

अर्जुन उवाच  
Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

ज्यायसी चेत् कर्मणस्ते  
If better than karma, you  
jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te

मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन  
consider knowledge, O Krishna,  
matā buddhir janārdana

तत् किं कर्मणि घोरे मां  
then why, into this gruesome deed,  
tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām

नियोजयसि केशव  
do you compel me, O Krishna?  
niyojayasi keśava 3.1

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन  
With seemingly contradictory words  
vyāmiśreṇeva vākyaena

बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे  
you confuse my mind.  
buddhiṁ mohayasīva me

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य  
Tell me certainly the path  
tad ekam vada niścitya

येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम्  
by which I can gain enlightenment.  
yena śreyo 'ham āpnuyām 3.2

श्रीभगवानुवाच  
The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

लोकेऽस्मिन् द्विविधा निष्ठा  
In this world are two paths  
loke 'smin dvividhā niṣṭhā

पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ  
described by me long ago, O Arjuna:  
purā proktā mayānagha

ज्ञानयोगेन साङ्ख्यानां  
jnana yoga for renunciates  
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām

कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम्  
and karma yoga for aspirants.  
karma-yogena yoginām 3.3

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्  
By refraining from action  
na karmaṇām anārambhān

नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते  
one does not gain actionlessness.  
naiṣkarmyam puruṣo 'śnute

न च संन्यासनादेव  
Nor by renunciation alone  
na ca saṁnyāsanād eva

सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति  
can one attain perfection.  
siddhim samadhigacchati 3.4

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि  
No one, even for a moment,  
na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api

जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत्  
ever remains without action  
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarmakṛt

कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म  
because all are compelled to act  
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma

सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः  
by the qualities of nature.  
sarvaḥ prakṛtijair guṇaiḥ 3.5

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य  
Restraining the organs of action,  
karmendriyāṇi saṁyamya

य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन्  
one whose mind continually dwells  
ya āste manasā smaran

इन्द्रियार्थान् विमूढात्मा  
on sense objects is deluded.  
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā

मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते  
He is called a hypocrite.  
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate 3.6

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा

But one who restrains the senses  
yas tv indriyāṇi manasā

नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन

with his mind, O Arjuna, practicing  
niyamyārabhate 'rjuna

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगम्

karma yoga with the organs of action,  
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam

असक्तः स विशिष्यते

that detached person is superior.  
asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate 3.7

यज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र

Except for actions done as a sacrifice,  
yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra

लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः

mankind is bound by karma.  
loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय

O Arjuna, as a sacrifice  
tad-artham karma kaunteya

मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर

perform action without attachment.  
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara 3.9

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं

You must do action as ordained  
niyataṁ kuru karma tvam

कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः

because action is better than inaction.  
karma jyāyo hy akarmanah

शरीरयात्रापि च ते

Even maintaining your body  
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te

न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः

is not possible without action.  
na prasiddhyed akarmanah 3.8

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा

Having created people and sacrifices,  
saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā

पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः

the Creator said in the beginning:  
purovāca prajāpatiḥ

अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वम्

"By this sacrifice shall you multiply.  
anena prasaviṣyadhvam

एष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक्

May it fulfill your wishes."  
eṣa vo 'stv iṣṭa-kāma-dhuk 3.10

देवान् भावयतानेन

“By sacrifice, the gods are pleased,  
devān bhāvayatānena

ते देवा भावयन्तु वः

and those gods will bless you.  
te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ

परस्परं भावयन्तः

Propitiating each other,  
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ

श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ

you shall gain the highest good."  
śreyāḥ param avāpsyatha 3.11

इष्टान् भोगान् हि वो देवा

The gods will fulfill your desires  
iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā

दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः

when propitiated by sacrifice.  
dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ

तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो

One who enjoys their blessings  
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo

यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः

without sacrificing is a thief.  
yo bhun̄kte stena eva saḥ 3.12

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो

Those who eat food offered as a sacrifice  
yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo

मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः

are freed from all sins.  
mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ

भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा

But they eat sinfully  
bhun̄jate te tv agham pāpā

ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात्

who cook food only for themselves.  
ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt 3.13

अन्नाद् भवन्ति भूतानि

Creatures are born of food,  
annād bhavanti bhūtāni

पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः

food is born of rain,  
parjanyaād anna-sambhavaḥ

यज्ञाद् भवति पर्जन्यो

rain is born of sacrifice,  
yajñād bhavati parjanya

यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः

and sacrifice is born of rituals.  
yajñaḥ karma-samudbhavaḥ 3.14

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि

Rituals are born of Vedic scriptures,  
karma brahmodbhavaṁ viddhi

ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम्

and Vedic scriptures are born of Ishvara.  
brahmākṣara-samudbhavam

तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म

Therefore, the eternal Vedas  
tasmāt sarva-gataṁ brahma

नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम्

always abide in sacrifice.  
nityaṁ yajñe pratiṣṭhitam 3.15

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्याद्

But one who revels only in atma,  
yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād

आत्मतृप्तश्च मानवः

a person satisfied by atma  
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavaḥ

आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्

and content with atma alone,  
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas

तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते

for him, nothing remains to be done.  
tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate 3.17

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं

Thus the cycle continues.  
evaṁ pravartitaṁ cakram

नानुवर्तयतीह यः

One who does not follow it  
nānuvartayatīha yaḥ

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो

is sinful and self-indulgent.  
aghāyur indriyārāmo

मोघं पार्थ स जीवति

He lives in vain, O Arjuna.  
moghaṁ pārtha sa jīvati 3.16

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो

For him, there is no purpose in action  
naiva tasya kṛtenārtho

नाकृतेनेह कश्चन

nor in inaction.  
nākṛteneha kaścana

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु

Nor upon anything that exists  
na cāsya sarva-bhūteṣu

कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः

is he dependent.  
kaścīd artha-vyapāśrayaḥ 3.18

तस्मादसक्तः सततं

Therefore, with detachment, always  
tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ

कार्यं कर्म समाचर

perform required actions,  
kāryaṁ karma samācara

असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म

because by acting with detachment,  
asakto hy ācaran karma

परमाप्नोति पूरुषः

a person attains the highest.  
param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ 3.19

यद् यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्

Whatever a great person does,  
yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas

तत्तदेवेतरो जनः

that alone other people do.  
tat tad evetaro janaḥ

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते

The standard he sets,  
sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute

लोकस्तदनुवर्तते

other people will follow.  
lokas tad anuvartate 3.21

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिम्

By action alone, enlightened  
karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhim

आस्थिता जनकादयः

were King Janaka and others.  
āsthitā janakādayaḥ

लोकसङ्ग्रहमेवापि

Similarly, keeping the welfare of all  
loka-saṅgraham evāpi

सम्पश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि

in view, you should perform action.  
sampaśyan kartum arhasi 3.20

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं

O Arjuna, for me, nothing remains  
na me pārthāsti kartavyaṁ

त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन

to be done in the three worlds.  
triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana

नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं

Nothing remains to be gained,  
nānavāptam avāptavyaṁ

वर्त एव च कर्मणि

yet I am engaged in action.  
varta eva ca karmaṇi 3.22

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं  
If I do not engage  
yadi hy ahaṁ na varteyaṁ

जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः  
tirelessly in action,  
jātu karmaṇy atandritaḥ

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते  
people will follow my example  
mama vartmānuvartante

मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः  
everywhere, O Arjuna.  
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ 3.23

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो  
Attached to results, the ignorant  
saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso

यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत  
perform action, O Arjuna.  
yathā kurvanti bhārata

कुर्याद् विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्च  
But the wise, without attachment,  
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaśch

चिकीर्षुर्लोकसङ्ग्रहम्  
act for the welfare of all.  
cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham 3.25

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका  
People would degenerate  
utsīdeyur ime lokā

न कुर्यां कर्म चेद् अहम्  
if I do not perform action.  
na kuryāṁ karma ced aham

सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्याम्  
I would cause confusion  
saṅkarasya ca kartā syām

उपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः  
and harm those people.  
upahanyām imāḥ prajāḥ 3.24

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेद्  
One should not confuse  
na buddhi-bhedaṁ janayed

अज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम्  
the ignorant ones attached to results.  
ajñānāṁ karma-saṅginām

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि  
Inspiring them to perform all duties,  
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi

विद्वान् युक्तः समाचरन्  
the wise act properly.  
vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran 3.26

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि

Due to the qualities of nature,  
prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni

गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः

all actions are performed.  
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ

अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा

One who is deluded by egotism  
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā

कर्ताहमिति मन्यते

thinks, "I am the doer."  
kartāham iti manyate 3.27

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो

But one who knows the truth, O Arjuna,  
tattvavit tu mahā-bāho

गुणकर्मविभागयोः

about qualities and actions:  
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ

गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त

"Qualities act in the body and mind,"  
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta

इति मत्वा न सज्जते

knowing thus, he is not attached.  
iti matvā na sajjate 3.28

प्रकृतेर्गुणसम्मूढाः

Deluded about the qualities,  
prakṛter guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ

सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु

they get attached to the quality's actions.  
sajjante guṇa-karmasu

तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्

Those who are ignorant and foolish,  
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān

कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत्

the wise should not disturb.  
kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet 3.29

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि

Unto me, all your actions  
mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi

संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा

renounce with a discerning mind.  
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा

Free from desire and possessiveness,  
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā

युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः

you must fight without anger.  
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ 3.30



ये मे मतमिदं नित्यम्

This is my teaching.

ye me matam idam nityam

अनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः

Those who consistently follow it,

anutīṣṭhanti mānavāḥ

श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो

full of faith, free from criticism,

śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto

मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः

are freed from their karmas.

mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ 3.31

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो

But those who reject it

ye tv etad abhyasūyanto

नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम्

and do not follow my teachings,

nānutīṣṭhanti me matam

सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्

confused about all knowledge,

sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhāṁs tān

विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः

foolish, know them to be lost.

viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ 3.32

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः

One acts according to one's own

sadr̥śam ceṣṭate svasyāḥ

प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि

nature, even a wise person.

prakṛter jñānavān api

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि

Beings conform to nature.

prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni

निग्रहः किं करिष्यति

What can restraint do?

nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati 3.33

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे

Towards every sense object,

indriyasyendriyasyārthe

रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ

attraction and aversion arise.

rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau

तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्

One should not fall under their control

tayor na vaśam āgacchet

तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ

because they are one's enemies.

tau hy asya paripanthinau 3.34

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः

Doing one's own nasty duties is better  
śreyān svadharmo viguṇaḥ

परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात्

than doing another's nice duties.  
para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः

Following one's dharma, death is better.  
svadharme nidhanam śreyaḥ

परधर्मो भयावहः

Following another's is dangerous.  
para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ 3.35

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं

Compelled by what  
atha kena prayukto 'yaṁ

पापं चरति पूरुषः

does a person commit sin,  
pāpaṁ carati pūruṣaḥ

अनिच्छन्नपि वाष्णेय

even without wanting to, O Krishna,  
anicchann api vārṣṇeya

बलादिव नियोजितः

as though driven by force?  
balād iva niyojitaḥ 3.36

अर्जुन उवाच

Arjuna said,  
arjuna uvāca

श्रीभगवानुवाच

The Blessed Lord said,  
śrī-bhagavān uvāca

काम एष क्रोध एष

This desire, this anger,  
kāma eṣa krodha eṣa

रजोगुणसमुद्भवः

born of the quality of passion,  
rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ

महाशनो महापाप्मा

is an insatiable source of great sin.  
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā

विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम्

Know it to be your enemy in life.  
viddhy enam iha vairiṇam 3.37

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन

Wisdom is covered by this,  
āvṛtaṁ jñānam etena

ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा

the relentless enemy of the wise  
jñānino nitya-vairiṇā

कामरूपेण कौन्तेय

in the form of desire, O Arjuna,  
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya

दुष्पूरेणानलेन च

which is an insatiable fire.  
duṣpūreṇānalena ca 3.39

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्

Like fire covered by smoke,  
dhūmenāvriyate vahnir

यथादर्शो मलेन च

or a mirror covered by dust,  
yathādarśo malena ca

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्

or a foetus in the womb,  
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas

तथा तेनेदमावृतम्

so too, wisdom is covered by desire.  
tathā tenedam āvṛtam 3.38

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिर्

Senses, mind and intellect  
indriyāṇi mano buddhir

अस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते

are its abode.  
asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate

एतैर्विमोहयत्येष

With these, desire deludes  
etair vimohayaty eṣa

ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम्

a person by covering his wisdom.  
jñānam āvṛtya dehinam 3.40

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ

Therefore, having first  
tasmāt tvam indriyāṅy ādau

नियम्य भरतर्षभ

restrained the senses, O Arjuna,  
niyamya bharatarṣabha

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं

remove this sinner  
pāpmānaṁ prajahi hy enaṁ

ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम्

that destroys wisdom and discernment.  
jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam 3.41

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुर्

They say: senses are superior,  
indriyāṅi parāṅy āhur

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः

mind is superior to the senses,  
indriyebhyaḥ paraṁ manaḥ

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्

intellect is superior to the mind,  
manasas tu parā buddhir

यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः

but atma is superior to the intellect.  
yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ 3.42

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा

Realizing atma, superior to the intellect,  
evaṁ buddheḥ paraṁ buddhvā

संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना

fixing your mind on atma,  
saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो

O Arjuna, destroy this  
jahi śatruṁ mahā-bāho

कामरूपं दुरासदम्

powerful enemy, desire.  
kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam 3.43