

Introduction to Karmayoga

Preface

The word 'Karmayoga' (Path of Action) conjures images of those giving alms to beggars, setting up educational institutions, and those engaged in social service. However, in most cases, since the activities are at an emotional level or for the sake of publicity, it does not constitute Karmayoga in the real sense of the word. Then, what exactly is Karmayoga ? Performing that *karma* (An act, action which gives rise to Destiny) which will result in spiritual growth and, ultimately, God-realisation, denotes Karmayoga. Even if the *karma* were to be worldly, performing it in a way such that no new *sanskār* (Subconscious impression) is created on the *chitta* (Subconscious mind) and thereby getting freed from the bondage of *sanskārs* forever is the objective of Karmayoga. Performing *karma* as expected by the Hindu *Dharma* (Righteousness) and the scriptures, by sacrificing the attachment and the expectations of the fruit, is a supreme definition of Karmayoga. If a *Bhaktiyogī* (Follower of Bhaktiyoga [Path of Devotion]), *Dhyānyogī* (Follower of Dhyānyoga [Path of Meditation]) etc. complement their *sādhana* (Spiritual practice) with Karmayoga, then it will certainly help improve their *sādhana*.

Since the subject of 'Karmayoga' is vast, we are presenting its various facets in a Holy text series titled 'Karmayoga'. This Holy text provides basic information on Karmayoga and the essence of *sādhana* according to this Path. The history of Karmayoga, Arjun's doubts about Karmayoga and Shrikrushṇa's clarification of Arjun's doubts; importance of performing *karma*; importance of Karmayoga in *vyashṭi* (Individual spiritual practice that benefits only the seeker undertaking it) and *samashṭi sādhana* (Spiritual practice for the spread of Spirituality); salient features of Karmayoga; secrets of Karmayoga, meaning, sacrificing doership and means of accomplishing it according to Karmayoga, Dnyānyoga and Bhaktiyoga; how and why to perform *swadharma karma* (*Karma* as per *Dharma*) and *kartavya-karma* (Duty-bound acts) are discussed in this Holy text.

We were able to simplify such a difficult subject as Karmayoga solely with the support of the great Ascetic Gurudev Dr. Kateswamiji, who explained the gist of several *shlokās* (See Glossary) from Shriṃadbhagwadgētā. No matter how much gratitude we express at Gurudev's Holy feet, it will still be inadequate.

Our earnest prayer at the Holy feet of Shri Guru is - 'May the desire for spiritual progress be created in the minds of seekers through the daily practice of Karmayoga !' - **Compiler**

Index

(An asterisk [*] sign has been placed alongside important points)	
1. Definitions of Karmayoga	18
2. Synonyms of Karmayoga	18
3. Karma and Karmayoga	19
* If there is no <i>nishkām-bhāv</i> in the practice of Karmayoga, then it is merely <i>karma</i>	20
* Performing <i>karmās</i> expertly that are not mentioned in the scriptures, is not the intent of the Karmayoga	20
4. History of Karmayoga)	21
5. Importance of Karmayoga	32
5A. Importance of <i>karma</i> according to Karmayoga	32
5B. Importance of Karmayoga in the context of <i>vyashti sādhanā</i> (individual spiritual practice)	35
* Performing <i>karma</i> with dexterity means Yoga	36
* Following Karmayoga is essential to be able to sacrifice desires	36
* Karmayoga liberates from all sorrows	40
* Karmayoga cures <i>bhavarog</i>	40
5C. Importance of Karmayoga in the context of <i>samashti sādhanā</i>	40
* Setting ideals for society	42
* Increase in <i>samashti</i> merit makes the Nation righteous and prosperous	42
6. Special characteristics of Karmayoga	42
*The pace (extent) of <i>karma</i> is mysterious	42
* Giving up <i>karma</i> does not mean renouncing <i>karma</i>	43
7. The secret of Karmayoga is sacrifice of doership	45
7A. The doer	45

7B. Sacrifice of doership	52
8. Those not deserving of Karmayoga	62
* A righteous person who does not believe in God is in reality, a so-called <i>karmayogī</i>	63
* Saints who lack faith in <i>dhārmik</i> mission take to social work	64
9. Essence of <i>karma</i> to be performed according to Karmayoga	65
9A. How to perform <i>karma</i> without getting entrapped in it ?	65
9B. Essence of Karmayoga is incessant performance of <i>swadharma-karma</i> and prescribe duties, devoid of all attachments	67
9C. Cause for getting entrapped in <i>karma</i>	69
9D. A karma performed as a duty does not entrap in the bondage of <i>karma</i>	70
9E. Once liberated from the bondage of <i>karma</i> , we attain God	70
10. Spiritual experience	71
* Some Additional Points	73
* A foreword to Part 2 of ‘Introduction to Karmayoga’	75