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## The thought of 'self-restraint' in the light of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā.

SUBIR DOLUI

Research scholar

Cooch Behar panchanan Barma university  
West Bengal, India

**Abstract:** Śrīmadbhagavadgītā has been hailed as one of the greatest religious discourses of the *Bhīṣma* period of *Mahābhārata*. The exhortations of the Gītā have a direct impact on people's lives, specially where modern society is in danger. At this situation the valuable words of the Gītā help them to get right direction. The splendor of the world always brings excessive addiction to human life. According to the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, this addiction is at the root of all destruction. The Gītā has always said to give up addiction. But it is not so easy. Sensory restraint is very important in this case. self-restraint, or sensory restraint is beautifully described in Śrīmadbhagavadgītā. How the Gita has depicted about sense restraint and its impac on human life has been described in my research paper.

**Index Terms -** Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, sensory restraint, Gītā on human life, kāmanā, ātma-sanyama.

### I. INTRODUCTION

salvation is the main root of vedic learning. From the ancient times the people have been working for salyation. According to Indian tradition people are going through the cycle of rebirth & death. Lord Krishna said in the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā – that

ज्ञातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च।<sup>१</sup>  
Śrīmadbhagavadgītā – is one of the most important religious discourses in the *Bhīṣma* period of *Mahābhārata*, it is come through the conversations between Srikrishna and Arjuna. Not only Hindus, but the essence of all religions has been described in the Gītā Therefore, it is easy to assume that there is a direct connection between the Gītā and the human life. Moreover, the holly Gītā is an excellent example of how to live an idle life.

Through the 'Jñāna-yoga', 'Karma-yoga' and 'Bhakti-yoga' Gītā nourishes the Indian culture. The 'karma' (action) mentioned in the Gītā refers to the result of past action, present action, and the action we will perform in the future. Mainly four types of Karma have been explained in the entire Gītā.<sup>2</sup>

1. Sañchita Karma (Accumulated action)
2. Prārabdha Karma (Fructifying action)
3. Kṛyamāna Karma (Instant action)
4. Āgāmi Karma (Future action)

But the main basis of all these works is 'Niskāma-Karma'. It means desireless action by someone. It is mentioned in the Gītā "कर्मन्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन"<sup>3</sup> that means an action performed without any expectation or results. Moreover, only those who have been doing their duty without expecting result, are called the best. It is mentioned in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Gītā that-

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः।  
स सन्यासी च योगी च न निरर्ग्रिन चाक्रियः।<sup>४</sup>

But it does not mean that the role of result is secondary, rather, it can be said that any good action will definitely benefit people. But prior to this 'Niskāma-karma' sense restraint is very important, because if the dynamic senses are not controlled properly then there is a possibility of something bad happening.

The holly Gītā discusses how we should exercise restraint of the senses and what we can gain as a result of such exercise. There are five senses in a human body. They are eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin.

These senses are always engaged in their own work. Yet it can be said that, without the sense of mind (Mana-indriya) they can not work independently. It is said in the *Mahābhārata* "चक्षुः पश्यति मनसा न तु चक्षुषा"<sup>5</sup> It means, whatever we see it is with the mind, not with the eyes. The senses are very agile and dynamic. It is said, 'मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्'<sup>6</sup> People can control their sense only through the mindfulness, because the mind (Mana-indriya) is transmitter and holder of the senses. The effective way of meditation is mentioned in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, there it is said that it is possible to subdue the mind with adequate practice and asceticism. Through proper

meditation people strive to conquer their mind. It is very important because, the uncontrolled mind is described as a worse enemy. The mind (mana) is indeed very tough to restrain but by practice and detachment, it can be restrained. It is said

“असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम्।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येन च गृह्यते।।”<sup>7</sup>

The splendor of the world always attracts the senses. So, if there is not enough ‘self-restraint’ then people are involved in different things, whatever they are good or bad. So, it has been said in the Gita with analogy

“इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते।

तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नाविमाम्भसि।।”<sup>8</sup>

According to *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* – mind (mana-indriya) is the supreme and greatest of all senses. Although the working senses are superior to dull matter; our mind (Mana-indriya) is higher than the senses; intelligence is still higher than the mind; and the soul is even higher than the intelligence.

“इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः।”

मनसस्तु पराबुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः।।”<sup>9</sup>

The holly Gita gives us advice on our actions through sense restraint.

According to the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* –

the best person is, who performs the deeds in a perfect way without being addicted.

“यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन।

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते।।”<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, it is the advice of Gita that people should concentrate on their work. Lord Shree Krishna has given advice to Arjuna through this verse –

“नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः।

शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्धोद कर्मणः।।”<sup>11</sup>

The Gītā always speaks of the action judging the consequences. In this case, human intellect is specially helpful because the intellect controls the mind most of the time. The intellect (*budhhi*) is divided into three parts as mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of *Gītā*, based on desire, purity and holiness. They are *Sātbika*, *Rājasa*, *Tāmasa*. *Sātbika* is the best of all. It has been said in the Gita about *sātbika* –

“प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये।

वन्धं मोक्षं च या वेति बुद्धि सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी।।”<sup>12</sup>

It means ‘*sātbiki-budhhi*’ that helps to think about what should be done, what should not be done, where there is salvation etc.

“यया धर्माधर्मं च कार्यं च अकार्यमेव च।

अयथावत् प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी।।”<sup>13</sup>

The intellect that can’t diagnose the ineffectiveness of; ‘*Dharmādharmā*’, ‘*karyā-karya*’ is *Rājasi*.

The last one is *Tāmasi*. According to the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* –

due to the abundance of this ‘*Tāmasi-guna*’ human life becomes dark. As follows-

“अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसाऽवृता।

सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी।।”<sup>14</sup>

The essence of the above verses is that the best intellect in the world is *Sātbiki*. By this intellect people are engaged in good and scriptural action, and the result of this action is always good. but the *rājasi-budhhi*

(intellect) leads us in a different direction due to prejudice (pre-birth reformation) or uncontrolled eating habits.

This is why people are repeatedly misled and fall in danger. We, Therefore, have to lean towards *Sātbiki-budhhi*; without it the desired salvation for all of us is not possible. But here *kāma* (lust) is considered to be the main obstacle in the scriptural purification ritual.

This is why we should restrain our desire. Here desire means *kāmanā*. The Gītā describe *kāmanā* (desire) as a great sinner who destroys knowledge.

“इत्स्माद् त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भारतर्षभम्।

पापमानं प्रजहि होनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम्।।”<sup>15</sup>

So, we should turn our attention away from *kāma* (desire), and focus on god. The holly Gita describes how *kāma* harms our lives. The verse mentioned in the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* –

“ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंस संगस्तेषुपजायते।

संगात् संजायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते।।

क्रोधात् भवति सन्मोह सन्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः।

स्मृतिभ्रमाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशाद् प्रणश्यति।।”<sup>16</sup>

The significance of the above verse is –

Frist of all seeing the splendor of the world addiction awake at frist. From the addiction desire awakens. Similarly, anger arises from desire (*kāmanā*). This anger reveals human stupidity. In this way people are gradually destroyed. Thus, self-restraint is very important for living human being. It is beautifully described in the entire *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*. According to *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, excessive addiction turns our life in a wrong direction.

So, why the Gītā clearly says to give up addiction. For this reason the greatness and superiority of the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* is equally present in this age.

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