

## Brief summary for Tuesday 29th June (2.62 - 2.63 session)

We must thank all our teachers for their contribution to what has been written below. These are things we have learned and heard from other gracious souls whose teachings are expressed in our own words/understanding.

If you missed part 20, [check out the notes here.](#)

You can find [all the previous notes here.](#)

Krsna continued his answer to Arjuna's question, "how does an enlightened person sit." Last time we saw Krsna explain that such a person has tasted a higher reality, and so naturally their minds are controlled. One can't be in transcendental meditation without controlling the senses and that starts with the mind. Krsna also explicitly pointed out Himself being the object of devotion for the first time. So devotion to Krishna, Hrsikesh, the master of the senses is seen as the essential ingredient assuring all success. In today's verses, for emphasis, Krishna will speak about what happens when the mind is left uncontrolled: the loss of one's power of discrimination.

We studied verses 2.62-63 together to look at the process of falldown. By contemplating the objects of the senses, or put another way, the cravings of the senses, one becomes attached to them. Attachment leads to desire (sometimes translated as lust, meaning, a lust for those sense objects, whatever they are). When there is intense desire and they are unfulfilled, frustration or anger arises. Anger leads to delusion which then bewilders one's memory. By this, intelligence or the power of discrimination is lost and so one's own self is lost, meaning, we identify more and more with matter rather than ourselves as conscious beings (fall into the material pool). We identify more with the objects the lightbulb is shining on, rather than the lightbulb itself.

There is a similar sequence of events given in the Srimad Bhagavatam 11.21.19-21:

**When one contemplates the qualities of sense objects, attachment arises. From attachment, desires ensue, and unfulfilled desires lead to quarrel.**

**From quarrel, unrestrained anger arises, anger causes delusion, and when one is in delusion, the wisdom to discriminate between right and wrong vanishes.**

**O gentle one, a man who has lost his discrimination becomes like inert matter, and from that condition, he slides down to states of unconsciousness and becomes almost dead. Thus the supreme purpose of life is defeated.**

We looked at each of these steps in the process a little more. Here is a summary of the discussions.

### **Contemplating the Objects of the Senses leads to Attachment**

Krsna has been explaining to Arjuna how even if Arjuna decides to give up his dharma and go to the forest to develop knowledge, the senses are so strong that he will likely be unable to control the mind (and there are many examples of yogis in the sastra who have had their minds taken away by the sense objects, even while making great advancement on the path of self-realisation). To contrast how He has spoken about the Sthita-Prajna (that person fixed in contrast), Krsna will explain to Arjuna what happens when one is unable to fully control their mind.

Following on from the themes of last week's verses, Krsna is saying that even if a person is able to restrain themselves from the sense objects, if their mind is not focused on Him then even by that control of the senses for

some period, internal contemplation on the sense objects is unavoidable. This is due to the innumerable impressions (samskaras) of sense objects we have from time immemorial (see the discussion on karma and the analogy of mustard seeds [in session 19](#)).

Due to this contemplating of the sensual objects (which are anything that consists of form, touch, smell, sound, or taste), we start to get the feeling that acquiring such objects will be the root cause of our happiness. By this contemplation, or thinking of the sense objects, meditating on them, we develop a fondness for them and so attachment comes.

So we can understand the real work of yoga (in all its forms) is in curbing the mind from such contemplation. If the mind can be controlled, one can be peaceful even if the physical circumstances are disturbing. If the physical circumstances are of the highest quality (material comforts, stability, etc) but the mind is not peaceful, then one can't be happy. We see this theme come up frequently in the lives of the rich and famous. Satisfaction isn't there even while having all the material resources that most common people could desire.

As discussed, the sthita prajna controls the mind and this is the means by which they control their external senses. The mind is the king or controller of the senses so the external senses will automatically be controlled by controlling the mind. The Katha-Upanisad (2.3.10) makes the point:

**If one can control his five knowledge-acquiring senses, his mind and his intelligence, he attains the supreme destination. Otherwise, if the mind and other senses are not subdued, one has to wander in the cycle of birth and death.**

As discussed, if one doesn't have control of the mind, the result is attachment. So if we give in to overly dreaming about and contemplating sensual pursuits, considering them worth the mental energy to indulge in, then the result is a strong attachment for them.

It's not that the thoughts of sensual objects won't come in the mind, especially in the early stages of yoga practice, but Krsna is making the point that we shouldn't give in to over indulging them, thinking that they will be the cause of actual happiness. Rather we should look at these thoughts with the eyes of wisdom (which as we know, Krsna is going to keep on giving throughout the Gita). For one who allows themselves to develop fondness for them, attachment will develop, which will lead to lust.

## **Lust**

So because of meditating on these sense objects, allowing oneself to become attached, lust arises, or in other words, excessive desire for those objects arises. We think that they will give us happiness and so we start to hanker for them. A strong desire which is a further stage of attachment (sometimes said to be a modification of attachment) arises. Once the attachment gets to this stage of excessive desire, it is not possible for a person to stay still without experiencing the sense-object in question, and will strive to do so. If unable to fulfil the desire, it will lead to anger.

## **Anger**

As mentioned, when the desires become addictive and they flare up, if they are not satisfied then anger will arise. It is true, depending on one's karma, etc, sometimes one will be able to gratify their senses by enjoying the sense object in question. However, as we have previously discussed, not only does one become controlled by the desire of the object in question that one is seeking to exploit, but it also creates more impressions (samskaras). So even if there isn't frustration in the immediate moment, when the temporary happiness from that object disappears, there will be a hankering for more and so again a frustration.

However, more often it is found (due to the sheer amount of impressions in the mind) that one's desires are obstructed or unfulfilled (especially to the degree of happiness imagined in the mind that the sense object would bring) and so this leads to another modification of the mind: frustration. Then anger is directed toward whatever it is that became the obstacle that blocked one's ability to enjoy the contemplated sense object. Anger toward that which stops us acquiring the desired object, whether it is a person or situation or even oneself. So this anger isn't necessarily in the sense of us smashing up the room with a baseball bat, but it can be an intense frustration or sometimes manifest in other ways like depression, etc. This anger leads to complete delusion.

## **Complete Delusion**

Under the influence of delusion, one doesn't know what is to be done and what isn't to be done. We develop an absence of discrimination between what actions we should perform that would be favourable to our spiritual progress, and what actions we shouldn't perform that will be unfavourable. A person may do anything and everything to satisfy the desire. It also might take the form of an illusory perception of knowledge. We may even have some knowledge but the judgment of it is compromised and so one's actions follow a distorted understanding. On one level, we saw this in Arjuna in the first chapter where he became completely bewildered and so tried to use the dharma sastra to make excuses for his retiring from his dharma. But as we saw, Krsna quickly corrected that faulty understanding, even on the basis of the dharma sastra while also taking the argument beyond that. Due to this delusion, one's memory becomes bewildered.

## **Bewilderment of Memory**

At this stage, one develops a loss of remembrance of one's own real benefit in life, even if one has previously heard such things from the scriptures or the spiritual teachers. Although these instructions are the cause of auspiciousness for such a person, one has a failure of memory for these things and forgets the impressions of earlier efforts of sense control. Although the memory referenced here is generally understood to mean the instructions of the yoga texts (sastra), it could also be understood as memory of our past mistakes. Ideally, we learn by our mistakes, but if we have let the mind dwell too long on a selfish desire, we can easily forget the lessons we should have learned from previous experience as the thirst for the desire increases. I am sure many of us have had this experience. Due to this bewilderment of memory, the intellect is lost.

## **Intelligence Lost**

At this stage, one loses resolve for their spiritual practices. There is a destruction of the effect of efforts one previously made to attain knowledge of the self. So a person will find they don't have the proper understanding and certainty about the nature of ultimate reality that are characteristic of buddhi (intelligence). With clear intelligence, there is a certainty that accompanies it, but even if it may peek its head occasionally, when one is taken to this stage, it does not remain constant and so doesn't lead to the full fruit of self-realisation. Hence why it is said sometimes that the self is lost. We identify with the material energy and have non-awareness of our eternal connection with the omnipresent soul (Paramatma). This is what is meant by one being sunk in samsara or worldliness as a result of the destruction of discrimination. One loses focus on the goal of material existence and the purpose of human life, and becomes tossed around by the whims of the materially driven mind once again. So Krsna is making clear to Arjuna that controlling one's mind is essential.

## **The Solution**

Of course we aren't without hope. It is true, the mind must be fixed on something. We can't have completely empty minds as Krsna has pointed out. Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport:

**One who is not Krishna conscious is subjected to material desires while contemplating the objects of the senses. The senses require real engagements, and if they are not engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, they will certainly seek engagement in the service of materialism.**

Krsna isn't leaving us in the dark although at this point in the Gita some things may seem ambiguous (remember that we are still on the summary of the Gita). In fact, Arjuna also feels this way about certain topics and so he will raise questions at the start of the next chapter. Here for instance (and we have discussed this previously), cravings or desires are seen as enemies or detrimental to those seeking to realise their higher self, realising themselves as conscious entities. However, Krsna a few verses back was also encouraging Arjuna's desire to fight for heavenly or earthly rewards. As we make progress through the Gita, we will see clearly that bhakti is not a path of self-denial. The soul is by nature pleasure-seeking, and desire in itself is not wrong. Krsna will actually elaborate on this point more at the start of the 3rd chapter.

Krsna is really distinguishing here between selfish or hurtful desires, that is, cravings that if fulfilled will be at the expense of others, and healthy desires which aren't destructive to anyone but are actually beneficial for all. This is especially true for desires in the context of bhakti as we will see. Krsna's main warning here is that we don't let uncontrolled cravings get the better of us (something He will expand on more at the end of the 3rd chapter).

It is not that we have to fully renounce the world and all desires, as Krsna is making the point to Arjuna. Srila Prabhupada quotes the Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu 1.2.258 in his purport:

“The daily and periodic duties of varṇāśrama and the impersonal aspect of jñāna(the obstructive portions of karma and jñāna) have already been rejected as aṅgas of bhakti by using the stated definition of uttama-bhakti obtained through the *bhakti* scriptures. However, to make the point clear, the false type of vairāgya (the obstructive portion) has again been rejected as an aṅga of *bhakti*.”

As Kṛṣṇa is pointing out, dry renunciation (Phalgu-vairagya) may lead to fall-down because of lack of positive enjoyment. But such renunciation isn't actually a limb or practice of bhakti as this verse points out.

Even so, we may find ourselves in the early stages of bhakti practice also "falling down" through this process before we develop a deeper and higher taste (as remember, Kṛṣṇa said this is the reason the sthita-prajna is able to control his senses, a higher taste). There are different ways to approach this point, but for now, one thing to say is that if we are taken away down such a process (the reverse-yoga ladder if you will), and by the force of the modes of nature, we are unable to nip the process in the stage of contemplation (which we should certainly strive to do, and keep on striving even in the face of occasional failure), it is worth observing oneself and one's inner state either during the process, or reflecting on it after being taken away (through the eyes of the wisdom of the Gita). We will likely see this verse in action and hopefully fix our resolve to continue in our spiritual path.

Another thing we discussed is a point often brought up in the Gita by using this name of Kṛṣṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa. Krishna is the master of the senses. A big part of our process to come to the fixed stage of bhakti (Nishta) is saranagati (surrender). Part of that is developing the realisation that Kṛṣṇa is the protector and maintainer of our spiritual progress and so in times we may struggle in the mind, it is always worth appealing to Him. We read a couple of excerpts from Śrīla Nārottama dāsa Ṭhākura's Prema Bhakti Candrika that exemplify the kind of mood we should develop internally (and



by meditating on these songs, they will sink into our hearts more and more).

**1) O Lord, You are an ocean of mercy. You are the friend of the fallen souls. Please notice me. I have become like a non devotee, swallowed by the timingila fish of lust. O Lord, please protect me.**

**2) In every birth I repeatedly offended You. In every birth I failed to worship You sincerely. No one is as fallen as I. Nevertheless, You are the only goal of my life. O Lord of my life, please do not abandon me.**

**3) O Lord, You are known as Patita-pavana, the deliverer of the fallen, and You are also known as Syamasundara. Please do not ignore my appeal. Even if I am an offender, I think that You are the real goal of life. That is the truth.**

**4) O Supreme Personality of Godhead, please do not neglect me. O master of my life, please hear my words. Even if I have committed offences to You, I always think of You as my master. Please allow me to serve You as Your associate and follower.**

**5) Lust has destroyed my mind. I do not know what is actually beneficial for me. O Lord, You glance mercifully on all living entities and You are like a desire tree fulfilling the desires of everyone. Please accept me as Your servant.**

**6) O Lord, You will not see anyone in these three planetary systems who is as fallen as I. O Lord, please accept the name "Narottama-pavana" (the deliverer of Narottama), and let that name be broadcast throughout the material world. O Lord Syamasundara, O lifter of Govardhana Hill, O deliverer of the fallen, please accept me as Your servant.**

**7) Narottama dasa is very unhappy. O Lord please engage him in Your sankirtana movement and thus make him happy. O Lord, I am very afraid that I will not be able to overcome the many obstacles that stop me from advancing in devotional service. O Lord, at every moment I beg You to remove all those obstacles.**

**[Song 3 - Prema Bhakti Candrika]**

**15) In private I will practice the nine kinds of devotional service and in this way I will attain perfection. I will always humbly pray for that. In public I will perform Hari-sankirtana, my heart overcome with love. Any activity that does not lead to My worshipable Lord is an obstacle.**

**16) When arrested by the highwaymen of material illusion, bound about the neck with ropes of lust, and about to take his last breath, the devotee of Lord Hari calls out for the Lord's help and is saved. O devotees, call out in this way, glorifying the nectar topics of pure love for Krsna. Then the calamity of repeated birth and death will come to an end.**

**[Song 9 - Prema Bhakti Candrika]**

These verses hint toward the solution. It is better to have a little steady practice than to give up. A little goes a long way, and as Krsna said previously, there is no loss or diminution in taking up this practice. Whereas one who artificially restrains the senses (without the assistance of bhakti) loses all their efforts if the powerful sense objects attract the mind (as Krsna has warned Arjuna is a possibility over the last few sessions), no loss is there on the path of bhakti and as one develops a higher taste, the senses and mind are naturally engaged in such a way that there isn't room to contemplate on the objects of the senses. In the times there is disturbance, taking the mood of these prayers (and other similar sentiments found in the songs of our teachers), which Srila Prabhupada said where as

good as the Vedas themselves, then we surely will be coming closer to the ideal that Krsna is taking us towards throughout the Gita.

Next time, in verses 2.64 - 2.68, we will see Krsna begin to answer the last part of Arjuna's question: How does an enlightened person "walk" or interact with the world. That is, how is such a person's mind controlled while their senses are interacting with sense objects. Krsna will continue to answer this until almost the end of chapter two.