

Reflections from Shrimad Bhagavadgita– Part 61: Chapter 7, Verses 01-06

(July 3 –July 9, 2019)

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TRANSLITERATION

अथ सप्तमोऽध्यायः

Atha Saptamodhyayah

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

śhrī bhagavān uvācha

मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।

mayyāsakta-manāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan mad-āśhrayaḥ

असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ ७-१ ॥

asanśhayaṁ samagraṁ mām yathā jñāsyasi tach chhṛiṇu

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।

jñānam te 'ham sa-vijñānam idam vakṣhyāmyaśheṣataḥ

यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ ७-२ ॥

yaj jñātvā neha bhūyo 'nyaj jñātavyam-avaśhiṣyate

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

manuṣhyāṇām sahasreṣhu kaśchid yatati siddhaye

यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ७-३ ॥

yatatām api siddhānām kaśchin mām vetti tattvataḥ

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।

bhūmir-āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ kham mano buddhir eva cha

अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ ७-४ ॥

ahankāra itīyaṁ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।

apareyam itas tvanyām prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām

जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धारयति जगत् ॥ ७-५ ॥

jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho yayedam dhāryate jagat

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।

etad-yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇītyupadhāraya

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ ७-६ ॥

aham kṛitsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā

TRANSLATION

- (01) Lord Krihna said: O Arjun, hear how, with your consciousness totally absorbed in me, taking complete shelter of me, and surrendering to me through the practice of *Yoga* (the science of uniting the individual consciousness with the Ultimate Consciousness) you can know me completely, free from doubt.
- (02) I shall now reveal unto you fully this knowledge and wisdom, knowing which nothing else remains to be known in this world.
- (03) Amongst thousands of persons, hardly one strives for perfection of self-realization; and amongst those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows me in truth.
- (04) Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, and ego—these are eight components of my material energy.
- (05) Such is my inferior energy. But beyond it, O mighty-armed Arjun, I have a superior energy. This is the *jīva śhakti* (the soul energy), which comprises the embodied souls who are the basis of life in this world.
- (06) Know that all living beings are manifested by these two energies of mine. I am the source of the entire creation, and into me it again dissolves.

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1BGTbPXHDR6r8oX3-xX4bMD2DKjjoFYNF>

Chapter 7

Verse 01:

The first six chapters of Shrimad Bhagavad-Gita comprises the **first division** known as the **Karma Yoga** section which is the science of the individual consciousness attaining communion with the ultimate consciousness by the performance of prescribed Vedic activities with detachment. There the subject matter primarily delineated was with reference to how an aspirant may achieve *Atma Tattva* or Self-Realization of the soul by adopting the path of *Karma Yoga*. *Atma-Tattva* is essential and ancillary to constant devotion and continuous meditation necessary by which communion with the Supreme Lord Krishna occurs. He is the ultimate and the supreme goal to be attained. Now the middle section of six chapters from seven to twelve comprises the **second division** of Shrimad Bhagavad-Gita known as the **Bhakti Yoga** section which is the science of the individual consciousness attaining communion with the ultimate consciousness by loving devotion to the Supreme Lord. The subject matters revealed are the nature of *Parabrahma*, the Supreme Being of All, *Parama Purusha*, the Supreme Spirit of all and the method and modes of loving devotion and meditation that are to be offered to Him. This is known as *Bhakti*. At the conclusion of chapter six, Shree Krishna had declared that those who devotedly serve him, with mind focused exclusively on him, are the best amongst all *Yogis*. This statement can lead to some natural questions: What is the way to know the Supreme

Lord? How should one meditate upon him? How should a devotee worship God? Although Arjun did not raise these questions, yet, out of His compassion, the Lord presupposes them, and begins to answer them, starting with this verse.

Verse 02:

Lord Krishna has deigned to reveal completely in detail the general knowledge as well as the esoteric knowledge concerning Him. The word *Vijnana* means realized knowledge. This denotes a more profound level of understanding with a special propensity of innate wisdom which can discern and discriminate the reality of the Supreme Lord Krishna being the original substratum and foundation of all that is animate and inanimate in existence. He is the ultimate controller, the antithesis to whatever is demoniac. He is the sovereign master of all creation possessing unlimited divine glories and infinite transcendental qualities and attributes. Along with revealing these things, Lord Krishna will also reveal the wisdom concerning His manifested nature. By realization of this spiritual knowledge, there will be nothing left worthy of knowing for an aspirant of *Bhakti* or unconditional loving devotion. The extreme difficulty in acquiring such esoteric knowledge about the Supreme Lord will be explained in the following verse. Knowledge that is acquired through the senses, mind, and intellect is called *jñāna*. Knowledge that comes as insight from within, as a consequence of spiritual practice, is called *Vijñāna* (wisdom). *Vijñāna* is not intellectual knowledge; it is direct experiential realization. For example, we may keep hearing about the glories of the sweetness of honey kept in a bottle, but it remains a theoretical knowledge. However, when we open the lid of the bottle and taste the honey inside, we get experiential realization of its sweetness. Similarly, the theoretical knowledge we get from the Guru and the scriptures is *Jñāna*. And when, in accordance with that knowledge we practice *Sādhana* and purify our mind, then the knowledge that awakens within us as realization is called *Vijñāna*. When Sage Ved Vyas decided to write the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam describing the nature, glories, and object of devotion, he was not content to write it on the basis of *Jñāna*, and so he first engaged in *Bhakti* to get experiential realization of God. Through *Bhakti Yoga*, Ved Vyas fixed his mind upon God, without any material sentiments, and thus he attained complete vision and realization of the Supreme Divine Personality along with his external energy, *Maya*, which was under his control.” Equipped with this realization, he then wrote the famous scripture. Shree Krishna declares that he will illumine Arjun with the theoretical knowledge of the Supreme Divine Personality, and also help him gain the inner wisdom regarding it. On realization of this knowledge, nothing further will remain to be known.

Verse 03:

Lord Krishna emphasizes that the knowledge He is prepared to reveal is very rarely achieved and difficult to acquire. Out of innumerable, countless souls some have attained human status and amongst them hardly one in thousands of humans is qualified in Vedic scriptures and strives for *atma tattva* or self-realization of the soul. Of those few endeavouring for *atma tattva* hardly one in thousands actually achieves it and out of thousands who after having achieved *atma tattvae* and finally attained *moksha* or liberation from the material existence, amongst this group some very rare personalities are actually aware of Lord Krishna's paramount position and divine glories in reality. This is because without *Bhakti* or loving devotion unto Lord Krishna it is not possible to know and

perceive Him. This Lord Krishna confirms Himself at the conclusion of chapter eighteen, verse fifty-five when He declares, That only through devotion does one come to the platform of communion with Him.

Verse 04:

Continuing on from the previous verse, Lord Krishna presents **Prakṛiti**, the material substratum in **eight categories representing His lower material energy.** It comprises earth, water, fire, air and ether (five basic elements called Pancha Bhoota), along with **Manas or mind, Buddhi or intellect and Ahankara or false ego.** What Shree Krishna presented to Arjun, 5,000 years before the development of modern science, is the perfect Unified Field Theory. **He says, “Arjuna, all that exists in the universe is a manifestation of my material energy.”** It is just one material energy that has unfolded into myriad shapes, forms, and entities in this world. This is described in detail in the **Taittirīya Upaniṣhad:**

Tasmadvā etasmādātmana ākāśhaḥ sambhūtaḥ ākāśhādvāyuh vāyoragniḥ agnerāpaḥ adbhyaḥ pṛithivī pṛithivyā auśadhayaḥ auśadhībhyo ’nnam annātpuruṣaḥ sa vā eṣha puruṣho ’nnarasamayaḥ (2.1.2)[v2]

The primordial form of the material energy is Prakṛiti. When God desires to create the world, he glances at it, by which it gets agitated and unfolds into *Mahān* (since science has not yet reached to this subtle level of energy, there is no equivalent word for it in the English language). *Mahān* further unfolds, and the next entity to manifest *Ahankār*, which is also subtler than any entity known to science. From *Ahankār*, come the *Pañch-Tanmātrās*, the five perceptions—taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound. From them come the five gross elements—ether, air, fire, water, and earth (Pancha Bhoota). In this verse, **Shree Krishna not only includes the five gross elements as different manifestations of His energy, He also includes the mind, intellect, and ego, as distinctive elements of His energy. Shree Krishna states that all these are simply parts of His material energy, Maya.** *Beyond these is the soul energy, or the superior energy of God, which he describes in the next verse.*

Verse 05:

Lord Krishna now clarifies that the eight-fold nature he spoke about in the previous verse is from His lower inferior nature because it is inanimate and insentient but **He has a higher superior nature which constitutes the life force of all living beings as the Atma or eternal soul which sustains the whole creation.** The physical body the lower nature is factually a corporeal inanimate object into which the animate *Atma* the higher nature has entered and taken up residence. Both the animate and inanimate make up the higher and lower natures of the *Prakṛiti* of the Supreme Lord. Shree Krishna now goes totally beyond the realm of material science. He explains that the eight-fold *prakṛiti* mentioned in the previous verse is his inferior material energy. But it is not all that exists. There is also a superior spiritual energy, which is completely transcendental to insentient matter. This energy is the *Jīva śhakti*, which encapsulates all the souls in this world. The relationship between the *Jīva* (individual soul) and God has been described from various perspectives by India’s great philosophers. **The non-dualist philosophers state: *Jīvo Brahmaiva Nāparaḥ* “The soul**

itself is God.” However, this contention raises a number of unanswerable questions: 1) God is all-powerful and Maya is his subservient energy. If the soul is God, then how come it has been overpowered by Maya? Is Maya stronger than God? 2) We all know that the soul is suffering from ignorance. Hence, it perceives the need for scriptures like the *Bhagavad Gita* and the lectures of saints. How can the soul that is subject to the ignorance be considered as God, who is all-knowing? 3) God is all-pervading in the world. This is repeatedly stated in the Vedas. If the soul is God then the soul must exist everywhere at the same time; so where is the question of going to heaven and hell after death? 4) The souls are innumerable in quantity, and they all have their individual identity. However, God is one. Now, if the soul itself were God, then God would also have been many. We thus see that the claim of non-dualistic philosophers that the soul itself is God makes no sense. On the other hand, the dualist philosophers state that the soul is separate from God. This answers some of the questions above, but it is an incomplete understanding compared to what Shree Krishna states in this verse. He says that the soul is a part of the spiritual energy of God. Therefore, God is the one Supreme Energetic, and everything that exists—both spiritual and material—is composed of all his various lower and higher energies.

Verse 06:

Lord Krishna now reveals that He alone is the sole source of the entire creation and its dissolution as well. Everything in all creation--movable and immovable-- have manifested and evolved from His two fold nature. He is the cause of the creation of the inanimate temporary physical body and He is the cause of the animate eternal embodied *Atma* or soul. The inanimate reality is due to a modification of His propensity as He becomes the substratum while the animate reality is the way by which He enters into material nature and enjoyingly participates and interacts with it. The physical body cannot sustain and grow without the life principle of the *Atma* and both the physical body and the soul are both His powers and both completely under His control. The power and the powerful cannot remain separate because the source of the power is found residing in the powerful only. All life in the material realm comes into existence by the combination of souls and matter. By itself, matter is insentient; the soul needs a carrier in the form of the body. By the conjugation of these two energies, living beings manifest. God is the origin of both these energies; the entire creation manifests from him. When the cycle of creation reaches a completion at the end of 100 years of Brahma, the Lord dissolves the manifestation. The five gross elements merge into the five subtle elements, the five subtle elements merge into *Ahankār*; *Ahankār* merges into *Mahān*; *Mahān* merges into *Prakṛiti*; *Prakṛiti* goes and sits in the body of Maha Vishnu (a form of the Supreme Lord). The souls who did not get liberated in the cycle of creation also reside in God’s body in an unmanifest form, awaiting the next cycle of creation. Once again, when God wishes to create, the cycle begins, and the world comes into existence. Hence, God is the source, support, and final resting ground for all existence.