

TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Sanjaya said: Lord Krishna spoke these words to Arjuna whose eyes were tearful and downcast, and who was overwhelmed with compassion and despair. (2.01)

Lord Krishna said: How has the dejection come to you at this juncture? This is not fit for a person of noble mind and deeds. It is disgraceful, and it does not lead one to heaven, O Arjuna. (2.02)

Do not become a coward, O Arjuna, because it does not befit you. Shake off this trivial weakness of your heart and get up for the battle, O Arjuna. (2.03)

ARJUNA CONTINUES HIS REASONING

AGAINST THE WAR

Arjuna said: How shall I strike my grandfather, my guru, and all other relatives, who are worthy of my respect, with arrows in battle, O Krishna? (2.04)

It would be better, indeed, to live on alms in this world than to slay these noble personalities, because by killing them I would enjoy wealth and pleasures stained with their blood. (2.05)

We do not know which alternative $\frac{3}{4}$ to fight or to quit $\frac{3}{4}$ is better for us. Further, we do not know whether we shall conquer them or they will conquer us. We should not even wish to live after killing our cousin brothers, who are standing in front of us. (2.06)

My senses are overcome by the weakness of pity, and my mind is confused about duty (Dharma). Please tell me what is better for me. I am Your disciple, and I take refuge in You. (2.07)

I do not perceive that gaining an unrivaled and prosperous kingdom on this earth, or even lordship over all the celestial controllers will remove the sorrow that is drying up my senses. (2.08)

Sanjaya said: O King, after speaking like this to Lord Krishna, the mighty Arjuna said to Krishna: I shall not fight, and became silent. (2.09)

O King, Lord Krishna, as if smiling, spoke these words to the distressed Arjuna in the midst of the two armies. (2.10)

THE TEACHINGS OF THE GITA BEGIN WITH THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF SPIRIT AND THE PHYSICAL BODY

Lord Krishna said: You grieve for those who are not worthy of grief, and yet speak words of wisdom. The wise grieves neither for the living nor for the dead. (2.11)

There was never a time when these monarchs, you, or I did not exist; nor shall we ever cease to exist in the future. (2.12)

Just as the soul acquires a childhood body, a youth body, and an old age body during this life; similarly, the soul acquires another body after death. This should not delude the wise. (See also 15.08) (2.13)

The contacts of the senses with the sense objects give rise to the feelings of heat and cold, and pain and pleasure. They are transitory and impermanent. Therefore, one should learn to endure them. (2.14)

Because a calm person $\frac{3}{4}$ who is not afflicted by these sense objects, and is steady in pain and pleasure $\frac{3}{4}$ becomes fit for salvation. (2.15)

THE SPIRIT IS ETERNAL, BODY IS TRANSITORY

The invisible Spirit (Atma, Atman) is eternal, and the visible physical body, is transitory. The reality of these two is indeed certainly seen by the seers of truth. (2.16)

The Spirit by whom this entire universe is pervaded is indestructible. No one can destroy the imperishable Spirit. (2.17)

The physical bodies of the eternal, immutable, and incomprehensible Spirit are perishable. Therefore fight, O Arjuna. (2.18)

The one who thinks that the Spirit is a slayer, and the one who thinks the Spirit is slain, both are ignorant. Because the Spirit neither slays nor is slain. (2.19)

The Spirit is neither born nor does it die at any time. It does not come into being, or cease to exist. It is unborn, eternal, permanent, and primeval. The Spirit is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. (2.20)

O Arjuna, how can a person who knows that the Spirit is indestructible, eternal, unborn, and immutable, kill anyone or causes anyone to be killed? (2.21)

DEATH AND TRANSMIGRATION OF SOUL

Just as a person puts on new garments after discarding the old ones; similarly, the living entity or the individual soul acquires new bodies after casting away the old bodies. (2.22)

Weapons do not cut this Spirit, fire does not burn it, water does not make it wet, and the wind does not make it dry. The Spirit cannot be cut, burned, wetted, or dried. It is eternal, all pervading, unchanging, immovable, and primeval. (2.23-24)

The Spirit is said to be unexplainable, incomprehensible, and unchanging. Knowing the Spirit as such you should not grieve. (2.25)

Even if you think that the physical body takes birth and dies perpetually, even then, O Arjuna, you should not grieve like this. Because death is certain for the one who is born, and birth is certain for the one who dies. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable. (2.26-27)

All beings are unmanifest, or invisible to our physical eyes before birth and after death. They manifest between the birth and the death only. What is there to grieve about? (2.28)

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE SPIRIT TRANSCENDS MIND AND SPEECH

Some look upon this Spirit as a wonder, another describes it as wonderful, and others hear of it as a wonder. Even after hearing about it very few people know what the Spirit is. (See also KaU 2.07) (2.29)

O Arjuna, the Spirit that dwells in the body of all beings is eternally indestructible. Therefore, you should not mourn for anybody. (2.30)

LORD KRISHNA REMINDS ARJUNA OF HIS DUTY AS A WARRIOR

Considering also your duty as a warrior you should not waver like this. Because there is nothing more auspicious for a warrior than a righteous war. (2.31)

Only the fortunate warriors, O Arjuna, get such an opportunity for an unsought war that is like an open door to heaven. (2.32)

If you will not fight this righteous war, then you will fail in your duty, lose your reputation, and incur sin. (2.33)

People will talk about your disgrace forever. To the honored, dishonor is worse than death. (2.34)

The great warriors will think that you have retreated from the battle out of fear. Those who have greatly esteemed you will lose respect for you. (2.35)

Your enemies will speak many unmentionable words and scorn your ability. What could be more painful to you than this? (2.36)

You will go to heaven if killed on the line of duty, or you will enjoy the kingdom on the earth if victorious. Therefore, get up with a determination to fight, O Arjuna. (2.37)

Treating pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat alike, engage yourself in your duty. By doing your duty this way you will not incur sin. (2.38)

IMPORTANCE OF KARMA-YOGA, THE SELFLESS SERVICE

The science of transcendental knowledge has been imparted to you, O Arjuna. Now listen to the science of selfless service (Seva), endowed with which you will free yourself from all Karmic bondage, or sin. (2.39)

No effort is ever lost in selfless service, and there is no adverse effect. Even a little practice of the discipline of selfless service protects one from the great fear of repeated birth and death. (2.40)

A selfless worker has resolute determination for God-realization, but the desires of the one who works to enjoy the fruits of work are endless. (2.41)

THE VEDAS DEAL WITH BOTH MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF LIFE

The misguided ones who delight in the melodious chanting of the Veda $\frac{3}{4}$ without understanding the real purpose of the Vedas $\frac{3}{4}$ think, O Arjuna, as if there is nothing else in the Vedas except the rituals for the sole purpose of obtaining heavenly enjoyment. (2.42)

They are dominated by material desires, and consider the attainment of heaven as the highest goal of life. They engage in specific rites for the sake of prosperity and enjoyment. Rebirth is the result of their action. (2.43)

The resolute determination of Self-realization is not formed in the minds of those who are attached to pleasure and power, and whose judgment is obscured by ritualistic activities. (2.44)

A portion of the Vedas deals with three modes — goodness, passion, and ignorance — of material Nature. Become free from pairs of opposites, be ever balanced and unconcerned with the thoughts of acquisition and preservation. Rise above these three modes, and be Self-conscious, O Arjuna. (2.45)

To a Self-realized person the Vedas are as useful as a small reservoir of water when the water of a huge lake becomes available. (2.46)

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF KARMA-YOGA

You have control over doing your respective duty only, but no control or claim over the results. The fruits of work should not be your motive, and you should never be inactive. (2.47)

Do your duty to the best of your ability, O Arjuna, with your mind attached to the Lord, abandoning worry and selfish attachment to the results, and remaining calm

in both success and failure. The selfless service is a yogic practice that brings peace and equanimity of mind. (2.48)

Work done with selfish motives is inferior by far to the selfless service. Therefore be a selfless worker, O Arjuna. Those who work only to enjoy the fruits of their labor are verily unhappy, because one has no control over the results. (2.49)

A Karma-yogi or the selfless person becomes free from both vice and virtue in this life itself. Therefore, strive for selfless service. Working to the best of one's abilities without becoming selfishly attached to the fruits of work is called Karma-yoga or Seva. (2.50)

Karma-yogis are freed from the bondage of rebirth due to renouncing the selfish attachment to the fruits of all work, and attain blissful divine state of salvation or Nirvana. (2.51)

When your intellect will completely pierce the veil of confusion, then you will become indifferent to what has been heard and what is to be heard from the scriptures. (2.52)

When your intellect, that is confused by the conflicting opinions and the ritualistic doctrine of the Vedas, shall stay steady and firm on concentration of the Supreme Being, then you shall attain union with the Supreme in trance. (2.53)

Arjuna said: O Krishna, what are the marks of an enlightened person whose intellect is steady? What does a person of steady intellect think and talk about? How does such a person behave with others, and live in this world? (2.54)

MARKS OF A SELF-REALIZED PERSON

Lord Krishna said: When one is completely free from all desires of the mind and is satisfied with the Supreme Being by the joy of Supreme Being, then one is called an enlightened person, O Arjuna. (2.55)

A person whose mind is unperturbed by sorrow, who does not crave pleasures, and who is completely free from attachment, fear, and anger, is called an enlightened sage of steady intellect. (2.56)

The mind and intellect of a person become steady who is not attached to anything, who is neither elated by getting desired results, nor perturbed by undesired results. (2.57)

When one can completely withdraw the senses from the sense objects as a tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell for protection from calamity, then the intellect of such a person is considered steady. (2.58)

The desire for sensual pleasures fades away if one abstains from sense enjoyment, but the craving for sense enjoyment remains in a very subtle form. This subtle craving also completely disappears from the one who knows the Supreme Being. (2.59)

DANGERS OF UNRESTRAINED SENSES

Restless senses, O Arjuna, forcibly carry away the mind of even a wise person striving for perfection. (2.60)

One should fix one's mind on God with loving contemplation after bringing the senses under control. One's intellect becomes steady when one's senses are under complete control. (2.61)

One develops attachment to sense objects by thinking about sense objects. Desire for sense objects comes from attachment to sense objects, and anger comes from unfulfilled desires. (2.62)

Delusion or wild idea arises from anger. The mind is bewildered by delusion. Reasoning is destroyed when the mind is bewildered. One falls down from the right path when reasoning is destroyed. (2.63)

ATTAINMENT OF PEACE AND HAPPINESS THROUGH SENSE CONTROL AND KNOWLEDGE

A disciplined person, enjoying sense objects with senses that are under control and free from attachments and aversions, attains tranquillity. (2.64)

All sorrows are destroyed upon attainment of tranquillity. The intellect of such a tranquil person soon becomes completely steady and united with the Supreme. (2.65)

There is neither Self-knowledge, nor Self-perception to those who are not united with the Supreme. Without Self-perception there is no peace, and without peace there can be no happiness. (2.66)

Because the mind, when controlled by the roving senses, steals away the intellect as a storm takes away a boat on the sea from its destination $\frac{3}{4}$ the spiritual shore of peace and happiness. (2.67)

Therefore, O Arjuna, one's intellect becomes steady whose senses are completely withdrawn from the sense objects. (2.68)

A yogi, the person of self-restraint, remains wakeful when it is night for all others. It is night for the yogi who sees when all others are wakeful. (2.69)

One attains peace, within whose mind all desires dissipate without creating any mental disturbance, as river waters enter the full ocean without creating any disturbance. One who desires material objects is never peaceful. (2.70)

One who abandons all desires, and becomes free from longing and the feeling of 'I' and 'my', attains peace. (2.71)

O Arjuna, this is the super conscious state of mind. Attaining this state, one is no longer deluded. Gaining this state, even at the end of one's life, a person becomes one with the Absolute. (2.72).