

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 166: Chapter 18, Verses 26-29

(July 07 – July 13, 2021)

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ORIGINAL SANSKRIT DOCUMENT

TRANSLITERATION

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमान्वितः ।

mukta-saṅgo 'naham-vādī dhṛity-utsāha-samanvitaḥ

सिद्धसिद्धयोर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ १८-२६ ॥

siddhy-asiddhyor nirvikāraḥ kartā sāttvika uchyate

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।

rāgī karma-phala-prepsur lubdho hinsātmako 'śhuchiḥ

हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ १८-२७ ॥

harṣha-śhokānvitaḥ kartā rājasah parikīrtitaḥ

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।

ayuktaḥ prākṛitaḥ stabdhaḥ śhaṭho naiṣhkṛitiko 'lasah

विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥ १८-२८ ॥

viṣhādī dīrgha-sūtrī cha kartā tāmasa uchyate

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।

buddher bhedaṁ dhṛiteśh chaiva guṇatas tri-vidhaṁ śhṛiṇu

प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥ १८-२९ ॥

prochyamānam aśheṣheṇa pṛithaktvena dhanañjaya

TRANSLATION

- (26) The performer is said to be in the mode of goodness, when he or she is free from egotism and attachment, endowed with enthusiasm and determination, and equipoised in success and failure.
- (27) The performer is considered in the mode of passion when he or she craves the fruits of the work, is covetous, violent-natured, impure, and moved by joy and sorrow.
- (28) The performer, who is undisciplined, vulgar, stubborn, deceitful, slothful, despondent, and procrastinating, is in the mode of ignorance.
- (29) Hear now, O Arjun, of the distinctions of intellect and determination, according to the three modes of material nature, as I describe them in detail.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mFVAqoFW7ZVEi1p7cp8H0f_lusOHHZK/view?usp=sharing

CHAPTER 18

Commentary

Verse 26

Early on in this chapter, Lord Krishna described that the Action consists of three components: (1) Knowledge, (2) Action itself, and (3) Performer. He has thus far covered the first two components, including Knowledge and Action. In the following few verses, He now elaborates on the last component of Action: Performer. In particular, he describes how the three *gunas* or the modes of material nature influence a performer of activity, beginning with the *sattva guna*, the mode of goodness, as outlined in this verse. The performer in this category is: 1) *muktah-sangah* or free from attachment and exempt from desires for results, 2) *anaham-vadi* or free from egotism as the doer, and hence, devoid of pride, 3) full of *dhriti* or fortitude and determination in surmounting all odds for accomplishment, and 4) with *utsaha* or enthusiasm and zeal in undertaking prescribed activities. The words *siddhya-asiddhyor nirvikarah* means equipoised in success or failure of all activities, realizing that all results are under the auspices of *karma* or reactions to actions and the ultimate will of the Supreme Lord.

Verse 27

Lord Krishna describes here the nature of one performing activities in *raja guna*, the mode of passion. One who is *raagi* or craving to seek fame, power, wealth, etc. One who is *prepsuh*, always hankering for recompense and reward. One who is *ashuchi* or impure and greedy, envious and unrighteous causing injury to others by mental and physical cruelty. Such a one who is never in equipoise, who rejoices at success but is depressed by failure, is indisputably known to be situated in *raja guna*.

Verse 28

In this verse, Lord Krishna describes the characteristics of the performer in the *tama guna*, the mode of ignorance. One who is *ayukta* or undisciplined, careless, and inconsistent, who is *prakritah* or vulgar, vile and unrefined, who is *stabhdah* or obstinate (stubborn), who is *shathah* or cunning, vile, wicked and deceitful, having a predilection for evil, who is *alasa* or lazy, slothful, indolent, lethargic and unmotivated to engage in spiritual activities, and who is *deergha-sutri* or procrastinating, unable to timely accomplish what one boasted about.

Verse 29

Lord Krishna has thus far described the three-component characteristics of ACTION, including Knowledge, Action itself, and the Actor or Performer of action, and each component characteristic was assessed on the basis of the three *gunas* or the modes of material nature -- *sattva*, *raja*, and *tama* -- attributable to the individual performer. In this verse, He elaborates on how these *gunas* also influence *buddhi* or intellect and *dhriti* or determination, both of which are the essential factors for ascertaining what is truth and what is reality. *Buddhi* is the intelligent function of intellect that ascertains existence. *Dhriti* is the steadfast resolve that stands for righteousness in accomplishing the objective. While clarity and reasoning are the essential parts of *Buddhi*, patience and forbearance apply to *Dhriti*.