

CHAPTER 3

THE TOPIC OF KARMA

अर्जुन उवाच ।

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।

तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १ ॥

arjuna uvāca

jyāyasī cetkarmaṇaste matā buddhirjanārdana

tatkiṃ karmaṇi ghore māṃ niyojayasi keśava

Verse 1

Arjuna said:

If, Oh! *Janārdana*, your contention is that knowledge is better than action, why then do you impel me into this gruesome action, Oh! *Keśava*?

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ २ ॥

vyāmiśreṇeva vākyaena buddhiṃ mohayasīva me

tadekaṃ vada niścitya yena śreyo'hamāpnuyām

Verse 2

With words that are seemingly contradictory, you appear to be confusing my mind. Having decided which is better, tell me the one thing by which I shall gain liberation.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मया नघ ।

ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्यानं कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

śrībhagavānuvāca

loke'smin dvividhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayānagha

jñānayogena sāṅkhyānāṃ karmayogena yoginām

Verse 3

Śrī Bhagavān said:

Oh! Sinless One, the two-fold committed life-style in this world, was told by Me in the beginning — the pursuit of knowledge for the renunciates and the pursuit of action for those who pursue activity.

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च सन्न्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

na karmaṇāmanārambhānnaiṣkarmyaṃ puruṣo'snute

na ca sannyasanādeva siddhiṃ samadhigacchati

Verse 4

to *Īśvara*). For this reason, Oh! *Kaunteya*, being one free from attachment, perform action for the sake of that (*yajña*).

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ १० ॥

sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatiḥ
anena prasaviṣyadhvameṣa vo'stviṣṭakāmadhuk

Verse 10

In the beginning, the Creator, having created human beings along with *yajña*, said: 'By this (*yajña*) shall you multiply. May this (*yajña*) be a wish-fulfilling cow for you.'

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

devānbhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ śreyaḥ paramavāpsyatha

Verse 11

Propitiate the deities with this (*yajña*). May those deities propitiate you. Propitiating one another, you shall gain the highest good (*mokṣa*).

इष्टान् भोगान् हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥ १२ ॥

iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajñabhāvitāḥ
tairdattānapradāyaibhyo yo bhuṅkte stena eva saḥ

Verse 12

The gods, propitiated by *yajña*, will give you desirable objects. Therefore, one who enjoys objects given by them without offering to them in return is indeed a thief.

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।
भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३ ॥

yajñāśiṣṭāśinaḥ santo mucyante sarvakilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tvaghaṁ pāpā ye pacantyātma-kāraṇāt

Verse 13

Those who eat, having first offered the food to the Lord, are released from impurities, whereas those sinful people who cook only for themselves eat *pāpa* (sin).

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।
यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ १४ ॥

annādbhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍannasambhavaḥ
yajñādbhavati parjanyaḥ yajñaḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ

Verse 14

Living beings are born of food; food is born of rain; rain is born of *yajña* (*punya*); and *yajña* (*punya*) is born of action.

*karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhimāsthītā janakādayaḥ
lokasaṅgrahamevāpi sampāśyankartumarhasi*

Verse 20

Indeed, by action alone, *Janaka* and others gained liberation. Also, by merely seeing the desirability of protecting the people from falling into unbecoming ways you ought to perform action.

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

*yadyadācarati śreṣṭhastattadevetaro janah
sa yatpramāṇaṃ kurute lokastadanuvartate*

Verse 21

Whatever an important person does, that alone the other people do. Whatever that person sets as proper, the world of people follows.

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ २२ ॥

*na me pārthāsti kartavyaṃ triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana
nānavāptamavāptavyaṃ varta eva ca karmaṇi*

Verse 22

Oh! *Pārtha*, for me, there is nothing to be done. In the three worlds, there is nothing to be accomplished by me, which is not yet accomplished. Yet, I am engaged in action.

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ २३ ॥

*yadi hyahaṃ na varteyaṃ jātu karmaṇyatandritaḥ
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

Verse 23

Because, should I ever not engage myself in action, without being lazy, Oh! *Pārtha*, people would follow my example in every way.

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्या कर्म चेदहम् ।

सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥ २४ ॥

*utsīdeyurime lokā na kuryāṃ karma cedaham
saṅkarasya ca kartā syāmupahanyāmimāḥ prajāḥ*

Verse 24

If I were not to perform action, these people would perish. I would be the author of confusion (in the society) and I would destroy these beings.

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसङ्ग्रहम् ॥ २५ ॥

*saktāḥ karmaṇyavidvāṃso yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryādvīdvāṃstathāsaktaśchikīrṣurlokasaṅgraham*

Verse 25

Renouncing all actions unto Me, with a mind that is discriminating, devoid of expectations with reference to the future and any sense of 'mine-ness,' without any anger or frustration whatsoever, fight!

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।

श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥ ३१ ॥

ye me matamidaṃ nityamanutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto'nasūyanto mucyante te'pi karmabhiḥ

Verse 31

Those people who constantly follow this teaching of Mine, full of faith, without *asūyā* (without finding fault with the teaching or the teacher), they too are released by the *karma-phalas*. (They are freed from the hold of the *karma-phalas* — they gain *mokṣa*.)

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।

सर्वज्ञानविमूढास्तान् विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२ ॥

ye tvetadabhyasūyanto nānutiṣṭhanti me matam
sarvajñānavimūḍhāṃstān viddhi naṣṭānacetasaḥ

Verse 32

Whereas those who, being critical without reason do not follow my vision, know them, who are deluded in all realms of knowledge, and devoid of discrimination, as lost.

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥ ३३ ॥

sadrśaṃ ceṣṭate svasyāḥ prakṛterjñānavānapi
prakṛtiṃ yānti bhūtāni nigrahaḥ kiṃ kariṣyati

Verse 33

Even a wise person acts in keeping with his or her own nature. Because all beings follow their own nature, of what use is control?

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।

तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ ३४ ॥

indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāgadveṣau vyavasthitau
tayorna vaśamāgacchettau hyasya paripanthinau

Verse 34

There is attachment and aversion with reference to every sense object. May one not come under the spell of these two because they are one's enemies.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ ३५ ॥

śreyānsvadharmo viguṇaḥ paradharmātsvanuṣṭhitāt
svadharmaṃ nidhanaṃ śreyaḥ paradharmo bhayāvahaḥ

Verse 35

etairvimohayatyeṣa jñānamāvṛtya dehinam

Verse 40

Its location is said to be the senses, mind, and intellect. With these, it (*kāma*) deludes the person by covering his or her wisdom.

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

tasmāttvamindriyāṇyādau niyamya bharatarṣabha
pāpmānaṁ prajahi hyenaṁ jñānavijñānanāśanam

Verse 41

Therefore, Oh! *Arjuna*, controlling the senses at the outset, destroy indeed this sinner, the destroyer of knowledge and wisdom.

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२ ॥

indriyāṇi parāṇyāhurindriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ
manasastu parā buddhiryo buddheḥ paratastu saḥ

Verse 42

They say that the sense organs are superior to the body; the mind is superior to the sense organs; the intellect is superior to the mind. Whereas the one who is superior to the intellect is he (the *ātmā*).

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥ ४३ ॥

evaṁ buddheḥ paraṁ buddhvā saṁstabhyātmānamātmajā
jahi śatruṁ mahābāho kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam

Verse 43

Oh! *Arjuna*, knowing that which is superior to the intellect in this way, having made the mind steady with the *buddhi*, destroy the enemy, that is in the form of desire, that which is so difficult to understand.

ओं तत्सत् । इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे कर्मयोगो

नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

oṃ tatsat. iti śrīmadbhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ yogaśāstre
śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvāde karmayogo nāma tṛtīyo'dhyāyaḥ