

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 35: Chapter 4, Verses 10-14

(January 2 –January 8, 2019)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।

*vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā man-mayā mām upāśhritāḥ
bahavo jñāna-tapasā pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ ४-१० ॥

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

*ye yathā mām prapadyante tāns tathaiva bhajāmyaham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣhyāḥ pārtha sarvaśhaḥ*

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ४-११ ॥

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

*kāṅkṣhantaḥ karmaṇām siddhiṁ yajanta iha devatāḥ
kṣhipram hi mānuṣhe loka siddhir bhavati karmajā*

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ ४-१२ ॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्माविभागशः ।

*chātur-varṇyam mayā sṛiṣṭam guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśhaḥ
tasya kartāram api mām viddhyakartāram avyayam*

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ ४-१३ ॥

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti na me karma-phale sprihā
iti mām yo 'bhijānāti karmabhir na sa badhyate*

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥ ४-१४ ॥

TRANSLATION

- (10)** Being freed from attachment, fear, and anger, becoming fully absorbed in Me, and taking refuge in Me, many persons in the past became purified by the penance of knowledge of Me, and thus attained My divine love.
- (11)** In whatever way people surrender unto Me, I reciprocate with them accordingly. All mankind follows My path, O Arjuna, in all respects.
- (12)** In this world, those desiring success in material activities worship the demigods, since material rewards manifest quickly.
- (13)** The four divisions of occupations were created by Me according to people's qualities and activities (aptitudes). Although I am the creator of this system, know me to be the non-doer and eternal.
- (14)** Activities do not taint me, nor do I desire the fruits of action. One who knows me in this way never gets entangled by reactions to fruitive actions.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=12XH4pQN2RWEs5M3Rp1x7Z4jZJUdHkAOo>

Commentary:

Verse 10:

In this verse Lord Krishna declares that those that truly know Him attain Him. One would, however, wonder if there are any requirements necessary for attaining Him or does it mean that oneness with Him in His abode transpires automatically with knowledge of Him. To clear this up, Lord Krishna states that one must be totally freed from passion, fear and anger to earn His love. Passion is attachment to the material world and family life. Fear is abhorrence of frightening situations due to lack of faith in God. Anger is a state of mind that blows up when one's ardent desires are frustrated by obstacles. This clearly indicates that *jnana yoga* or the cultivation of knowledge is essential for the mind to control the senses. The very knowledge of the Supreme Lord's transcendental names, forms, attributes, pastimes and abode is the penance which dissolves all *karmas*. Thus, wholly absorbed internally and externally in the wonderful and phenomenal Supreme Lord, one naturally attains His divine love.

Verse 11:

If Lord Krishna only bestows His rewards upon those who are devoted to Him but not to those who are devoted to sense gratification and worldly attachment, then there would appear to be some injustice in this. In order to correct this notion, Lord Krishna states in this verse that regardless of whatever way one approaches Him, with desires or without desires, direct or indirect, He rewards them all accordingly and this is not only for His devotees who worship Him exclusively; but also for all those who worship others in various religions and denominations. It is a fact that all living beings in all different ways and in all respects follow Lord Krishna's path as He resides as the supreme soul

within all living beings. In conclusion, the Supreme Lord Krishna is the ultimate dispenser of all rewards to everyone regardless of whom one offers one's homage to.

Verse 12:

One may argue that since the Supreme Lord Krishna (The Brahman or Paramaatman in this context) is the exclusive grantor of *moksha* or liberation from the cycle of birth and death, then why is it that many people worship demigods instead of Him? In this verse, Lord Krishna answers this question by saying that most people desire material benefits such as wealth, power, good health and family life, which are easy and quick to obtain from demigods. But *moksha* or liberation is only achieved as a result of cultivating Vedic knowledge about the Supreme Lord and is hard to attain. Besides, this knowledge must often be refined and perfected by picking up where one left off in a previous birth through many lifetimes. A vast majority of people in their current life have no knowledge of and no intrinsic interest in an esoteric entity such as *moksha*. It is to be noted here that the demigods give rewards and boons only by the powers bestowed upon them by the Supreme Lord. People who are not aware of this, approach the demigods, but those who are spiritually advanced enough to differentiate God from demigods, skip the intermediary deity and instead approach the Supreme Lord directly for the fulfillment of their desires. Ironically, however, the ones who recognize, approach, and genuinely experience The Supreme Lord will have, by that time, lost all their worldly aspirations, and will instead be craving to attain Him!

Verse 13:

The Vedas classify people into **four categories of occupations, not according to their birth, but according to their natural inclinations or predispositions.** These four divisions include *brahmins* or the priestly class, *ksatriyas* or the royal/warrior class, the *vaishyas* or the farming/trading class and *shudras* or the servant class. Such diverse occupations exist in every society. Even in communist nations where equality is the overriding principle, the diversity in human society cannot be avoided. The Vedic philosophy explains this variety in a more scientific manner. It states that the material energy is constituted of three *gunas* (modes): *sattvic guna* (mode of goodness), *rajasic guna* (mode of passion), and *tamasic guna* (mode of ignorance). The Brahmins are those who have a preponderance of the mode of goodness. They are predisposed toward teaching and worship. The Kshatriyas are those who have a preponderance of the mode of passion mixed with a smaller amount of the mode of goodness. They are inclined toward administration, protection and management. The Vaishyas are those who possess the mode of passion mixed with some mode of ignorance. Accordingly, they form the business and agricultural class. Then there are the Shudras, who are predominated by the mode of ignorance. They form the working class. **This classification was neither meant to be based on birth, nor was it unchangeable, and anyone could change one's profession at free will at any time! There was absolutely no caste system during either the Vedic Period that ended ~1000 BCE or the immediately past Vedic Period that lasted another 500 years.** (For details, please refer to the recent PBHM Pravachan on the Hindu Caste System Posted on The PBHM Website: ([The Caste System: A Curse On Hinduism. Are Vedas To Be Blamed?](#))). Shree Krishna explains in this verse that the classification of the *Varṇāśram* system was according to people's qualities, inclinations and activities. Although God is the creator of the scheme of the world, yet he is the non-doer. Take for example, the rain. Just as the rain water falls equally on the forest, yet from some seeds huge banyan trees sprout, from other seeds beautiful flowers bloom, and from still others, some thorny bushes emerge. The rain, which is impartial, is not answerable for this

difference. In the same way, God provides the souls with the energy and advice to act, but they are free in determining what they wish to do with it; God is not responsible for their actions.

Verse 14:

Pure entities are never tainted by contacts with impure materials, take for example, the sun, the fire, and the Ganges. The sun does not get tainted if sunlight falls on a puddle of urine. The sun retains his purity, while also purifying the dirty puddle. Similarly, if we offer impure objects into the fire, it still retains its purity—the fire is pure, and whatever we pour into it also gets purified. In the same manner, numerous gutters of rainwater merge into the holy Ganges, but this does not make the Ganges a gutter—the Ganges is pure and it transforms all those dirty gutters into the holy Ganges. Likewise, God is not tainted by the activities He performs because God is all-pure, and whatever He does also becomes pure and auspicious. Activities bind one in karmic reactions when they are performed with the intent of enjoying the results. However, God's actions are not motivated by selfishness; His every act is driven by compassion for the souls. Therefore, although He administers the world directly or indirectly, and engages in all kinds of activities in the process, He is never tainted by any reactions. Lord Krishna states here that he is transcendental to the fruitive reactions of work. Even Saints who are situated in God-consciousness become transcendental to the material energy. Since all their activities are performed in love for God, such pure-hearted Saints are not bound by the fruitive reactions of work.