

Bhagavad Gita- Demystified

By Paramahansa Nithyananda

Chapter 2- You Are God Follow That Man!

- 2.54 O Keśava! What is the description of one who stays in the present moment and is merged in the awareness of truth and wisdom? How does one of steady wisdom speak, how does he sit, how does he walk?
- 2.55 Srī Bhagavān said: O Pārtha, A man who casts off completely all the desires of the mind and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, He is said to be one of steady wisdom.
- 2.56 He whose mind is not disturbed by adversity, and who in prosperity does not go after other pleasures, He who is free from attachment, fear or anger is called a sage of steady wisdom.
- 2.57 His wisdom is fixed on one who is everywhere without attachment Meeting with anything good or bad, and who neither rejoices nor hates.
- 2.58 As the tortoise withdraws its limbs from all sides, when a person withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, His wisdom becomes steady.
- 2.59 From the body, the sense objects turn away, but the desires remain; His desires also leave him on seeing the Supreme.

Arjuna is now curious and wants to know more. He asks Krisna, 'You are telling me all this; that is wonderful. You tell me that I must perform without expectations and attachment and that I must be centered in wisdom. I would like to live that way and move on the path of wisdom. Pray, tell me what kind of a person is this, the one who is always in awareness in the present moment? How does he behave, walk and talk? Let me model myself on him.'

Arjuna has realized that whatever he said earlier had arisen from his confusion. When Krisna tells him to behave in a manner befitting the code of the warriors, it makes good sense to Arjuna, since this is the conditioning that he has been brought up in. However, when Krisna tells him to do what he has to do without being concerned about the outcome, Arjuna is confused. He has rarely done anything in his life without first thinking about what is going to happen as a result of his action.

Arjuna is the greatest of marksmen. He is conditioned to first define his target and then act. Krisna has confused him totally now. Krisna says, 'Release your arrow; where it lands is my business.' Arjuna has enough trust in Krisna not to ignore this instruction from the Divine. So he asks, 'What kind of a person is not concerned about the result, whether it is good or bad, painful or joyful, and how do I identify with such a person?' Arjuna is asking Krisna for the specifications of the person he should emulate so that he too can become what Krisna wants him to become. This is the basis of modern day Neuro-Linguistic Programming!

Krisna responds, 'This man is free from desires and emotions. He has neither greed nor fear. He is always centered in himself. Pleasures through the senses do not interest him. He has withdrawn his senses from the external world and has focused them inwards, directed them towards that supreme Truth that is beyond all pleasures, attachments, emotions and sense objects. Once he realizes that truth, even the longing for that truth leaves him.'

Seeking the Unattached

‘Nirmohatve niscalatatvam,’ says Ādi Śhakarācārya, taking a cue from the master. It means: Absence of desires leads to a clear and still mind steeped in wisdom. When there are no desires, there are no emotions such as joy, elation, depression, sadness, anger, disappointment, jealousy, that normally arise from the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of such desires. When the mind is without fear and anger, without expectations of success and failure, the unattached mind seeks that which is unattached. The desire for the objects disappears as truth dawns.

This universe is responsible for all of us. We exist not because of our actions and ourselves but in spite of them. When we let go, when we listen to the universe, it gives us all that we need to live with abundance, but the problem is that we don’t listen. We do not stop with our needs but get greedy with our wants as well. There is no way all our wants can be fulfilled without taking away the needs of other beings in this universe.

The law of the jungle operates beautifully without man. Animals act based on needs and not on wants. A lion kills because it has to eat, not because it sees another lion killing. It would kill only to appease its own hunger or when its own life is threatened. Once the human being enters the scene, this equation changes. Man engages in wanton killing without caring about what he needs. Unlike animals, man no longer expresses his innate intelligence.

Krisna aptly provides the example of the tortoise to illustrate how to withdraw one’s senses inwards. The tortoise follows its instincts to obey nature; it lives in the present moment. It moves when its sensors report that there is no danger and it withdraws completely when it senses threat. Its entire cycle of life is tuned to the wisdom of nature. It is not an active and adventurous living being, but it is celebrated in all ancient cultures for its longevity and steadiness. Man is obviously a different being from the rest of the animals. He alone has the power to decide whether to follow the wisdom of nature inherent in him as in all other beings, or reject it to be ‘unintelligent’. An animal, when it indulges in any act, whether of mating, caring, killing or saving its own life, does all and any of these with tremendous focus. The animal always lives in its present moment. Not so the human. For the human, his mind is never where his body is.

Corporate people ask me how to make right decisions. It is simple. When you focus intensely on the job at hand and make a decision based on the information available at that moment, your decisions will always be right. The universal energy guides you in your decision when you settle into yourself, focus inwards and withdraw your senses as the tortoise does.

What do you all do instead? Half the time you postpone decisions because you are afraid of the consequences of the decision. So things happen that are out of your control and that do not favor you. The other half of the time you are led by greed and prejudices based on past experiences and future fantasies, and you decide with no relevance to issues of that moment. You never do anything with complete awareness.

When you do whatever you do with one-hundred percent focus, you are in awareness. You become God!

Monkeys in Your Mind!

- 2.60 O son of Kuntī, the turbulent senses carry away the mind of a wise man,
Though he is striving to be in control.
- 2.61 Having restrained them all, he should sit steadfast, intent on Me.
Whose senses are under control, his mind is steady in the present.
- 2.62 When a man thinks of objects, it gives rise to attachment for them.
From attachment, desire arises; from desire, anger is born.
- 2.63 From anger arises delusion, from delusion, loss of memory, from loss of memory, the loss of
discrimination, from loss of discrimination, he perishes.

- 2.64 The self-controlled man, moving among objects with his senses under control, free from both attraction and repulsion, attains peace.
- 2.65 All pains are destroyed in that peace, for the intellect of the tranquil-minded soon becomes steady.
- 2.66 A person not in self-awareness cannot be wise or happy or peaceful.
How can there be happiness to one without peace?
- 2.67 He loses his awareness of the present moment when his mind follows the wandering senses,
Just as the wind carries away a boat on the waters.

Krisna continues to explain to Arjuna how difficult it is to control the senses and what happens when one loses control of the senses.

It is like this: Once a monkey spotted a jar full of nuts. The jar was big and heavy with a long and narrow neck. The monkey put his hand into the jar and grabbed lots of nuts, but as he had been unable to withdraw his fist from the jar! He thought he was trapped with his hand in the jar!

He didn't realize that all he needed to do was to let go of the nuts and he would be free. His greed enslaved him!

Krisna says that our senses are turbulent, and however much we try to control them, they stay out of control. Even some of the greatest sages, ~~the~~—is, have been known to succumb to sensual pleasures. There is the legendary story of Viśvāmitra, a great sage, who, in the midst of his intense penance, was seduced by the celestial maiden Menakā.

Do you think the gods above have no other business than sending young women down to disturb people who meditate? In that case, I am sure that all men will start meditating from tonight without any compulsion from my side!

Nothing of that sort will happen, so don't start meditation for this reason. It was the suppressed fantasies of Viśvāmitra's mind that took the shape of the celestial nymph. His senses were out of control. Hindu scriptures have referred to brahmacharya as a prerequisite to spiritual evolution and many misinterpret this to be celibacy. Brahmacharya is not merely celibacy; it is more than physical celibacy; it is living in reality without fantasies.

Krisna says that the only way is to focus one's mind on Him once the senses are under control and the mind is steady. The mind cannot be stopped. Thoughts cannot be stopped as long as the body exists. You can only focus your mind on something that transcends sensory pleasures and it will become quiet by itself.

A small story:

A man who was intent on spiritual progress went to a master and begged him to teach him how to control his mind. The master tried to explain that the mind cannot be controlled in the manner he was seeking, by stopping his thoughts, but he wouldn't listen. Fed up, the master gave him a bottle of some liquid and told him to drink three drops three times a day.

The man asked, 'That's it? It will control my mind?'

The master said, 'Just one thing, make sure you don't think of a monkey when you drink the medicine.'

'Oh, sure, quite simple!' said the man as he walked out. At the door, he turned and asked, 'By the way, in case I do think of a monkey, what should I do?'

'Take a shower,' said the master, 'and try again.'

As soon as the man went home, without wasting time, he took out the medicine and opened his mouth to drink it. Just then he remembered the master's warning – and remembered the monkey!

'Oh, my God!' he said to himself, 'Now I have to take a shower. What else to do!'

You can guess the rest of the story. Each time he opened his bottle of medicine, monkeys invaded his

mind and all he did was keep taking showers.

It got to the point where as soon as he got out of the shower, thoughts of monkeys arose in his mind. He ran to the master and pleaded, 'Forget the medicine and the powers. Just get rid of the monkeys, please!'

You can never destroy thoughts or suppress them. You can only witness thoughts and not get involved in them and gradually the mind will settle down. When you settle into the present moment with no expectations and no attachments, you will find that your mind becomes quiet and your senses slow down.

Fall into the Present Moment

Krisna says that from attachment springs desire, from desire arises anger, from anger arises delusion, from delusion comes loss of memory, and from loss of memory develops loss of discrimination which then leads to one's destruction. The only way to stop this, the Lord says, is to control one's senses, center oneself in the present and surrender to Him, the universal energy, and achieve lasting peace.

Go through each of these stages laid down by the master. The path will be crystal clear. Each one of us develops attachment, liking, hatred and dislike for many things based upon our experiences. These likes and dislikes stay in our unconscious memory and even without any conscious awareness on our part they drive us into actions through desires or into inaction through fears. When the desires are fulfilled, there is temporary satisfaction; the desires grow. When the desires do not get fulfilled, we are disappointed, we get angry.

We should be angry with our own selves for having had the desires or for not having worked wholeheartedly towards fulfilling the desire, but we actually get angry with other people whom we think are responsible for our failures. Rarely do we admit that we are the cause of our failures. We normally say, 'Why admit our fault when there are literally millions out there who can carry it for us?' So we create fantasies and delusions about shifting responsibility and gradually erase the memory of our own responsibility for our actions.

The vicious cycle is now almost complete. The moment we fail to take responsibility for our actions, we lose all our powers of intellectual discrimination between right and wrong and resign ourselves to being unaware and engaging in unconscious behavior. This is a one-way road to disaster.

Krisna reveals two very important truths here in the last two verses. One is that you can never be peaceful unless you are aware and conscious. The other is that you cannot be aware if you are led by your senses. Therefore, as long as your senses lead you into what you think is a pleasurable journey, you cannot really be happy or peaceful. It is just another trick your mind is playing on you.

There are many who come and ask me, 'Swamiji, I am so happy just fantasizing. I fantasize about you. It is truly blissful. Yet you say not to do that. You ask me to drop your form. Why?'

Even fantasizing about me or fantasizing about your *istadevatā*, your favorite god, is not going to lead you to happiness. When you lose that form, you will be in depression.

Your happiness is not real happiness. It is just a gap between two periods of sorrow. All this happens when you fantasize about the material also. Imagine your plight when you fantasize about other material objects and desires that can only lead you into more greed. Every single thing that you receive as inputs through your senses is processed and colored by the filter of your mind and ego, and you get to know only what they want you to know.

Your mind is constantly flitting between the future and the past in the form of thoughts. That is what thoughts really are, the journey of your mind between past and future and back, again and again. This journey never stops all through your life unless you make a serious attempt to stop it. On its own, your mind would never want to stay in the present moment, which is the only moment of truth. Your past is the dumping ground of all your regrets and guilt. There is no greater sin that you can commit than carrying these regrets and guilt. Committing an act labeled sinful by society and religion is less of a sin; carrying the guilt of having committed it is the real sin. That is what carries you into hell, even as

you live in this world.

There is no hell in some afterlife. Do you think God has no other job except to chronicle each and every deed and thought you had in your life, mark them good and bad, give you marks and, like a schoolteacher, send you to suffer in hell because you had poor marks? He has no time for all that! Hell for you is what you suffer in this life while living. You suffer with guilt, regret and remorse. You live in hell in this life; you don't go to hell after you die.

Or your mind dwells in the future, a future that does not exist. You speculate and dream creating stories and arguments, planning a case for your future. How much of what you plan is based upon the present reality? There is nothing wrong at all if you are grounded in reality and plan to progress in that reality. That is what I call chronological planning. Chronological planning is necessary if you live in the material world. I do it too. For example, it is planning your day, with what time you will wake up, what time you will have the meeting at the office, what work you will complete during the day, etc. But most of the time what you plan has nothing to do with reality.

You either worry about things that you have no control over and plan how to escape such worries, or desire things not in your reach out of sheer greed. Our senses aid us very ably in these worries and desires. They make us believe that all this is real and make us react to situations as if they are real. It is the same way that we get up from a nightmare sweating profusely out of fear. In the same manner, these projections of our mind appear real to us even when we are fully awake.

Krisna says, 'Get away from your senses; escape from their control; ground yourself in the awareness of the present moment. Only then can you be at peace.'

What is this present moment? What is this awareness? When our mind stops moving back and forth between the past and future, it will by itself land in the present moment. The present moment is what we are doing now. If you are reading this book, don't half-read this book and half-listen to music; don't half-read this book and half-watch television; don't half-read this book and half-talk with someone.

Either focus completely on what you are reading or don't read at all.

When did you really eat last? When I mean eat, I mean eat with full focus on the eating. When was the last time that you can remember each morsel that went into your mouth, without reading a book, watching television or talking to someone, without the food's going into your mouth on auto pilot? If we treat food as junk, it turns into junk in our stomach. So instead of giving us the energy that it should, it makes us want to nap.

The next time you do anything, focus completely on what you are doing at that moment. If you are brushing your teeth, just focus on how the brush moves and how the paste tastes. Stop thinking about the meetings later at your office or getting your children ready for school, or whatever it is that you need to do a few minutes or hours later.

When you settle into the present moment, you are out of the clutches of your senses and mind. You will still see and hear, but none of what you see and hear will divert you from what you are focused on. You will be aware of only what you are doing in that present moment. This is what we call meditation. Meditation is nothing but being focused completely on what you are doing at a particular moment. This is what Buddha calls mindfulness.

Wake Up!

- 2.68 O Mighty-armed, his knowledge is therefore steady whose senses are completely detached from sense objects.
- 2.69 The self-controlled man is awake in that which is night to all beings.
Where all beings are awake, it is night for the sage who sees.
- 2.70 Just as all waters enter the ocean, he attains peace into whom all desires enter, which when filled from all sides, remains unmoved; not the desirer of desires.
- 2.71 The man who moves about abandoning all desires, without longing,

Without the sense of I and mine, attains peace.

2.72 O Pārtha, this is the state of Brahman; none is deluded after attaining this.
Even at the end of life, one attains oneness with Brahman when established in this state.

In His concluding words in this chapter, Krisna clarifies to Arjuna once again, how to reach liberation, how to become one with Brahman, which is one's true and natural state. We have seen that a person not centered in self-awareness and led by his senses cannot be peaceful or happy or wise. A person who is in control of his senses is firmly in control of his mind and emotions. Only such a person is truly awake.

We all think we are awake but are we really? We live in daydreams even if we are awake. We pretend that we are awake, that we are intelligent, that we are thinking and that we are making the right decisions. The only occasion when we are truly awake is when we are in the present moment, when we are aware of what we are doing at that point in time. A person in such awareness is whom Krisna calls a 'muni', a realized being living in the present. Such a person is always awake, whether physically awake or asleep.

Krisna says that such a person is in sleep when others are awake. The realized person, although he may appear to be living and actively participating in the activities of the same world that we live in, is, in reality, in a state of passive alertness. This means that his senses are not immersed in worldliness and he is centered in his Self. He is dead and asleep to this world because he has moved beyond his senses. A truly realized person is also awake when others are asleep. Even in his sleep, he is aware, in what is called the state of *supta chittam*.

The 'muni', one who is still, in silence, is one who is in total control of his senses. When the senses are controlled, when the ego is out of action, all thoughts and desires are just witnessed. The 'muni' does not get involved in these thoughts and desires. He does not even try to stop or suppress them, as he knows it is impossible. He just lets them be. An enlightened being watches the world go past, just like the ocean watches impassively as other waters merge into it.

We are all enlightened because we are all a holographic part of the reality of the universe, Brahman. All that we lack is the awareness of the truth of our enlightenment. There is no path to enlightenment because we are already enlightened. All that is needed is the awareness of our enlightened state.

What prevents you from realizing that you are enlightened is your ego. This ego is not necessarily about any arrogance. It is the perception of who you think you are; it is the collection of thoughts, experiences and emotions that go to make up the 'I' and 'mine'. Your identity is that of the body and mind, not of your spirit. Therefore, it perishes with your body and is transient. This identity with the transient reality of who you think you are and what 'yours' is, is *māyā*.

Māyā is the illusion that creates a barrier between you and your awareness of your enlightened state.

A person who is in control of his senses, his mind and thoughts, lives in the present moment, in full awareness of his true nature and is one with Brahman. He is the only one who is truly awake, not the rest of us who think we are awake. We are all still in deep sleep. Such a person who is self-aware is fully awake even when he is asleep.

People with a strong consciousness of 'I' live out of their blocked *mūlādhāra* cakra, the root energy center. They are at the very beginning of their spiritual evolution. Their main concerns will be about their own survival and the survival of their species and they are caught in lust, anger and greed.

The person with a strong attachment to 'mine', the possessions belonging to the 'I', constantly lives in fear of losing these possessions. Such people live out of their blocked *svādisthāna* or spleen cakra – the energy center that gets locked due to fear. They live in insecurity of losing possessions, of losing identity, and, finally, of death.

Energization of the *mūlādhāra* and *svādisthāna* cakra, and moving the energy up through the

anāhata or heart cakra to the ājñā or third eye cakra (the energy center between the eyebrows which is the seat of intelligence) opens up people to the reality of looking at others and the rest of the universe as themselves and finally dropping the ego – one's identification with 'I' and 'mine'.

Then, true surrender to the universe and identification with one's true nature occurs, and enlightenment happens. You then do become God!

Krisna completes His description of the person established in yoga whose profile Arjuna has asked for. Krisna concludes by saying that a person steeped in yoga is centered in reality and is one with Brahman. He says that this person is liberated even if he were to reach that state at the end of his life.

I tell my disciples time and time again, 'I am not here to prove my divinity. I am here to prove your divinity.'

This is the timeless message of Krisna. This is the message of the Bhagavad Gītā.

Arjuna's confusion is slowly reducing. Actually, it is good to be confused. It is much better to accept that one is confused than to live in the delusion that one knows everything. Arjuna had the courage to come out and tell Krisna his fears and doubt. This is the first step towards clarity. How long it takes for that clarity to emerge doesn't matter. One is on the path, and that is what matters.

Thus ends the second chapter named Sāṅkhya Yogas of the Upanishad of Bhagavad Gītā, the scripture of yoga dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Śrī Krisna and Arjuna.