

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 47: Chapter 5, Verses 21-25

(March 27 –April 2, 2019)

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बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।

स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥ ५-२१ ॥

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ ५-२२ ॥

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।

कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ ५-२३ ॥

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥ ५-२४ ॥

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ ५-२५ ॥

TRANSLITERATION

*bāhya-sparśheṣvasaktātmā vindatyātmani yat sukham
sa brahma-yoga-yuktātmā sukham akṣhayam aśhnute*

*ye hi sansparśha-jā bhogā duḥkha-yonaya eva te
ādyantavantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhaḥ*

*śhaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhum prāk śharīra-vimokṣhaṇāt
kāma-krodhodbhavaṁ vegaṁ sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ*

*yo 'ntaḥ-sukho 'ntar-ārāmas tathāntar-jyotir eva yaḥ
sa yogī brahma-nirvāṇaṁ brahma-bhūto 'dhigachchhati*

*labhante brahma-nirvāṇam ṛṣhayaḥ kṣhīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ
chhinna-dvaidhā yatātmānaḥ sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ*

TRANSLATION

- (21)** Those who are not attached to external sense pleasures realize divine bliss in the self. Being united with God through Yoga, they experience unending happiness.
- (22)** The pleasures that arise from contact with the sense objects, though appearing as enjoyable to worldly-minded people, are verily a source of misery. O son of Kunti, such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise do not delight in them.
- (23)** Those persons are yogis, who before giving up the body are able to check the forces of desire and anger; and they alone are happy.
- (24)** Those who are happy within themselves, enjoying the delight of God within, and are illumined by the inner light, such yogis are united with the Lord and are liberated from material existence.
- (25)** Those holy persons, whose sins have been purged, whose doubts are annihilated, whose minds are disciplined, and who are devoted to the welfare of all beings, attain God and are liberated from material existence.

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1pP8VikitwJt9DmJcy1zMo7Z_WnwnzKen

Chapter 5

Verse 21:

The word *sparsheshu* here means sense pleasures and those attached to them are called *spharsha*. But one whose mind is unattached and is withdrawn internally, ceases to crave, yearn and desire for indulging in the objects of the senses. Such a person attains the sublime and serene bliss that is the nature of the atma or soul. The Vedic scriptures repeatedly describe God as an ocean of unlimited divine bliss. The *Yogi*, who absorbs the senses, mind, and intellect in God, begins to experience the infinite bliss of God who is seated within. Having attained the wonder of *atma*- or self-realization of the soul, one continuously identifies with the *Brahman* (*Paramaatman* or the Supersoul) by being immersed in this consciousness and experiences the never-ending bliss.

Verse 22:

Here Lord Krishna describes how material pleasures are finite and suffer from the feeling of discontentment. One may feel happiness on becoming a millionaire, but the same millionaire becomes discontented on seeing a billionaire, and thinks, "If only I also had one billion, then I too would be happy." He will continuously strive to become a billionaire. The mind, which is like the sixth sense, derives pleasure from honor, praise, circumstances, success, etc. All these pleasures of body and mind are known as *bhog* (material enjoyment). Such worldly pleasures cannot satisfy the soul. Worldly pleasures are

temporary. Once they finish, they again leave one with the feeling of misery. In contrast, the bliss of God is infinite, giving total satisfaction and so does not invoke additional desires to be satisfied. The word *samsparshaja* means contact of the senses with their objects, which precipitates material pleasures, giving the illusion of happiness, but are actually a source of misery, pain and suffering. When one begins to enjoy divine bliss, the mind loses all taste for material pleasures. Those endowed with the faculty of discrimination between material pleasure and divine bliss opt to choose the latter.

Verse 23:

It has been repeatedly said earlier in the Bhagavadgita (see for example, Chapter 2, Verse 62) that the desire (*Kaama*) leads to both anger (*Krodha*) and greed (*Lobha*). When one's desire is not fulfilled, it leads to anger. When the desire does get fulfilled, it only leads to greed (or more desire). The urges of desire and anger are very powerful. Even animals are subject to these urges, but unlike humans they are not bestowed with the discrimination to restrain them. However, the human intellect has been bestowed with the power of discrimination. The word *Sodhum* means "to withstand." This verse instructs us to withstand the urges of desire and anger. The resolute intellect should be used to check the mind. As soon as the thought of savoring a material pleasure comes to the mind, one should bring the knowledge to the intellect that these are sources of misery. One should practice austerities to purify one's heart, and enjoy the unlimited bliss of God. This opportunity to practice discrimination is available only while the human body exists, and one who is able to check the forces of desire and anger while living, becomes a *Yogi*. Such a person alone tastes the divine bliss within and becomes happy.

Verse 24:

In this verse, the phrase *yo'ntah sukho* means "one who is internally happy." There are two kinds of happiness: one that we get from external objects, and another that we experience from within when we absorb the mind in God. If we do not experience happiness within, we will not be able to permanently resist external temptations. But when the bliss of God starts flowing within the heart, then the fleeting external pleasures seem trivial in comparison and are easy to renounce. "*Happiness Within*" comes from the divine knowledge (*Inner Light*) that is bestowed upon us through self-realization, by the grace of God, when we surrender to Him. One who is thus illuminated from within by the eternal *Atma* is a *Yogi* and such a person is situated in the *Brahman* or spiritual substratum pervading all existence, and surely achieves *Moksha* or liberation from the material bondage.

Verse 25:

In the previous verse, Lord Krishna talked about the *Yogis* who are internally happy through divine knowledge that results from self-realization. In this verse, He explains that sins of such *Yogis* are forgiven, their doubts are cleared, their minds are under control, and they are actively engaged in the welfare of all beings. The trait of compassion is the intrinsic nature of all saints. Motivated by it, they use their words, mind, and body for the welfare of others. However, there are two types of welfare, including (a) material welfare, which is temporary, and (b) spiritual welfare that is eternal. Welfare schemes that are committed to bodily care only result in temporary welfare. Take for example, a person who is hungry; he

is given food, and his hunger is satiated. But after 4-5 hours, he is hungry again. Spiritual welfare, on the other hand, goes right to the root of all material suffering, and endeavors to revive the God-consciousness of the soul. Therefore, the highest welfare activity is to help a person unite his or her consciousness with God. This is the kind of welfare work that the elevated souls with purified minds engage in. Such welfare activity further attracts God's grace, which elevates them even further on the path. Finally, when they have achieved complete purification of the mind and perfected their surrender to God, they are liberated to the spiritual realm (*Moksha*).