

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 45: Chapter 5, Verses 11-15

(March 13 –March 19, 2019)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ ५-११ ॥
युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ ५-१२ ॥
सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ ५-१३ ॥
न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ ५-१४ ॥
नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ ५-१५ ॥

*kāyena manasā buddhyā kevalair indriyair api
yogīnaḥ karma kurvanti saṅgaṁ tyaktvātma-
śuddhaye
yuktaḥ karma-phalaṁ tyaktvā śhāntim āpnoti
naiṣṭhikīm
ayuktaḥ kāma-kāreṇa phale sakto nibadhyate
sarva-karmāṇi manasā sannasyāste sukhaṁ
vaśhī
nava-dvāre pure dehī naiva kurvan na kārayan
na karṭṛitvaṁ na karmāṇi lokasya sṛijati
prabhuḥ
na karma-phala-saṅyogaṁ svabhāvas tu
pravartate
nādatte kasyachit pāpaṁ na chaiva sukṛitaṁ
vibhuḥ
ajñānenāvṛitaṁ jñānaṁ tena muhyanti
jantavaḥ*

TRANSLATION

- (11)** The yogis, while giving up attachment, perform actions with their body, senses, mind, and intellect, only for the purpose of self-purification.
- (12)** Offering the results of all activities to God, the *Karma Yogis* attain everlasting peace. Whereas those who, being impelled by their desires, work with a selfish motive become entangled because they are attached to the fruits of their actions.
- (13)** The embodied beings who are self-controlled and detached reside happily in the city of nine gates, free from thinking they are the doers or the cause of anything.
- (14)** Neither the sense of doership nor the nature of actions comes from God; nor does He create the fruits of actions. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature (*gunas*).
- (15)** The omnipresent God does not involve Himself in the sinful or virtuous deeds of anyone. The living entities are deluded because their inner knowledge is covered by ignorance.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1OfUGHKzenZB1AQJeKTwZDUaOz1pvLxVM>

Chapter 5

Verse 11:

In many previous instances in Bhagavadgita, Lord Krishna has advised Arjuna that one should do one's work without expecting to receive any fruits of one's actions, but instead should completely dedicate one's work to God. In this verse, Lord Krishna brings a new twist to the often repeated phrase "dedication of one's work to God". He poses the question, "why would God ever need the dedication of anybody's work to Himself especially since he is self-content, perfect, and the Supreme Why would Lord of everything that exists in this Universe need anything from us? He says the enlightened yogis perform their works for the sole purpose of purification of their minds. Those who have indeed become accomplished in *Karma Yoga* or prescribed Vedic activities without desiring rewards simply let their body, mind and senses perform their natural functions as instruments to effect *atma-suddhi* or self-purification which breaks the bonds of the past deeds that bind the *atma* to *samsara* or the cycle of birth and death. *Karma yoga* should be performed solely for this purpose and not for obtaining worldly or heavenly enjoyments.

Verse 12:

In this verse, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna why despite performing the same actions some people are bound to material existence while others are released from it. He uses two important words, *Yukta* and *Ayukta*, to describe two categories of people: Those who are "United in Consciousness with God" and others who are "Not United in Consciousness with God", respectively. The first category comprises *Karma Yogis* who relinquish desire for the

rewards of their actions, and instead engage in works solely for the purpose of self-purification. Therefore, they soon attain divine consciousness and eternal bliss. The people falling in the second category are those who are incited by material cravings and lustful desires for the rewards of their actions. The reactions of their work simply bind them to the material world and the cycle of life and death.

Verse 13:

Here, Lord Krishna describes the physical body as the city of nine gates, which include two ears, one mouth, two nostrils, two eyes, anus, and genitals. The supreme Lord sits within this body, while also controlling all living beings in the world. When the soul establishes its connection with the Lord, it becomes free like Him, even while residing in the body. Thus, the enlightened *Yogis* do not see themselves as the body, rather, they hold the body and all activities performed by it as belonging to God. Renouncing all actions through their mind, such enlightened souls remain happily situated in their body. A person of controlled mind and sense organs is well aware that the ego and ideas of I-ness and my-ness revolve around the bodily conception so they never ignorantly think that the physical body is who they really are and hence understand that any doership is not of the nature of the *atma* or soul.

Verse 14:

One might argue about who is virtuous and who is sinful when the actions of all beings is impelled by the Supreme Lord, and hence, both virtuous and sinful actions should go to Him. In this verse, Lord Krishna answers this question by emphasizing that God is not responsible for our actions as well as the false sense of doership. The fact is that the soul brings this false pride onto itself out of ignorance. If the soul chooses to do away with the ignorance, then God helps dispel it with His grace. Thus, renunciation of the sense of doership is the responsibility of the soul. The body is constituted of the three modes of material nature, including *Tamas* (darkness/ignorance), *Rajas* (excess/passion) and *Sattva* (goodness/balance), and all actions are performed by these modes. But out of ignorance, the soul identifies with the body and becomes implicated as the doer of actions, which are in fact done by material nature. It is the Supreme Lord's external energy *Maya* or the deluding illusory energy that directs the embodied being according to their degree of nescience from reactions to past life activities.

Verse 15:

This is a continuation of the theme of the previous verse. Here, Lord Krishna once again clarifies that He is not responsible for anyone's sinful or pious actions, nor does He accept them. So, God is not connected to any merit or demerit they may incur by their actions. If the Supreme Lord, the impeller of all beings is not involved in the doership and activities of the embodied beings and He is not a recipient of any of their merits and demerits, then why is it that embodied beings perform actions that bind them to material existence? The word *jnanam* or knowledge denoting cognizance is used to explain this here. One's natural cognizance and spiritual discrimination is enveloped in ignorance since time immemorial and so the embodied being is infatuated by delusion. They perform sinful activities believing them to be good and when they receive severe repercussions as reactions for such sinful activities, they blame the Supreme Lord. The individual soul has the freedom to perform

good or bad actions by the exercise of its own free will. That free will is the basis of the play of creation and it accounts for the varieties of consciousness amongst the souls in existence.