance) are in an entirely different category, while The Self is in a completely different category.

Just like when a square metal piece is heated on fire, the fire also appears to have four corners, due to the fire's identification (projection) with the form of the square metal piece. Similarly, on identifying with the Nature (*prakriti*, world) even in that otherwise

entirely invariant (changeless) Self (*Purusha*), one begins to perceive the ever-variant (changing) nature (*prakriti*). Just like metal is drawn only towards the magnet, not towards the fire; however the fire also appears as if it is drawn towards the magnet along with the metal piece, because of identity with the metal piece. Similarly, the Self (soul), even though being action-less (*akriyaa*), on having established identity with *prakriti* (in form of body) begins to perceive these bodily activities in its Self. The understanding is that in reality, the Self (*Purusha*) cannot have even slightest traces of doer-ship or enjoyer-ship unless it associates (identifies) with the body.

Bhagavad Gita says,

Kaaryakaaranakartritve hetuh prakritiruchyate |  
Purushah sukhadukhaanaam bhoktritve heturuchyate |  
Purushah prakritistho hi bhunkte prakritijaangunaan ||

(Gita 13:20-21)

The Nature (*Prakriti*) is said to be the cause of all activities of the body (*Kaarya*) and the external and internal organs, while The Self (*Purusha*), is said to be the cause of experiencing pleasure and pain, when the Self (Spirit, *Purusha*) seated in matter (*prakriti*) enjoys the modes born of *prakriti* (matter).

Mere activities alone are occurring in the world (*prakriti*, nature) while its effect i.e. the acceptance of the pleasures and miseries always happens only in the Self (*Purusha*). The reason is that the experience of pleasures and pains can be realized only in the sentient, not in the insentient. However, in reality, the Self (*Purusha*) can be the enjoyer only when it believes it is established in the body. The Self has imagined and accepted itself to be in the body though in reality, it is not the body. Therefore, in spite of the womb or the world it chooses, the Self can never be established in the body. That eternally stays in itself as itself - '**Samadukhasukhah svasthah**' (Gita 14/24). When it is not bound even in the body how

can it ever be bound in the world? But the relation with the world is automatically established when one accepts the existence within the body just like by accepting the relation between husband and wife the relation between the families are automatically established. If that is not trapped within the body, it won't be trapped within this world either. In fact it is neither *Shareerastha* (existence within the body) nor *Prakritistha* (existence within a world), but IT IS *Sarvatra Sthita* (omni-present) - '**Sarvatraavasthito dehe tathaatmaa nopalipyate**' (Gita 13/32). Complete and all actions take place within THAT. THAT illumines all the actions as well as, objects while being the basis for the same. Of course, the actions start and end and the objects are consummated and destroyed, but their illuminator (basis) as well as consciousness remain as is. Both actions and objects are in the world. **In The Self, there is neither any action nor any object.**

Only one who is capable of doing can claim the responsibility of doing. Just the way a painter cannot create a painting without the necessary things such as color, brush, etc. no matter how talented he is, the Self (*purusha*) cannot do anything without the assistance of the nature (body). Hence, there cannot be any kind of responsibility on part of the Self (soul) to do anything. There cannot be any scarcity in the dominion of the pure consciousness as it is ever complete, and therefore, there is nothing that Self needs do either. There cannot be anything other than the consciousness ever, and therefore, there is no need of any companionship for the Self (*purusha*) as well. This way, **(for my sake) there is no need to do anything, I do not need anything and there is nothing that can be mine**' - once these three principles are realized properly the identification of one's self with nature (*prakriti*, world) will not continue. Once the association with the world is cut off, the actions would continue but the enjoyer of the same would not.

Gita says,

Yathaa prakaashayatyekah kritsnam lokamimam ravih |  
Kshetram kshetree tathaa kritsnam prakaashayati bhaarata ||

(Gita 13/34)

'Hey Bhaarata! Just like the single sun illumines the whole world, the knower of the field (Spirit, *Purusha*) illumines all the fields (Cosmos).'

The purport is that the Sun illumines the whole world; all good and bad things happen under its light; but the Sun neither becomes the doer of any of these nor the enjoyer. It illumines the whole world and all the bodies perpetually. In other words, it provides the illumination / inspiration as well as the basis for all the dominions around. Yet it neither does anything nor does it get tainted or attached; In other words, neither does it take on doer-ship nor the enjoyer-ship. The meaning is that there cannot be pride of illumination in 'The Self. That is the reason why it is told about the great realized souls:

Karmanyabhipravritto'pi naiva kinchitkaroti sah || (Gita 4/20)

'In spite of being involved in all the actions, he (the realized one) does not do anything in reality.'

In the Self (*swaroop*) there is not the slightest trace of doer-ship (*kartutva*) and enjoyer-ship (*bhoktutva*). This is a self-evident fact. There is no effort required and hence no need to do anything. He only has to establish the eye of wisdom here. The intent is that one need not try to divest one's self from doer-ship and enjoyer-ship, rather, (what is required is) one should not just consider them as their own; one should experience their absence; because they do not really exist within oneself. Therefore, the seeker should always experience the non-doership and non-enjoyership. Experiencing the perpetual non-doer-ship and non-enjoyer-ship within is the self-emancipation in one's life (*Jeevanmukti*).

The Self is of the dominion of innate awareness where no trace of activities can ever exist:

Anaadittvaannirgunatvaat paramaatmaayamavyayah |  
Shareerastho'pi kounteya na karoti na lipyate || (Gita 13/31)

'O' Son of Kunti! This Soul being without beginning and devoid of qualities is verily the imperishable Supreme Self as such. IT neither acts nor does IT get affected in spite of being in the body.'

Just like the ocean remains absolutely calm in its depth in-spite of the apparent ever-perturbed waves on its surface, a true seeker would remain absolutely unperturbed within in-spite of being in the activities while transacting with the external world. In other words, one has to stay as 'na karoti na lipyate' `neither acts nor is tainted' (Gita 13:31) internally in spite of being 'Gunaa guneshu vartante' `it is all an interplay of the modes ` (Gita 3:28) externally; meaning, one has to remain established in the dominion of innate awareness at all times.

The potential error a seeker could often indulge-in is: he may actually consider all the mundane activities such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, etc. as belonging to the insentient world in true spirits of 'Gunaa guneshu vartante' (being an interplay of modes); and yet considers the spiritual activities such as chanting, meditation, *samaadhi*, etc. as those delivered through oneself for the sake of the individual spiritual benefits. In fact, this is a big hurdle for spiritual progress. The reason is that the actions, irrespective of whether they are the lowest-of-the-lowest or the highest-of-the-highest, they all belong to the physical world (Prakriti, Nature). Swinging sticks as well as, raising garlands are both mere actions, though occurring discretely, within the dominion of the inert body and the world. That is the reason, Bhagavaan emphasizes –

Shareeravaangmanobhiryat karma praarambhate narah |  
Nyaaayam vaa vipareetam vaa panchaite tasya hetavah || (Gita 18/25)

"The five causes (facility, facilitator, cause, activity and cosmic force) always trigger all the activities - holy activities (promoted by the holy scriptures) as well as the unholy activities (abolished by the holy scriptures) - that are delivered through one's mind, speech and body.'

The purport here is that all actions starting from eating-drinking, sleeping-waking, etc. as well as holy chants, meditation etc. including *Samaadhi* (deep trans) - social as well as spiritual – happen in the insentient world. Therefore, a seeker should not abandon the spiritual activities, but yet, should not attempt to own the same as activities carried out through oneself for individual benefits of any kind. Whether the activity is worldly or spiritual, its significance resides in the significance of the inertness as such. Even the importance of spiritual activities maintained in one's understanding because of their holy legitimacy is, in fact, the importance given to the insentient world only; and hence is harmful to one's spiritual progress.

All the things belong to the physical world just like the activities associated with them:

Na tadasti prithivyaam vaa divi deveshu vaa punah |  
Sattvam praktikijairmuktam yadebhih syaattribhiraunaih ||

(Gita 18/40)

"There is nothing in this world or in heavens or amongst the gods or anywhere else that could be independent of the tri-fold qualities of the insentient nature.'

Therefore, the action as well as the object both belong to the insentient dominion. There is absolutely no room for either the actions or the objects in the sentient dominion. There is a beginning as well as an end for every action; same way, there is creation and destruction as well as union and separation for every object.

However, The Spirit transcends all limitations such as beginning-end, creation-destruction, and union-separation:

Na jaayate mriyate vaa kadaachin  
naayam bhutvaa bhavitaa vaa na bhuyah |  
Ajo nityah shaashvato'yam puraano  
na hanyate hanyamaane shareere || (Gita 2/20)

'The one who dwells in this body neither takes birth nor enters death; it is neither created nor would it change. It is birth-less, ever-present, change-less and ever-ancient (beginning-less). It is not terminated on the termination of the body.'

The 'doing', 'being' and 'is' are three distinct concepts. The ego is annihilated completely if the 'doing' is turned into the 'being' and the 'being' into the 'is'. When importance to the activities and the objects is retained in one's mind, the non-seeker (mundane person) imagines that, 'I am doing' –

'Ahankaravimudhaatmaa kartaahamiti manyate' (Gita 3/27).

One who believes to be a doer is bound to become the enjoyer as well. A spiritual seeker who gives importance to the wisdom would understand that, 'the activity is going on' - 'Gunaa guneshu vartante' (Gita 3/28) meaning 'I am not doing anything' –

'Naiva kinchitkaromeeti' (Gita 5/8).

However, the great realized ones would experience the mere presence of the objects and their images –

'ye'vatishthati nengate' (Gita 14/23).

That dominion of consciousness remains as-is amongst the activities. Of course, the activities are bound to come to their ends, but the dominion of consciousness will continue as-it-is. Great men's focus is always shifted away from the activities ('doing') into the unique dominion of mere presence ('is').

Until the 'doing' stays the association with the ego is inevitable because the 'doing' is impossible without the 'doer', the ego. Once

the sense of 'doing' creeps in, attachment develops on the doership. Attachment to 'doership' strengthens the sense of 'doing' and the sense of 'doing' strengthens the attachment to the 'doership'. Because of this, a seeker can never escape the vicious circle of the ego and pride about the "spiritual practices done". Any proud action can never bring anything good because ego is the root cause for all calamities of birth and death. By not doing anything for oneself one can terminate the association with the ego thereby removing one's association with the inert world altogether. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that a spiritual seeker should emphasize on his wisdom while de-emphasizing on any specific action. Emphasis on the wisdom clarifies the wisdom further guiding the seeker better and better. This wisdom naturally becomes the realization as it grows. On realization only the dominion of mere presence remains. That dominion is absolutely detached from everything, '*Asango hyayam purushah*' (Brihadaraanyaka, 4/3/15). The self-established presence in such dominion is The Mukti, The Liberation. Association with anything other than That (the inert world and its activities) is verily the bondage - '*Kaaranam gunasango'sya sadasyonijanmasu*' (Gita 13/21).

**Question:** Whatever actions that we do volitionally i.e. executed by one's own will, desires, intentions or resolutions (*sankalpas*) makes us feel very clearly that 'I am doing'. When we decide to eat when we are hungry it is very clearly evident that 'I am eating'. It is intriguing to hear that the actions occur in the insentient world and has nothing to do with me. How can we accept this?

**Answer:** Really speaking, even this decision happens in the insentient dominion only! However, one happens to see the volition belonging to oneself because of the blurred wisdom as one feels one with the mind. Getting hungry is not the nature of The Self, but the nature of the vitality of the body (*praan*)-

Kshudhaa pipaasaa praanasya manasah shokamohakou |

Janmamrityoo shareerasya shadoormirahitah svayam ||.

Food is to sustain the vitality of the body and not for sustenance of

The Self. But, having assumed to be one with the vitality one would believe that, 'I am hungry' and a desire rises as, 'Let me eat'. However, if one is detached from the vitality as such, no desire to eat arises when hunger hits, but a mere awareness about the bodily needs to sustain itself dawns. One has to appreciate the difference between thought waves/propensities (*sphurana*) and thoughts of one's own will, desires, intentions or resolutions (*sankalpas*). The thought waves (*sphurana*) rises momentarily to reveal the facts around and disperse away naturally. On the other hand, the self-will thoughts, intentions, resolves (*sankalp*) does not go away once generated; but further desires are consummated from that –

'Sankalpaprabhavaan kaamaan' (Gita 6/24).

Thought waves and propensities (*sphurana*) is just like a mirror. It reveals the image of an object with clarity, but it does not retain the image. But, the resolves are like a film role in a camera. The image imprinted on the film is retained forever. Therefore, one is not tainted (blended together) in thought waves and propensities, while one is tainted and blended together in self-willed resolves.

Only propensities occur in a realized man while the desires, resolves, intentions happen in a mundane as well as, a seeker. Because of identifying oneself with the inert body, a seeker would perceive the limitations of the inert as one's own limitations. Once the association with the inert world is mitigated in a realized person, limitations of the physical world is never reflected in oneself as one's own limitations because his identity is salvaged in the self-fulgent consciousness.

The liberated saint's natural experience is that the mere actions occur within the inert world and has no trace in The Self. Whatever

is the natural experience for a realized man is reverentially followed by a true seeker.

**Question:** What is the meaning of "anukaran" i.e. following the example of realized saints?

**Answer:** No relations were, are and will be ever possible between oneself and the actions in the first place - one has to accept this fact with absolute resolution; such an acceptance is the actual following the examples of the realized saints.

**Question:** To accept anything strongly, one has to depend on one's intellect. That means one has to retain a close relation with the intellect that executes all volitive actions "*Karan Saapeksha*", i.e. dependent on doing something.

**Answer:** Yes. At first, one has to deploy the intellect; to speak and listen one has to also deploy the speech and ears; but, as far as the intent is to know (an experience) The Truth, dependence with the instruments such as the intellect would be severed / whither away.

**Question:** It has been stated in the Gita that any person (*kashchi*), in any state of existence (*jaatu*), even for a moment (*kshanamaatra*) cannot be without being involved in action (Gita 3/5), Then, how will the relation with the actions be cut-off?

**Answer:** All actions are only occurring in the insentient world (*prakriti*) alone. But, man becomes enslaved (*avashab*) to the worldly tendencies by accepting affinity (belongingness) to the world. As a result, he develops bonds with the actions of the world. Because of that, anyone who believes in his bonds with the inert world can never stay away from the actions while awake, in dreams, in sleep, while unconscious, in deep trans, as well as in the heavens, during the cosmic dissolution, and in any other state of existence:

Na hi kashchitkshanamapi jaatu tishthatyakarmakrit |  
Kaaryate hyavashah karma sarvah prakritijairgunaih || (Gita 3/5)

**Question:** How can there be any action in sleep, unconsciousness and the state of deep trans?

**Answer:** When a person in deep sleep is woken up he would say, 'Why was I woken up from my sweet sleep?' This establishes that the activity of satisfactorily completing (ripening) the sleep is going on even during deep sleep. There will be similar activity during the unconscious as well as deep trans states as well. Such activity is called '*Parinaama*' or 'the effect' in *Paatanjalayogadarshana*\*.

**Question:** How do we attain the state of natural presence (sahaj avasthaa)?

**Answer:** There is a solution - not doing anything for one's own self i.e. doing all the actions such as eating, drinking, etc. as well as chants, meditation, trans etc. for the sake of others. The reason is, the actions actually do belong to the 'other' domain (the physical world) and not to one's own domain (The Self). Mind, intellect, senses, organs and the body - all these belong to the 'other' domain, in other words, the insentient world. Doing everything for others' benefit with absolutely no selfish motive is 'Karma Yoga', the path of action.

'I do nothing, the nature runs the show in itself' - such an understanding is '*Jnana Yoga*', the path of knowledge. Doing everything for God's pleasure (happiness, *prasannataab*) is '*Bhakti Yoga*', the path of devotion. Doing everything selfishly for one's own sake is '*Janma-Marana Yoga*', the cycles of birth and death.

From all the three points of view - paths of action, knowledge and devotion - one would not engage in any activity for one's own sake and hence would easily server all relations with the dominion of the insentient world (*prakriti*) and thus naturally and automatically

become established in the unique dominion of The Consciousness experiencing the self-established state of The Self.

This is the state of natural presence (*sabaj avasthaa*). Such natural presence is ever present on its own and does not go away. Whatever that goes away can never be the state of natural presence, but will be an artificial state. After attaining this state of natural presence, there remains nothing to be done or known or to be gained in life.

From "*Tattva Gyaan Kaise Ho?*" in Hindi by Swami Ramsukhdasji

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