

**B.A. Part—II (Semester—III) (NEP) Examination**

**ENGLISH**

**Major- IKS- Swami Vivekananda : Karma Yoga**

Time : Two Hours]

[Maximum Marks :

15

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1. Attempt any **one** long answer question out of **three** :
  - a) Explain Swami Vivekananda's views on Karma and its effect on character as discussed in the chapter.
  - b) Discuss Swami Vivekananda's concept of duty as explained in the chapter "What Is Duty?"
  - c) Describe Swami Vivekananda's ideal of a Karma Yogi as explained in the chapter "The Ideal of Karma-Yoga." **10**
  
2. Write all the questions in short :
  - a) What makes work great according to Swami Vivekananda?
  - b) Is duty the same for everyone?
  - c) Who benefits the most from service?
  - d) What does non-attachment free us from?
  - e) What does true freedom require? **05**

**Q. Explain Swami Vivekananda's views on Karma and its effect on character as discussed in the chapter.**

**Answer:**

Swami Vivekananda, in this chapter, presents a profound explanation of the concept of Karma and its role in shaping human character. He begins by asserting that every individual is the creator of his or her own destiny. According to him, the causes of human progress or suffering lie not in external circumstances but within the individual. Karma, therefore, is not limited to physical actions; it includes thoughts, intentions, and willpower. Each of these leaves deep impressions—called *samskaras*—on the mind, which gradually form one's habits, nature, and overall personality.

Swami Vivekananda emphasizes that no action ever goes to waste. Even the smallest deed, thought, or intention influences the mind and contributes to character formation. Good actions cultivate noble qualities such as kindness, courage, self-control, and compassion. In contrast, negative actions strengthen undesirable traits like greed, anger, jealousy, and fear. Thus, an individual has the power to transform his character by consciously choosing righteous thoughts and actions.

He further explains that Karma Yoga is not just about performing work. Its true essence lies in working with the right attitude—without selfish motives and without attachment to the results. Attachment to outcomes binds the mind and creates restlessness. When a person works solely for personal gain, the mind becomes dependent and anxious. But when actions are performed selflessly and with purity of intention, the mind becomes calm, strong, and fearless. This selfless attitude frees a person and leads to inner growth.

According to Vivekananda, the ultimate goal of human life is freedom, and Karma Yoga is one of the paths to attain it. By purifying the mind through responsible and aware action, one becomes prepared for higher spiritual knowledge. Actions performed with dedication strengthen willpower, and a strong will enables mastery over one's own nature.

The chapter concludes by highlighting that every person is practicing Karma Yoga knowingly or unknowingly. The real difference lies in whether one acts with wisdom or ignorance. By consciously choosing noble actions and thoughts, an individual becomes the architect of his destiny and moves steadily toward spiritual freedom.

Thus, Swami Vivekananda presents Karma as a powerful force that not only shapes character but also leads one toward spiritual liberation when practiced

with the right understanding and attitude.

**Q. Discuss Swami Vivekananda's concept of duty as explained in the chapter "What Is Duty?"**

**Answer:**

In the chapter "*What Is Duty?*" Swami Vivekananda offers a clear and practical interpretation of the idea of duty, highlighting that it is not a fixed or universal concept. He explains that duty varies according to time, place, situation, and the role a person occupies. What may be considered right for one individual may be wrong for another. Likewise, duties change over generations as society evolves. Therefore, one must not assume that duty is rigid or the same for everyone.

Vivekananda states that duty is often shaped by social norms, customs, and personal circumstances. Instead of blindly obeying traditions or external commands, a person must rely on reason, conscience, and a sense of responsibility to understand what is truly right. Blind obedience, he warns, can be harmful. True duty is that which strengthens a person, elevates the mind, and benefits others without causing harm.

A key message in the chapter is that running away from one's duties does not solve difficulties. Hard duties or unpleasant tasks must be faced with courage and determination. Attempting to escape responsibilities only creates fear and weakness. Karma Yoga teaches that every individual must perform their duty willingly and fearlessly.

Another important idea is that duty must be performed without attachment. Many people do their duties but still expect reward, appreciation, or recognition. Such attachment makes the mind restless and binds a person to the results of action. Real duty, according to Vivekananda, is performed selflessly, with love and sincerity, without expecting anything in return.

He further stresses that duty done with hatred, unwillingness, or force loses its spiritual value. Every action—studying, working, taking care of family, or serving society—can become sacred if done cheerfully and mindfully. Attitude, therefore, is more important than the action itself.

The chapter also highlights the principle of *ahimsa* or non-injury. No duty should cause unnecessary harm or injustice to others. However, Vivekananda also says that duty should be performed with strength, not weakness. In certain situations, firmness or discipline may be necessary, but it must come from compassion and not from anger or cruelty.

Swami Vivekananda concludes that duty should not be viewed as a burden. Instead, it is an opportunity for self-growth. By performing one's duties

sincerely, fearlessly, and selflessly, a person grows morally, mentally, and spiritually. Thus, duty becomes a powerful means of achieving self-perfection and inner freedom.

**Q. Describe Swami Vivekananda's ideal of a Karma Yogi as explained in the chapter "The Ideal of Karma-Yoga."**

**Answer:**

In the chapter "*The Ideal of Karma-Yoga*," Swami Vivekananda presents the highest model of a Karma Yogi—an individual who works tirelessly, serves selflessly, and remains completely calm and unattached. According to him, the perfect Karma Yogi performs every action with purity, courage, and dedication, treating all work as a sacred duty. For such a person, no task is small; everything becomes holy when done with the right attitude and devotion.

A central quality of the Karma Yogi is fearlessness. Because they are free from attachment to results, they do not fear failure or loss. Their selflessness makes them bold and confident, giving them immense mental strength and clarity. This fearless approach enables them to face challenges with determination.

Another important characteristic is equanimity—the ability to remain calm and undisturbed in success or failure, joy or sorrow, praise or blame. The Karma Yogi's inner peace does not depend on external circumstances. This stability comes from purity of heart and surrender of the ego, allowing them to maintain balance in all situations.

Vivekananda also highlights that the Karma Yogi possesses extraordinary willpower. They continue their work steadily even in difficult situations, without complaining or giving up. Their strength comes from the belief that they are an instrument of divine will, not the actual doer. This attitude removes pride and reduces mental stress, helping them focus on action rather than outcome.

Universal love and compassion are also essential traits of the ideal Karma Yogi. They serve all beings equally, without discrimination, seeing the divine presence in everyone. Their service is not based on pity or superiority but on deep love and respect for the unity of life.

Such a person becomes a blessing to society. Their selfless actions uplift others, their character inspires people, and their life becomes an example of spiritual strength and moral excellence. They turn ordinary activities into spiritual practice, showing that true spirituality lies in service.

Swami Vivekananda concludes by stating that the world needs more Karma Yogis—individuals who combine spiritual wisdom with active service. A true Karma Yogi lives in the world but remains above its distractions, works constantly but stays at peace, and serves others without expecting anything in return. This, according to Vivekananda, is the highest ideal of Karma Yoga.

1. **What makes work great according to Swami Vivekananda?**  
A: Sincerity and dedication make work great, not its social status.
2. **Is duty the same for everyone?**  
A: No, duty changes according to time, place, and circumstance.
3. **Who benefits the most from service?**  
A: The helper benefits the most through inner growth and purification.
4. **What does non-attachment free us from?**  
A: Non-attachment frees us from fear and emotional dependence.
5. **What does true freedom require?**  
A: True freedom requires self-control and responsibility.