

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 20: Chapter 2, Verses 54-59

(September 12 –September 18, 2018)

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अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम् ॥ ५४ ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८ ॥

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ ५९ ॥

TRANSLITERATION

arjuna uvāca

sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kiṁ

śrī bhagavān uvāca

prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadocyate

duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-sprṛhaḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucyate

yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnehas tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham
nābhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

yadā saṁharate cāyaṁ kūrmo 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas tasya prajña pratiṣṭhitā

viṣayā viniivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate

TRANSLATION

- (54)** Arjun said : O Keshav, what is the disposition of one who is situated in divine consciousness? How does an enlightened person talk? How does he sit? How does he walk?
- (55)** The Supreme Lord said: O Parth, when one discards all selfish desires and cravings of the senses that torment the mind, and becomes satisfied in the realization of the self, such a person is said to be transcendently situated.
- (56)** One whose mind remains undisturbed amidst misery, who does not crave for pleasure, and who is free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.
- (57)** One who remains unattached under all conditions, and is neither delighted by good fortune nor dejected by tribulation, he is a sage with perfect knowledge.
- (58)** One who is able to withdraw the senses from their objects, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into its shell, is established in divine wisdom.
- (59)** Aspirants may restrain senses from their objects of enjoyment, but the taste for sense objects remains. However, even this taste ceases for those who realize the Supreme.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aCz6nbyeK1b-cErL_XNGpf79BjTw7NuX/view?usp=sharing

Commentary:

Verse 54:

The designations *sthita prajña* (one with steady intellect) and *samādhi-stha* (situated in trance) apply to enlightened persons. Having heard from Shree Krishna about the state of perfect yoga, or *Samādhi*, Arjuna asks a natural question. He wishes to know the nature of the mind of a person who is in this state. Additionally he wishes to know how this divine state of mind manifests in a person's behavior. In other words, Arjuna wants to know what personal characteristics define a person of steady wisdom and how such a person conducts himself in terms of sitting, walking and talking.

Verse 55:

Lord Krishna answers Arjuna's questions beginning with this verse, and continues till the end of the chapter. He tells him that when one learns to turn the mind away from material senses/allurements and renounces all desires, such a person comes in touch with the inner bliss of the soul and becomes transcendently situated. He experiences the inconceivable joy of communion of his Individual Consciousness (the Atman) with the Ultimate Consciousness (the Paramatman), whose very nature is supreme bliss. Experiencing this supreme bliss, one automatically loses all desire for even the most exquisite material pleasures. Such an individual can be regarded as the person of steady wisdom. The Kaṭha Upaniṣhad goes to the extent of saying that one who has renounced all desires becomes like God:

*yadā sarve pramuchyante kāmā ye 'sya hṛidi śhṛitaḥ
atha martyo 'mṛito bhavatyatra brahma samaśhnute (2.3.14)[v48]*

“When one eliminates all selfish desires from the heart, then the materially fettered *jīvātmā* (soul) attains freedom from birth and death, and becomes Godlike in virtue.” In short, Lord Krishna states in the above verse that a transcendently situated person is one who has given up all selfish desires and cravings of the senses, and is satisfied in the self.

Verse 56:

In this verse, Shree Krishna describes sages of steady wisdom as: 1) *Vīta rāga*—they give up craving for pleasure, 2) *Vīta bhaya*—they remain free from fear, 3) *Vīta krodha*—they are devoid of anger. An enlightened person does not allow the mind to harbor the material frailties of lust, anger, greed, envy, etc. Only then can the mind steadily contemplate on transcendence and be fixed in the divine. If one permits the mind to brood over miseries, then the contemplation on the divine ceases and the mind is dragged down from the transcendental level. Similarly, if the mind craves for external pleasures, it runs to the objects of enjoyment, and is again diverted from divine contemplation. So a sage of steady wisdom is the one who does not allow the mind to hanker for pleasure or lament for miseries. Further, such a sage does not permit the mind to succumb to the urges of fear and anger. In this way, the mind becomes situated on the transcendental level.

Verse 57:

Lord Krishna explains here that one devoid of attachment to everything does not overly rejoice when exposed something pleasing or good, nor does he lament when exposed to something unpleasant or not good. Similarly, he is indifferent to statements made by people, whether it is a praise or rebuke. Such a person is regarded as *sthita-prajna* or one with stable wisdom with the perfect knowledge of transcendental consciousness.

Verse 58:

In this verse, Lord Krishna further elaborates on the qualities and characteristics of an enlightened individual with a stable wisdom, who has mastered over his mind as well as senses. The illustration used in this verse is that of a turtle. Whenever turtle encounters danger, the turtle protects itself by drawing its limbs and head inside its shell. The enlightened soul possesses similar control over his mind and senses. Just like the turtle, he can effortlessly withdraw his senses from the sense objects such as the ears from sound, the eyes from sight, and the tongue from taste. Attempting to quench the cravings of the senses by supplying them with their desired objects is like trying to douse a fire by pouring clarified butter on it. The fire may be smothered for a moment, but then it flares up with redoubled intensity.

Verse 59:

Here the Lord explains that when one gives up eating, as in a fast, the desires of the senses become feeble. Similarly, in sickness one loses interest toward the objects of enjoyment. These states of dispassion are temporary, for the seed of desire remains within the mind. Again when the fast is terminated or the sickness goes away, the desires return. Therefore, the lack of inclination of the

senses towards sense objects may not necessarily be a viable characteristic in determining one of steady wisdom. But when one engages in devotion toward God and has experienced what is Supreme Bliss, even this residual desire for sense objects is totally dissipated. The Taittirīya Upaniṣhad reaffirms this statement:

raso vai saḥ rasam hyevāyam labdhvā 'nandī bhavati (2.7.2)[v50]

“God is all-bliss. When the soul attains God, it becomes satiated in bliss.” Then, one naturally develops dispassion toward the lower sensual pleasures. This detachment that comes through devotion is firm and unshakeable.