

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 63: Chapter 7, Verses 12-16

(July 17 –July 23, 2019)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ ७-१२ ॥

*ye chaiva sāttvikā bhāvā rājasās tāmasāśh cha ye
matta eveti tān viddhi na tvaham teṣhu te mayi*

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैभवैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ ७-१३ ॥

*tribhīr guṇa-mayair bhāvair ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat
mohitaṁ nābhijānāti māmēbhyaḥ param avyayam*

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ ७-१४ ॥

*daivī hyeṣhā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te*

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ ७-१५ ॥

*na mām duṣhkṛitino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛita-jñānā āsuram bhāvam āśhritāḥ*

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ ७-१६ ॥

*chatur-vidhā bhajante mām janāḥ sukṛitino 'rjuna
ārto jijñāsura arthārthī jñānī cha bharatarṣhabha*

TRANSLATION

- (12)** The three states of material existence—goodness, passion, and ignorance—are manifested by my energy. They are in me, but I am beyond them.
- (13)** Deluded by the three modes of Maya, the people in this world are unable to know me, the imperishable and eternal.
- (14)** My divine energy Maya, consisting of the three modes of nature, is very difficult to overcome. But those who surrender unto me cross over it easily.
- (15)** Four kinds of people do not surrender unto me—those ignorant of knowledge, those who lazily follow their lower nature though capable of knowing me, those with deluded intellect, and those with a demoniac nature.
- (16)** O best amongst the Bharatas, four kinds of pious people engage in my devotion—the distressed, the seekers after knowledge, the seekers of worldly possessions, and those who are situated in knowledge.

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Chapter 7

Verse 12:

Here Lord Krishna explains that whatever exists in all creation, possessing the characteristics of the three *gunas* or modes, which are *sattva* or goodness, *rajas* or passion and *tamas* or nescience, all of which emanate solely from the Supreme Lord. Constituting His body as they do, they all eternally reside within Him; but *na tvaham teshu* meaning He is not in them. At times He incarnates in the material creation for the purpose of maintaining the universal order or to enjoy His *lilas* or divine pastimes but to do so He does not have to give up His transcendental, spiritual form for a material body as His attributes, powers and qualities all remain intact. All creation comprised of animate and inanimate beings emanates solely from Him, is sustained by Him, and likewise is dissolved again back into Him. In the relationship between cause and effect, the Supreme Lord is always superior due exclusively to His personal potency of powers, qualities and attributes with no other support. This is because He alone is the cause and the source, the maintainer and sustainer of the entire creation and is completely independent. Regarding all other sentient beings throughout creation, the *atma* or soul is seen to depend upon the physical body for its residence but without a soul the vitality is deactivated in the physical body and it will perish. But the Supreme Lord possessing a transcendental, spiritual body which is not material does not depend upon physicality. He is totally independent and although He has ordered

things in such a way as to reside in all sentient beings, it is for no other purpose than His *lila* or pastime.

Verse 13:

In this verse, Lord Krishna explains why billions of humans on this earth do not recognize Him as the Supreme Lord and controller of all as well as the cause and source of all creation. He says: *sarvam idam jagat mohitam*, meaning the entire creation is deluded. This is due to the influence of the three *gunas* or modes, including goodness (*Sattva*) possessing discrimination and righteousness, passion (*Rajas*) possessing pride and desire and the mode of ignorance (*Tamas*) possessing ignorance. These three modes infatuate all living entities causing their higher consciousness to be veiled and inaccessible. Thus it is not possible for the vast majority of human beings as well as other living entities to recognize Lord Krishna's, imperishable, eternal, and paramount position above all creation. Also these humans are unable to perceive that He manifests and incarnates in the material worlds in His eternal spiritual body which is immutable and not subject to decay or modification and He does this for the welfare of His devotees. The conclusion is that all these human beings do not recognize Lord Krishna as He factually is possessed of eternal, transcendental attributes and divine qualities. Thus, they are unable to attain His divine potency which enables them to free themselves from *samsara* or the endless cycle of birth and death and thus remaining in bondage are reborn again and again endlessly.

Verse 14:

Here, Lord Krishna says that Maya is his divine energy. The meaning of the word “Maya” comes from the roots *mā* (not) and *yā* (what is). Thus, Maya means “that which is not what it appears to be.” The Śhwetāśhvatar Upaniṣhad states: *māyām tu prakṛitīm vidyānmāyinaṁ tu maheśhvaram* (4.10)[v13]: “Maya is the energy (*prakṛiti*), while God is the Energetic.” Lord Krishna also says that Maya is very difficult to overcome because it is composed of three modes of nature—*Sattvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic* (goodness, passion and ignorance) qualities—which strongly shield the true nature of the Supreme Lord from souls who have not yet attained the eligibility for God-realization. How then can anyone overcome Maya? Lord Krishna answers this question in the second line of the verse. He says, “Arjun, if you surrender to me, the Supreme Lord, then by my grace, I will take you across the ocean of material existence. I will indicate to Maya that this soul has become mine. Please leave him alone”. In order to understand this concept, let us take an example from everyday life. Let us say that you wish to meet your friend and reach the gate of his house. He has a board on his fence, saying “Beware of dog.” His pet German Shepherd is standing in the lawn and, as a trained guard dog, growls at you menacingly. You decide to try the back gate and go around the fence. However, the mighty dog comes around too and snarls furiously, conveying the message, “I dare you to step into this house.” When you have no other option, you call out to your friend. He emerges from his house and sees his dog troubling you. He calls out, “No, Smokey! Come and sit here.” The dog is immediately pacified and comes and sits by his master’s side. Now, you open the gate fearlessly and walk in. Similarly, the

material energy that is troubling us is subservient to God. By our own efforts we cannot overcome it. The way to go across it is to fully surrender to God.

Verse 15:

Here Lord Krishna gives four categories of people who do not surrender to God:

(A) The Moodha (ignorant): These are the people who are bereft of spiritual knowledge. They are unaware of their identity as the eternal soul, the goal of life, which is God-realization, and the process of surrendering to the Lord with loving devotion. Their lack of knowledge prevents them from surrendering to God. (B) The Naradhamah (Those who lazily follow their lower nature): These are the ignoble members of society who although know the Supreme Lord's glory, disdain to offer Him respect and homage. These are people who do have basic spiritual knowledge and are aware of what they are supposed to do. However, they refuse to put in the effort to surrender, out of the force of inertia of their lower nature. This laziness in exerting oneself to act according to the religious principles is a big pitfall on the path of spirituality. (C) The Mayayapahrta (Those with deluded intellect): These are people who are very proud of their intellects. If they hear the teachings of the saints and the scriptures, they are not willing to accept them with faith. However, not all spiritual truths are immediately evident. First, we need to have faith in the process and begin the practice for only then can we understand the teachings through realization. Those who refuse to have faith in anything that is not evident to them in the present, refuse to surrender to God, who is beyond sense perception. Lord Krishna puts these people in the third category, and finally (D) The Asuram Bhavam Asritah (Those with a demoniac nature): These are the people who know there is a God, but work in evil and diametrically opposite ways to thwart God's purpose in the world. Because of a demoniac nature, they hate the nature of God's revealed personality. They are unable to stand anyone singing His glories or engaging in His devotion. Quite obviously, such people do not surrender to God.

Verse 16:

Only humans who are *sukritino*, meaning righteous and virtuous, surrender to the Supreme Lord Krishna becoming exclusively devoted to Him. Such humans are of four classes distinguished by their different grades of virtue. In the order they are given, each succeeding class is more superior to the preceding one due to being more elevated and exalted making it more meritorious. The four classes are: (A) The Artto (The Distressed): are those impoverished and distressed after losing all wealth and power and desire to have the Supreme Lord recover it for them and re- instate it. (B) The Atharthi (The Seekers of Knowledge): are those who having never enjoyed power and fortune desire the Supreme Lord to give them the ability to acquire them. (C) The jijnasur (The Seekers of Self-Realization): who are anxious to know the *atma* or soul in its state separate from matter for the benefit of escaping transmigration, the cycle of birth and death, and pray to the Supreme Lord for the benediction to discover this, and (D) The Jnani (Those who are situated in knowledge): who are the seekers of knowledge about the Supreme Lord who realize that the *atma* is essentially characterised by its being an eternal ingredient of the Supreme Lord residing within all embodied beings. They consider the Supreme Lord as their goal of life and attainment of Him as the fulfilment of all ambitions.