

Śloka 22

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।
आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ २२ ॥

*ye hi saṁsparśajā bhogā duḥkhayonaya eva te
ādyantavantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhaḥ*

ये	<i>ye</i>	which
हि	<i>hi</i>	verily
संस्पर्शजा	<i>saṁsparśajā</i>	contact born
भोगाः	<i>bhogāḥ</i>	enjoyments
दुःखयोनयः	<i>duḥkhayonayaḥ</i>	generator of pain
एव	<i>eva</i>	only
ते	<i>te</i>	they
आद्यन्तवन्तः	<i>ādyantavantaḥ</i>	having beginning and end
कौन्तेय	<i>kaunteya</i>	O Kaunteya (Arjuna)
न	<i>na</i>	not
तेषु	<i>teṣu</i>	in those
रमते	<i>ramate</i>	rejoices, indulges
बुधः	<i>budhaḥ</i>	the wise

VERSE 22

Why a Yogi Should Withdraw the Senses from the External World of Objects

22

The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only a source of pain; they have a beginning and an end. O son of Kuntī (Arjuna), the wise do not indulge in them.

The previous verse explained that when the ego self is unattached to the world of objects, a yogi experiences infinite bliss, which is the true nature of the Self. This verse explains the yogi's non-indulgence in the world of objects.

The enjoyments that are born of contacts are only a source of pain - When an ordinary person contacts an object with a desire for sense enjoyment, the ego immediately creates attachment both to the object and to the memory of the enjoyment of the object. That attachment gives rise to lust, anger, greed, and discontent, and it becomes the source of pain. When that object, which was enjoyed and created a pleasurable memory, disappears or is unavailable the mind becomes depressed, discontented, and filled with sorrow. Therefore, the sense enjoyments derived from contact with external objects are doomed to create pain, both in association and in separation.

they have a beginning and an end - Sense enjoyments are not permanent. An object is experienced with enjoyment only because the mind identifies and accepts it as a source of enjoyment. The enjoyments, however, are always changing according to the change of desires in the mind. For example, a child receives a toy and enjoys playing with it, but when the child finds something else to play with, that toy is discarded. The enjoyment of the toy began when the toy was received and ended when the toy was no longer desired.

Objects in this finite world cannot bring infinite happiness because the very nature of sense enjoyment is fleeting, ephemeral, and full of sorrow. A wise person is content and happy only with the infinite, changeless, and all-pervading Self. Such a one never indulges in any kind of sense enjoyments.

Śloka 23

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३ ॥

śaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhum prākśarīravimokṣaṇāt
kāmakrodhodbhavam vegam sa yuktaḥ sa sukhī naraḥ

शक्नोति	<i>śaknoti</i>	is able
इह	<i>iha</i>	here (in this world)
एव	<i>eva</i>	even
यः	<i>yaḥ</i>	who
सोढुम्	<i>soḍhum</i>	to withstand
प्राक्	<i>prāk</i>	before
शरीरविमोक्षणात्	<i>śarīravimokṣaṇāt</i>	liberation from the body
कामक्रोधोद्भवम्	<i>kāmakrodhodbhavam</i>	born of desire and anger
वेगम्	<i>vegam</i>	the impulse
सः	<i>saḥ</i>	he
युक्तः	<i>yuktaḥ</i>	united
सः	<i>saḥ</i>	he
सुखी	<i>sukhī</i>	happy
नरः	<i>naraḥ</i>	man

VERSE 23

Enemies of the Path of Bliss Should Be Controlled

23

He who is able to endure, while still here, before casting off this body, the impulse of desire and anger, he is a yogi, and a happy person.

In this verse the Lord says that a person can attain perfect joy in this world, even in this very life, by simply “enduring” (not responding to) **the impulse of desire and anger**.

Desire and anger are the two great negative forces in human life. Desire is the cause of delusion because it pulls the mind to the world of objects. This gives rise to feelings such as attachment, possessiveness, and greed. When a desire is obstructed, it generates anger. The stronger one’s desire for an object, the stronger the anger will be when that desire is obstructed or unfulfilled. Discontent, which leads to anger, is created when desires are unfulfilled.

Therefore, one who endures the impulse of desire and anger while still living in the world, **is a yogi**. The term yogi means one who has subdued the mind and senses in order to attain Self-realization. In an ordinary person, the two negative forces of desire and anger take control of the mind, senses, and intellect. They create a veil of ignorance that makes a person unable to identify the real Self.

The body is perishable; sooner or later it will die. Therefore, a person should try to remove desire and anger from the mind while still living. Desire and anger create negative *sanskāras*, therefore they are to be removed in this very lifetime.

The first step in removing the impulse of desire is to remove the thought of the object from the mind. This is because the impulse of desire and anger starts after the thought becomes rooted in the mind. The next step is to develop detachment from the external object. When the mind is not attached to external objects it will have no emotional reaction to obtaining either pleasant or unpleasant objects. A person who can live in this world of objects with non-attachment is a yogi and will have steady happiness.

If one wishes to become a yogi and attain steady happiness, it is not enough to control desire and anger simply out of fear. In that case desire and anger may not be visible, but they will still be present. For example, under the dominion of a tribal chief, the subordinates simply obey orders. They do not express their desires or anger but they live life with a numb heart. Even though they have controlled their desire and anger, they do so out of fear, and consequently they do not achieve any happiness.

Therefore only one who controls desire and anger by developing non-attachment to the objects of the world becomes a yogi with steady happiness.

Śloka 24

योऽन्तः सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥ २४ ॥

*yo'ntaḥ sukho'ntarārāmas---tathāntarjyotireva yaḥ
sa yogī brahmanirvāṇam brahmabhūto'dhigacchati*

यः	<i>yaḥ</i>	who
अन्तः सुखः	<i>antaḥ sukhaḥ</i>	one whose happiness is within
अन्तरारामः	<i>antarārāmaḥ</i>	one who rejoices within
तथा	<i>tathā</i>	also
अन्तर्ज्योतिः	<i>antarjyotiḥ</i>	one who is illuminated within
एव	<i>eva</i>	even
यः	<i>yaḥ</i>	who
सः	<i>saḥ</i>	that
योगी	<i>yogī</i>	yogi
ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्	<i>brahmanirvāṇam</i>	absolute freedom
ब्रह्मभूतः	<i>brahmabhūtaḥ</i>	becoming Brahma
अधिगच्छति	<i>adhigacchati</i>	attains

VERSE 24

Internal Characteristics of a Yogi Who Attains Brahma, the Absolute

24

One who is happy within, who delights within, who is illuminated within, that yogi attains absolute freedom by becoming Brahma.

within - This does not denote the inner ego sense of "I" acting with the mind and intellect but instead denotes the inner sense of the Self, the indwelling God.

A yogi who conquers the impulse of desire and anger by renouncing attachment to the world of objects finds happiness within. The joy and happiness experienced by the association with outer objects are temporary and fleeting. Ultimately they are only a source of pain and misery. Therefore a yogi does not indulge in outer enjoyment, but instead renounces attachment to objects and the enjoyment experienced through them. The yogi finds happiness only by identifying with the Self within.

By withdrawing the senses from outer stimuli, and by constant absorption in meditation within, the yogi takes delight in God alone and attains Self-realization. In the light of pure consciousness the yogi's heart is flooded with divine radiance.

A yogi who is completely detached from the world of objects and has withdrawn completely into the Self attains true knowledge. In the Self the yogi finds joy and happiness and attains realization of the infinite (Brahma), which wipes out all ignorance. The **yogi attains absolute freedom by becoming one with the absolute Brahma.**

Śloka 25

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।
छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ २५ ॥

*labhante brahmanirvāṇam---ṛṣayaḥ kṣīṇakalmaṣāḥ
chinnadvaidhā yatātmānaḥ sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ*

लभन्ते	<i>labhante</i>	obtain
ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्	<i>brahmanirvāṇam</i>	absolute freedom
ऋषयः	<i>ṛṣayaḥ</i>	the ṛṣis
क्षीणकल्मषाः	<i>kṣīṇakalmaṣāḥ</i>	those whose aims are destroyed
छिन्नद्वैधाः	<i>chinnadvaidhāḥ</i>	whose dualities are torn asunder
यतात्मानः	<i>yatātmānaḥ</i>	those who are self controlled
सर्वभूतहिते	<i>sarvabhūtahite</i>	in the welfare of all beings
रताः	<i>ratāḥ</i>	rejoicing, engaged

VERSES 25-26

*External Characteristics of a Yogi Who Attains
Self-Realization*

25

Those seers (ṛṣis) obtain absolute freedom whose sins have been destroyed, whose dualities have been removed, and who are self-controlled and engaged in the welfare of all beings.

The previous verse explained the internal characteristics of a yogi who attains Brahma (the absolute). In this verse the external characteristics are explained.

Yogis who are truthfully engaged in seeking reality bring all their senses under control and thus remove all sins from the mind. Sins are egocentric desires generated by ignorance. They are expressed by feelings such as attachment, possessiveness, greed, anger, hate, pride, and vanity, which create negative impressions in the mind. Sins, which are also called “evils of the mind,” are accumulated in birth after birth. They reinforce ignorance and create a vicious cycle in which the Self is completely veiled. They also create an unending chain of doubts regarding the Self or God. When the ignorance, which is the root cause of all sins and notions of dualities, is removed, the yogi experiences knowledge of the real Self and finds that there is no other than the Self, the infinite.

A yogi is in bondage due to the yogi's own false identification with the idea, “I am this mind-body complex.” When this false dualistic notion is removed, all afflictions are wiped out and the yogi obtains absolute freedom (the non-dual state).

In this verse the Lord clarifies the role of a yogi who, by attaining knowledge of the Self, has obtained complete freedom. Such a one does not selfishly enjoy the bliss of the absolute, but instead remains **engaged in the welfare of all beings** without any attachment, self-interest, or desire. That yogi identifies the same Self everywhere and in everything, and experiences non-duality with all creation.