



Ancient Vedic Mantras and Rituals





Shrimad Bhagavad Gita Chapter-3 Shalok-40 | श्रीमद् भगवद्गीता अध्याय तीन-श्लोक चालीस | PDF

Chapter 3 – Karma Yoga

Verse 40

Sanskrit Verse

Indriyāṇi mano buddhir asyādhiṣṭhānam uchyate |
Etair vimohayatyeṣha jñānam āvṛitya dehinam ||40||

Simple Meaning

Lord Krishna said:

O Arjuna, the senses, the mind, and the intellect are said to be the dwelling places of desire. Through these, desire covers the knowledge of the embodied soul and causes it to become deluded.

Detailed Explanation

The Seats of Desire

In this verse, Lord Krishna explains where desire (Kāma) primarily operates within a human being.





He identifies three important centers—the senses, the mind, and the intellect—as the places where desire resides and influences human behavior.

When these are not properly controlled, desire gains power and gradually dominates a person's thoughts, decisions, and actions.

Understanding these inner centers is the first step toward overcoming desire.

The Senses – The First Gateway

The senses constantly interact with the external world.

They see beautiful objects, hear pleasing sounds, taste enjoyable foods, and experience countless attractions.

Repeated contact with these objects creates attachment.

If attachment is allowed to grow unchecked, it develops into desire.

Therefore, controlling the senses is the foundation of spiritual discipline.

The Mind Strengthens Desire

The mind receives impressions from the senses and repeatedly thinks about them.

The more the mind dwells on attractive objects, the stronger desire becomes.



Instead of remaining peaceful, the mind becomes restless and continually seeks fulfillment through external pleasures.

When desires dominate the mind, inner contentment begins to disappear.

The Intellect Can Be Clouded

The intellect is meant to guide a person by distinguishing right from wrong.

However, when desire becomes powerful, it influences the intellect itself.

A person may begin to justify selfish actions or ignore moral principles simply to satisfy personal cravings.

As a result, wise judgment becomes weakened and spiritual understanding becomes obscured.

How Desire Creates Delusion

Lord Krishna says that desire covers knowledge and throws the embodied soul into delusion.

Knowledge itself is not destroyed.

Rather, it becomes hidden behind layers of attachment, selfishness, and emotional disturbance.





Because of this covering, a person forgets the true nature of the soul and begins to identify completely with temporary pleasures, possessions, and worldly achievements.

This misunderstanding is the root of suffering.

Karma Yoga in Practice

Karma Yoga teaches that the senses, mind, and intellect should be purified instead of being controlled by selfish desires.

When actions are performed without attachment to personal rewards and are offered to God with devotion, desire gradually loses its influence.

Self-discipline, meditation, devotion, and righteous action strengthen the intellect and calm the mind.

As inner purity develops, spiritual wisdom begins to shine naturally.

The Path to Self-Mastery

Lord Krishna emphasizes that true victory is not gained by controlling the external world but by mastering one's own senses, mind, and intellect.

When desire no longer governs these inner faculties, wisdom becomes clear and stable.



The seeker then experiences inner peace, self-control, and freedom from delusion.

This mastery becomes the foundation for self-realization and liberation.

Key Points

- Desire resides in the senses, mind, and intellect.
- The senses are the first gateway through which desire enters.
- The mind strengthens desire by constantly thinking about sense objects.
- Desire can cloud the intellect and weaken wise judgment.
- Spiritual knowledge becomes hidden by attachment and delusion.
- Self-control and discipline protect the mind from desire.
- Karma Yoga purifies the senses, mind, and intellect.
- Devotion, meditation, and selfless action reduce the influence of desire.
- Mastering the inner faculties leads to wisdom, peace, and liberation.



Profound Spiritual Meaning

This verse teaches that the real battlefield of spiritual life lies within the senses, mind, and intellect.

Desire does not merely arise from external objects—it gains strength only when these inner faculties become attached to them.

When the senses are disciplined, the mind remains peaceful, and the intellect is guided by wisdom, desire loses its power.

Lord Krishna therefore encourages every seeker to purify these inner instruments through selfless action, devotion, meditation, and self-control.

As the influence of desire fades, the covering over spiritual knowledge is removed, allowing the soul's true nature to shine forth.

This inner awakening leads to lasting peace, self-realization, and ultimately liberation.

Word-by-Word Meaning

Indriyāṇi – The senses

Manah – The mind

Buddhiḥ – The intellect



Asya – Of this (desire)

Adhiṣṭhānam – Dwelling place, seat

Uchyate – Is said to be

Etaiḥ – Through these

Vimohayati – Deludes, bewilders

Eṣhaḥ – This (desire)

Jñānam – Knowledge, wisdom

Āvṛitya – Covering, concealing

Dehinam – The embodied soul

Message of the Verse

Lord Krishna teaches that desire operates through the senses, the mind, and the intellect, making them its dwelling places. Through these inner faculties, desire covers spiritual knowledge and causes the embodied soul to become deluded. By practicing Karma Yoga, controlling the senses, purifying the mind, strengthening the intellect through wisdom, and dedicating all actions to God, a seeker gradually overcomes desire. As the veil of ignorance is removed, true knowledge shines forth, leading to inner peace, self-realization, and ultimate liberation.



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