

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 21: Chapter 2, Verses 60-65

(September 19 –September 25, 2018)

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यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ २-६० ॥
तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ २-६१ ॥
ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्सञ्जायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ २-६२ ॥
क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ २-६३ ॥
रागद्वेषविमुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ २-६४ ॥
प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ २-६५ ॥

TRANSLITERATION

yatato hyapi kaunteya puruṣasya vipaśchitaḥ
indriyāṇi pramāthīni haranti prasabham manah
tāni sarvāṇi sanyamya yukta āsīta mat-parah
vaśhe hi yasyendriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā
dhyāyato viśhayān puṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣhūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ kāmāt krodho 'bhijāyate
krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ sammohāt smṛiti-vibhramaḥ
smṛiti-bhraṅśhād buddhi-nāśho buddhi-nāśhāt praṇaśhyati
rāga-dveṣha-viyuktais tu viśhayān indriyaiśh charan
ātma-vaśhyair-vidheyātmā prasādam adhigachchhati
prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām hānir asyopajāyate
prasanna-chetaso hyāśhu buddhiḥ paryavatishṭhate

TRANSLATION

- (60)** The senses are so strong and turbulent, O son of Kunti, that they can forcibly carry away the mind even of a person endowed with discrimination and practicing self-control.
- (61)** They are established in perfect knowledge, who subdue their senses and keep their minds ever absorbed in me.
- (62)** While contemplating on the objects of the senses, one develops attachment to them. Attachment leads to desire, and from desire arises anger.
- (63)** Anger leads to clouding of judgment, which results in bewilderment of the memory. When the memory is bewildered, the intellect gets destroyed; and when the intellect is destroyed, one is ruined.
- (64)** But one who controls the mind, and is free from attachment and aversion, even while using the objects of the senses, attains the Grace of God.
- (65)** By divine grace comes the peace in which all sorrows end, and the intellect of such a person of tranquil mind soon becomes firmly established in God.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vcdD8D29Q6UITWibkP0CYuPMMJlQxjRM/view?usp=sharing>

Commentary:

Verse 60:

Even men of wisdom who lack spiritual experience and resort to using the mind as their only medium of understanding are soon overpowered by the senses. The senses are impetuous and reckless, and hence, disciplining them is an important battle that *sādhaks* have to fight within themselves. Until and unless self-realization is attained by direct soul cognition the cravings and attachments for sensual experiences will never entirely cease to exist subtly or physically. Therefore, those desirous of spiritual growth should carefully strive to tame the indulgent senses, which are colored with lust and greed, or else they have the power to sabotage and derail the spiritual process of even the most well-intentioned yogis. Since it is not possible without controlling the senses to be one in steady wisdom; it is strongly recommended that in the practice of ones spiritual austerities one apply themselves diligently in this regard. The senses are so turbulent that they can forcibly take the mind of even a person of discrimination, for the senses are very agitating.

Verse 61:

In this verse, the word *yuktaḥ* (united) indicates “absorption in devotion,” and *matparaḥ* means “toward Lord Krishna.” The word *āsīta* (seated) may be understood figuratively here to mean “situated or established.” The previous verse dictated that the impetuous mind and senses need to be tamed. Lord Krishna now reveals the proper engagement for them, which is total absorption in

devotion to God. The senses are too powerful to subdue by our own efforts. So, the only way to effectively subdue our senses is by devotion to Him. The word *yuktah* denotes devotion to Lord Krishna, one whose mind is attuned to Lord Krishna. By making Him the sole object of one's meditation, one becomes established in undisturbed serenity of the Ultimate Reality, and all impurities become eradicated, the mind becomes purified and clear, and free from all desires. The mind along with the senses, completely under control, will then be capable of achieving cognition of the eternal soul. But it must be noted that unless devotion has developed for the Supreme Lord Krishna, whosoever attempts to master the senses by their own might and self effort are all destined to failure.

Verse 62:

In this and the subsequent verse, Lord Krishna has given perfect and penetrating insight into functioning of the mind. He explains that when we repeatedly contemplate that there is happiness in some object, the mind becomes attached to it. Now attachment seems quite innocuous by itself. But the problem is that from attachment comes desire. For example, if one is attached to drinks, the desire for drinks comes repeatedly to the mind. If one is attached to cigarettes, then thoughts of the pleasure of smoking cigarettes repeatedly flow in the mind, creating a craving for them. In this way, attachment leads to desire. Once desire develops, it gives birth to two more problems—greed and anger. Greed comes from the fulfillment of desire. Thus desire is never eliminated by satiating it. If one person were to get all the wealth, luxuries, and sensual objects in the world, that person's desire would still not be satiated. Hence, knowing it to be the cause of misery, an intelligent person should renounce desire. On the flip side what happens if the fulfillment of desire is obstructed? It gives rise to anger. Bear in mind that anger does not arise by itself. It is created from the obstruction of desire; and desire arises from attachment, while attachment comes from contemplation of the sense objects. In this manner, we see how the simple act of contemplating the pleasures of sense objects leads downward to the twin diseases of greed and anger.

Verse 63:

Anger impairs judgment, just as the morning mist creates a hazy covering on the sunlight. *Sammoha*, meaning delusion, indicates the desire to engage in inappropriate actions. The same meaning is given for *moha* which also indicates unrighteousness desires and the tendency to inappropriate activities. In anger, people commit mistakes that they later regret, because the intellect gets clouded by the haze of emotions. When the intellect is clouded, it leads to bewilderment of memory. The person then forgets what is right and what is wrong, and flows along with the surge of emotions. The downward descent continues from there, and bewilderment of memory results in destruction of the intellect. And since the intellect is the internal guide, when it gets destroyed, one is ruined. In this manner, the path of descent from divinity to impiety has been described beginning with contemplation on the sense objects to the destruction of the intellect.

Verse 64:

The entire downward spiral leading to ruin begins with contemplating happiness in sense objects. If we can repeatedly revise the thought that happiness is in God, we will develop attachment toward him. This divine attachment will not degrade the mind like material attachment; rather, it will purify

it. God is all-pure, and when we attach our mind to him, the mind will also become pure. Thus, whenever Lord Krishna asks us to give up attachment and desire, He is referring only to material attachment and desire. Spiritual attachment is not to be given up; in fact, it is most desirable. It is to be cultivated and enhanced for purification of the mind. The greater the burning desire we develop for God, the purer our mind will become. In one of the future Chapter verses of Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna states: “Those who attach their minds to me with unadulterated devotion rise above the three modes of material nature and attain the level of the supreme *Brahman*. (*Bhagavad Gita* 14.26) He repeatedly urges Arjun to attach his mind to God in many verses ahead, such as 8.7, 8.14, 9.22, 9.34, 10.10, 12.8, 11.54, 18.55, 18.58, and 18.65. Attachment and Aversion are two sides of the same coin. Aversion is nothing but negative attachment. Just as, in attachment, the object of attachment repeatedly comes to one’s mind; similarly, in aversion, the object of hatred keeps popping into the mind. So attachment and aversion to material objects both have the same effect on the mind—they dirty it and pull it into the three modes of material nature. When the mind is free from both attachment and aversion, and is absorbed in devotion to God, one receives the grace of God and experiences his unlimited divine bliss. On experiencing that higher taste, the mind no longer feels attracted to the sense objects, even while using them. Thus, even while tasting, touching, smelling, hearing, and seeing, like all of us, the *sthita prajña* is free from both attachment and aversion.

Verse 65:

Grace is like a divine energy that floods into a person’s personality. By grace, God who is *sat-chit-ānand* bestows his divine knowledge, divine love, and divine bliss. This entrenches the intellect in the love, bliss, and knowledge of God. By God’s grace, when we experience the higher taste of divine bliss, the agitation for sensual happiness is extinguished. Once that hankering for material objects ceases, one goes beyond all suffering and the mind becomes tranquil. In that state of internal fulfillment, the intellect becomes firm in its decision that God alone is the source of happiness and is the final goal of the soul. Previously, the intellect was accepting this only on the basis of knowledge as stated in the scriptures, but now it gets the experience of perfect peace and divine bliss. This convinces the intellect beyond any shadow of doubt, and it becomes steadily situated in God. Lord Krishna explains that when the mind is placid and pure it has enacted for itself the cessation of all miseries arising from conjunction with *prakriti* materialism. *Prasanna-chetah* refers to that delightful one whose mind is expunged of all impediments that hinders it from realizing the eternal soul while bestowing the spiritual intelligence needed for illumination. Thus when the mind has been purified all sorrow is terminated.