

Śloka 41

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

*tasmāttvamindriyāṅyādau niyamyā bharatarṣabha
pāpmānam prajahi hyenam jñānavijñānanāśanam*

तस्मात्	<i>tasmāt</i>	therefore
त्वम्	<i>tvam</i>	you
इन्द्रियाणि	<i>indriyāṅi</i>	the senses
आदौ	<i>ādau</i>	in the beginning
नियम्य	<i>niyamyā</i>	having controlled
भरतर्षभ	<i>bharatarṣabha</i>	O Best of Bharatas (Arjuna)
पाप्मानम्	<i>pāpmānam</i>	the sinful
प्रजहि	<i>prajahi</i>	kill
ह्येनम्	<i>hyenam</i>	surely this
ज्ञान	<i>jñāna</i>	knowledge
विज्ञान	<i>vijñāna</i>	wisdom
नाशनम्	<i>nāśanam</i>	the destroyer of

VERSES 41-43

How To Overcome the Inner Enemy

41

Therefore, O Best of the Bharatas (Arjuna), you must first control your senses, then kill the evil thing (desire), the destroyer of knowledge and wisdom.

The preceding verse explained that the senses, mind, and intellect are the seats of desire. Through them desire creates ignorance. In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa tells how to control desire.

Desire first expresses itself by occupying the senses. Through the senses it deludes the mind, intellect, and the embodied soul. Therefore, desire is the root cause of all evil.

The term *jñāna* (knowledge) is used in this verse to mean intellectual or indirect knowledge of the Self. It also refers to such principles as right and wrong action, which are learned from a spiritual teacher or acquired by studying scriptures. The term *vijñāna* is used to mean direct knowledge, which comes from personal experience. Direct knowledge is also called *tattva jñāna*, or knowledge of the real truth.

Desire is not only dangerous to the direct knowledge gained through personal experience of reality (*vijñāna*); it also obstructs the intellectual understanding of the truth (*jñāna*) that comes from the study of the scriptures or the teachings of a spiritual master.

Therefore, one should begin to eliminate desire by practicing sense control (*indriya sanyama*), because the senses are the first to get trapped by sense objects. Sense control is practiced in two ways: 1) by persistent practice of devotion to God and selfless service; and 2) by developing dispassion for sense objects, through austerity or through cultivating aversion for sense enjoyments.

Desire is called “evil” because in its gross manifestation it pulls the mind toward worldly attachments. Desire, in its subtle manifestation, does not allow one to experience complete knowledge of the Self. Desire obstructs achievement of both knowledge and wisdom, which appear in one’s spiritual practices, and it keeps the embodied soul in a state of ignorance. Desire cannot destroy the knowledge of the Self because desire is caused by ignorance, and Self-knowledge erases ignorance.

Śloka 42

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२ ॥

*indriyāṇi parāṅyāhurindriyebhyaḥ param manaḥ
manasastu parā buddhiryo buddheḥ paratastu saḥ*

इन्द्रियाणि	<i>indriyāṇi</i>	the senses
पराणि	<i>parāṇi</i>	superior
आहुः	<i>āhuḥ</i>	(they) say
इन्द्रियेभ्यः	<i>indriyebhyaḥ</i>	than the senses
परम्	<i>param</i>	superior
मनः	<i>manaḥ</i>	the mind
मनसः	<i>manasaḥ</i>	than the mind
तु	<i>tu</i>	but
परा	<i>parā</i>	superior
बुद्धिः	<i>buddhiḥ</i>	intellect
यः	<i>yaḥ</i>	who
बुद्धेः	<i>buddheḥ</i>	than the intellect
परतः	<i>parataḥ</i>	greater
तु	<i>tu</i>	but
सः	<i>saḥ</i>	He

The senses are said to be superior to the body; superior to the senses is the mind; superior to the mind is the intellect; but superior to the intellect is He (the Self).

The preceding verse stated the means of controlling desire. It might be asked how it is possible to kill desire as long as desire controls the senses, mind, and intellect, and deludes the individual soul. In this verse the Lord answers this question.

The senses are said to be superior to the body - The organs of action and the organs of perception constitute the physical structure of the body. In the body structure the organs of perception are subtler than the organs of action.

superior to the senses is the mind - Subtler still is the mind because it controls and guides the sense organs. Therefore the mind is considered superior to the senses. The mind's field of activity is the outer world. It takes the perceptions gathered by the sense organs and presents the information to the intellect.

superior to the mind is the intellect - The intellect is subtler than the mind. It discriminates between the information presented by the mind, determining what is right and what is wrong, what is real and what is unreal. The mind does not know itself. It does not know if there is happiness or sorrow, pleasure or pain. It is the function of the intellect to make judgments about the mind and its thoughts, as well as the senses and their objects. Therefore, the intellect is said to be superior to the mind.

but superior to the intellect is He (the Self) - The intellect, however, does not function by its own power. It is consciousness that reflects in the intellect, which allows it to function. That consciousness is subtler than the intellect. That consciousness, which lies beyond the intellect, is none other than the Self (*Ātman*).

In the **Kāṭhōpaniṣad I: 3.10** it is said, "Higher than the senses are the objects of the sense, higher than the objects of sense is the mind (*manas*), and higher than the mind is the intellect (*buddhi*). Higher than the intellect is the great Self (*Ātman*)."

The senses, mind, and intellect derive their power from the Self; but desire, which is hidden in all three centers, keeps the soul entangled in the world. If the senses, mind, and intellect are controlled by completely withdrawing from all identification with them, then all desire for enjoyment of the world will be stopped.

Śloka 43

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥ ४३ ॥

*evam buddheḥ param buddhvā saṁstabhya ātmānam ātmanā
jahi śatrum mahābāho kāmārūpaṁ durāsadam*

एवम्	<i>evam</i>	thus
बुद्धेः	<i>buddheḥ</i>	than the intellect
परम्	<i>param</i>	superior
बुद्ध्वा	<i>buddhvā</i>	having known
संस्तभ्य	<i>saṁstabhya</i>	restraining
आत्मानम्	<i>ātmānam</i>	the self
आत्मना	<i>ātmanā</i>	by the Self
जहि	<i>jahi</i>	slay thou
शत्रुम्	<i>śatrum</i>	the enemy
महाबाहो	<i>mahābāho</i>	O Mighty-armed (Arjuna)
कामरूपम्	<i>kāmārūpaṁ</i>	of the form of desire
दुरासदम्	<i>durāsadam</i>	hard to conquer

Thus, O Mighty-armed (Arjuna), knowing the Self who is superior to intellect, and restraining the self by the Self, slay the enemy, in the form of desire, that is hard to conquer.

In the preceding verse Lord Kṛṣṇa stated that the Self is the highest principle in a human being, and that the body, senses, mind, and intellect derive their power to function from the consciousness of the Self. In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa states that control of **the self by the Self** frees one from desire. This is the fruit of non-identification of the Self with the senses, mind, and intellect.

It was previously mentioned that desire functions and thrives in the fields of the sense organs, mind, and intellect. This is due to the ignorance that arises when the Self identifies with the mind-body complex. In this state of ignorance, the Self follows and identifies with the senses, mind, and intellect in all worldly enjoyments, and thereby creates its own bondage. This identification with worldly enjoyments through the senses (ignorance) is removed by knowledge of the Self.

As long as people do not realize the true nature of the Self, they are no more than the ego of their existence. As limited human beings they remain involved in this experience of pleasure and pain and go through the cycles of birth and death. Their enemy, which exists in the form of desire, is very hard to conquer. However when Self-knowledge is attained by **restraining the self** (body, mind, intellect, and embodied soul) **by the Self**, the enemy in the form of desire loses all of its areas of functioning, and disappears on its own.

The **Kaṭhōpaniṣad I: 3.12** says, "The Self hidden in all beings does not shine forth, but it is seen by subtle seers through their one pointed and subtle intellect."

