



The power of Equanimity (*Saksi Bhava*) reflected in *Bhagavadgita*

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India's contribution to the world's treasure of knowledge as well as culture is unparalleled, be it philosophy, language, literature, arts, mathematics or physical sciences including medicine and surgery. Ancient India has served as the fountainhead of all these disciplines of knowledge. Similarly, Bhagavad Gita (*Gita*) is one of the great scriptures of Indian Philosophy, which is popular not only in India but also in the western world. It is holy and the mother of all scriptures. One of the highest-valued and most profound religious texts in

the world is the Bhagavad Gita. Swami Vivekananda says, "The *Gita* is a bouquet composed of the beautiful flowers of spiritual truths collected from the *Upanisads*".¹ The *Gita* has a wide range of different facets, but the primary theistic shape may be drawn from them all. The *Gita* presents ideas from the *Upanisads* that clarify several realities.

This article will examine the power of equanimity, a *Saksi Bhava* that appears in the *Bh.Gita* under various names, including *Anasakta*, *Niskama*, *Sthitaprajna*, etc. *Saksi Bhava* translates to





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Witness attitude. The word *Karmasaksi* appears in the *Amaraksah* (1.3.239) which is translated as "the witness of all acts", the sun by Monier Williams. *Saksi Bhava* means constantly being conscious of oneself and our surroundings. We frequently become engrossed in everything we see, feel, touch, hear, and taste in the overpowering physical world. We are *Saksi* when our consciousness is completely focused in the "here and now" and when it is not wandering around. That is why it is very important to understand the self and the attitudes of the self to develop the power of equanimity. Witnessing is looking at everything externally with neutrality. Or it can also be said that to remain stable in one's state of being is not to involve oneself in other external things. Hence, we will see in the following explication how *Gita* provides an understanding of the soul or self.

Understanding of the Self to acquire equanimity:

It is said in the *Gita* that the one who is superior to the intellect is He (Atman).ⁱⁱ That is our own identity. The thirteenth chapter of the *Gita* is fully dedicated to explain the difference between soul and body, which is called *ksetra-ksetrajna vibhaga yoga*, where it is said that, "Some by meditation behold the self in their own intelligence by the purified heart, others by the path of knowledge, others again by *Karma-Yoga*".ⁱⁱⁱ Our mind is always engaged

in physical activities, hence it develops our physical consciousness and we lose our original consciousness. Hence, to understand self we need some spiritual practices. It is not possible without spirituality.

As it is said in the *Gita* that, one who acts by dedicating actions to *Brahman* and by renouncing attachment, he does not become polluted by sin, just as a lotus leaf is not by water.^{iv} Therefore, the real consciousness i.e. the consciousness of Atman keeps us away from sin. The person who is in the awareness of real self is performing each and every action with the complete detachment and hence may not bind with the good or bad result of his *karma*, so God has given very nice example of lotus leaf, which stay away from water, which may be clean or muddy. That is why the *Gita* says that the *Parama Svabhava* - selfhood is said to be the *Adhyatma* i.e. the entity present in the individual plane.^v Hence understanding of self itself is a state of equanimity.

In the *Gita*, *Saksi Bhava* or equanimity is established as a foundation. The definition of equanimity is also "calm mental state in all circumstances, whether favourable or challenging." The *Gita* says that, for the mind, which follows in the wake of the wandering senses, carries away his discrimination, as the wind carries away a boat on the waters.^{vi} Hence, the *Bh.Gita*





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provides us with numerous lessons to control sensory organs and mind that help us maintain mental stability.

Sthita (firm) Mind:

In the *Gita*, it is suggested to the *Yogi* that, practise *yoga* for the purification of the self, having made the mind one-pointed.^{vii} At the time of meditation, the concentrated mind has special importance, if all the external things like place, seat etc. are fine, but if the mind is not stable, then

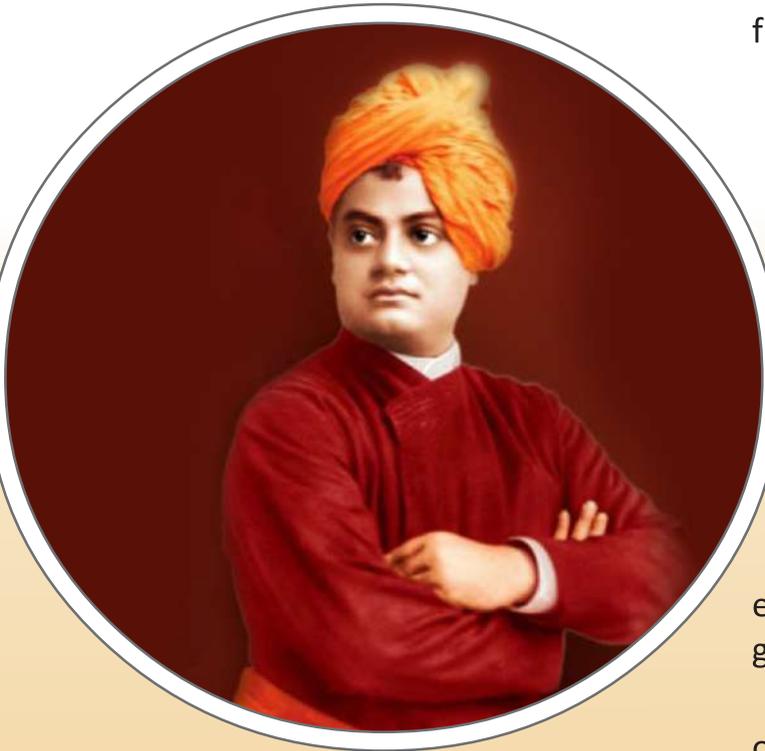
makes the work perfect.

In the first chapter, Arjuna who was in a state of confusion and depression, becomes stable after attaining divine knowledge in the last chapter, he says, “O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory with your mercy. I am now firm and free from doubt and prepared to act according to Your instructions.^{ix} This is how the divine knowledge makes Arjuna's state of mind very relaxed and positive, and this positive state of mind enables Arjuna to fight the battle.

Samadarsitva (vision of equanimity):

Power of equanimity is also means vision of equanimity. *Gita* beautifully explains the characteristics of *Samabuddhi* person, it says that, He, who regards equally the well-wishers, the friends, the relatives, the righteous as also the unrighteous, excels.^x After attaining enlightenment, everyone is an object for a *Yogi*. He looks at a sinner with the same respect as a *Mahatma*. This equanimity emerges from the inner goodness of the bad person.

Samadarsitva (equanimity) is not just one vision but it is a great quality which we are losing these days in so many diverse situations. As soon as we take birth, there is the distinction between a man and a woman, then the distinction of caste, class or creed, then the distinction between sinner and saint or wise and evil. Power to



meditation is impossible. *Gita* also says that, even here (in this world), birth (everything) is overcome by those whose minds rest in equality.^{viii} Hence, it is very important to have a concentrated mind to do any work. A higher level of concentration



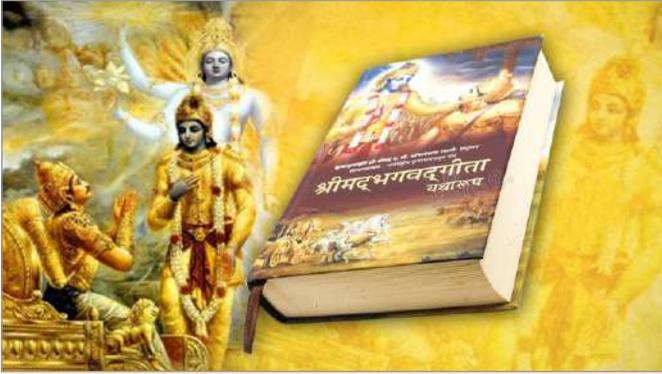


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equanimity allow us accept others with their negativity and love them unconditionally. It is very easy to hate someone who is not ethically good but to love such a person is really difficult hence equanimity is a power. This power helps one to transform devil personality to deity personality.

Conclusion:

Spirituality and worldly activities can never be different, in other words, spirituality and worldly activities are two sides of the same coin. Due to the use of



spiritual values in practice, practical things can be done efficiently, and success is also achieved in that. It takes skill to act impartially when interacting with other people regarding worldly issues. This skill can only come from the quality of witnessing, through which man can be free from bondages. Because of this, the power of equanimity can only be acquired through specific instructions and practices which are given in the *Bhagavadgita*.

List of References

ⁱ Swami Vivekananda, *Thought on the Gita*, Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, 1992, p. 7

ⁱⁱ *Bhagavad Gita* 3.42

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः॥

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid*, 13.24

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना।
अन्ये साङ्ख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे॥

^{iv} *Ibid*, 5.10

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा॥

Swami Gambhirananda (Tr.),
Bhagavad Gita with the commentary of Sankaracarya, op.cit. pp. 248-249

^v *Ibid*, 8.3

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते।

Swami Gambhirananda (Tr.),
Bhagavad Gita with the commentary of Sankaracarya, op.cit. p. 342

^{vi} *Bhagavad Gita* 2.67

इन्द्रियाणि हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नाविमिवाम्भसि॥

^{vii} *Ibid*, 6.12

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः।
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये॥

^{viii} *Ibid*, 5.19

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः।

^{ix} *Bhagavad Gita* 18.73

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा तवत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव॥

^x *Bhagavad Gita* 6.9

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेषबन्धुषु।
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते॥ ✦

