

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 113: Chapter 12, Verses 01-05

(July 01 – July 07, 2020)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

अथ द्वादशोऽध्यायः

ATHA DWADASHODHYAAYAH

अजुन उवाच ।

arjuna uvācha

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ १२-१ ॥

*evaṁ satata-yuktā ye bhaktās tvāṁ paryupāsate
ye chāpy akṣharam avyaktam teṣhām ke yoga-vittamāḥ*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

śhrī-bhagavān uvācha

मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेताः ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ १२-२ ॥

*mayy āveśhya mano ye mām nitya-yuktā upāsate
śhraddhayā parayopetās te me yuktatamā matāḥ*

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यञ्च कूटस्थमचलन्ध्रुवम् ॥ १२-३ ॥

*ye tv akṣharam anirdeśhyam avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatra-gam achintyañcha kūṭa-stham achalandhruvam*

सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ १२-४ ॥

*sanniyamyendriya-grāmaṁ sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mām eva sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ*

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ॥
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥ १२-५ ॥

*kleśho 'dhikataras teṣhām avyaktāsakta-chetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham dehavadbhīr avāpyate*

TRANSLATION

- (01)** Arjun inquired: Between those who are steadfastly devoted to Your personal form and those who worship the imperishable, formless *Brahman*, who do You consider to be a more perfect in *Yogi*?
- (02)** The Blessed Lord said: Those who fix their minds on Me and always engage in My devotion with steadfast faith, I consider them to be the best yogis.
- (03)** But those who worship the formless aspect of the Absolute Truth—the imperishable, the indefinable, the unmanifest, the all-pervading, the unthinkable, + the unchanging, the eternal, and the immoveable—by restraining their senses and being even-minded everywhere, such persons, engaged in the welfare of all beings,
- (04)** also attain Me.
- (05)** For those whose minds are attached to the unmanifest, the path of realization is full of tribulations. Worship of the unmanifest is exceedingly difficult for embodied beings.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aB6Ct3iTznx7W8yL1uaUSlm0JLZ3Ow2e/view?usp=sharing>

Chapter 12

Verse 01:

In this verse, Arjuna asks Lord Krishna about which of the following two paths, elaborated in previous chapters of Bhagavadgita, is superior for practicing *Yoga*, the science of uniting the individual consciousness (*atma* or *soul*) with the ultimate consciousness (*supersoul* or *paramaatman*). In Chapter 11, Arjun saw the cosmic, impersonal form of the Lord, which encompasses the entire universe. Having seen it, he preferred to behold God in His two-handed personal form, with Attributes, Qualities, and Pastimes. Thus, God has both aspects—the all-pervading formless Brahman and the personal form. Those who say that God cannot possess a personal form limit Him, and those who say that God only exists in a personal form also limit Him. God is perfect and complete, and so He is both formless and possessing forms. So, having witnessed both forms, Arjuna is now curious regarding who are more perfect—the devotees who worship the personal form of God or those who worship the impersonal Brahman. At the conclusion of Chapter 11, Lord Krishna declared that one who performs all actions dedicated to Him and has only Him as the ultimate goal, and being exclusively devoted to Him, attains Him. Although both paths are exemplary, Arjuna is requesting Lord Krishna to tell him which of the two paths is superior or better suited for *Yoga*.

Verse 02:

In this verse, Lord Krishna confirms that those who with firm faith focus their consciousness exclusively upon Him without cessation are *yuktatamah* or the most superior of all the worshipers. The words *aveshya manah* means focusing the mind and fixing the heart exclusively upon Lord Krishna. Otherwise, if it is not exclusive, something else may enter in and then it will not be possible for the Supreme Lord to be their only object of meditation. The word *shraddha* means firm faith and those so endowed eagerly and enthusiastically strive for divine communion with the Supreme Lord. Those who propitiate Lord Krishna in this way with mind and hearts absorbed totally in Him are His best devotees and *yuktamamah*, the most superior of all as they joyfully, skillfully, and with great determination navigate themselves swiftly through the currents of life to attain eternal communion with the Supreme Lord.

Verses 03 + 04:

In verse 2 above, Lord Krishna told Arjuna that the worship of His personal form is superior to that of His impersonal form. In this verse, He puts an addendum to that statement by saying that in no way does He reject the worship of the formless. Those who devote themselves to the all-pervading, indefinable, unmanifest, inconceivable, immovable, eternal Brahman with a total focus, also attain Him. In Chapter 4, Verse 11, Lord Krishna stated: “*In whatever way people surrender unto Me, I reciprocate with them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pritha.*” Here, Lord Krishna confirms that the worshipers of the formless also reach Him. Since their choice is to unite with the Supreme Absolute Truth without attributes, God meets them as the unmanifest, all-pervading, impersonal Brahman.

Verse 05:

Here, Lord Krishna explains why the worship of His personal form is superior to that of the unmanifest form. He says that worshipping the abstract, unmanifest, impersonal Brahman is very difficult and requires excessive tribulation. This is because it is not easily possible to imagine what to focus upon when it cannot be perceived by the mind and senses. One who only contemplates something abstract and unmanifest can never envision what they are unable to perceive and thus the mind is not able to realize it and is only rarely achieved with great difficulty.