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Wisdom as Elucidated in *The Bible* and *Bhagavad Gita*: A Brief Comparative Study

A. David

Guest Lecturer,
Alagappa University Evening College,
Paramakudi.

Literature with its genuiness has ever been the source of imparting wisdom to humanity for centuries in the history of mankind. Wisdom is categorized one among the Cardinal Virtues by Plato in his *The Republic*. “Wisdom which gives direction to the moral life and is the rational, intellectual base for any system of ethics. Wisdom is part natural and part acquired combining knowledge and narrative abilities; it largely comes from maturing of life experience, from contemplation, reading, conversing and study.” (Qtd. in Ahuja 5)

Wisdom shows the right direction in our life. It is the source of serene life. Thus it becomes imperative to acquire it. In English Literature The Bible is venerated not only for its literary qualities but also for the wisdom treasured in. “True wisdom is always consistent with the two great wisdom themes of the Bible: reverence to God, our creator and respect for all persons everywhere”. (Christian n.p. web) Our main concern regarding life is the ‘well being’. Human beings by their nature tend to live a peaceful life. Wisdom is incomparable. It is the fountain of life. “Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.” (Proverbs 3:17)

Bhagavad Gita, the Lord Krishna’s song has been threshold to Eternal Life to generations after generations from time immemorial. It’s priceless teachings quench the thirst of all souls seeking to become divine. From the original text in Sanskrit Gita has been translated into English by many eminent writers. Thirty songs have been dedicated to wisdom in Bhagavad Gita. God is universal so also the virtue of wisdom. God is the source of all wisdom. He is the Origin of all immeasurable values endowed with in wisdom. Human beings as seekers of wisdom strive to obtain it with the blessings of God. The Bible and The Bhagavad Gita contribute a lot in enriching oneself with wisdom

God is the source of wisdom

Wisdom springs forth from God who is Eternal and Ever lasting. With the power of wisdom, God causes changes in seasons and thrones and dethrones the kings. Wisdom belongs to God. He imparts wisdom to those who thirst for her. For this reason the whole world praises God.

*“Blessed be the name of God from age to age
for Wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons,
Deposes kings and sets up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have Understanding” (Daniel 2:20, 21)*

The same concept has been pronounced by God Himself in Bhagavad Gita. Here God promises everyone to be blessed with wisdom the knowledge with realization. Of all knowledge the knowledge of God realization is the supreme, which alone elevates soul from the bondage of Karma and none-else.

“I shall impart to you in full

*This Knowledge combined with realization
Having known which nothing else remains still
To be known in this world” (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 329)*

Wisdom for redemption Bible speaks about the necessity of God’s wisdom or the redemption of human beings. By imbibing God’s wisdom one can march towards the path of righteousness so as to attain salvation. This is the greatest achievement one can realize in this materialistic world.

“He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:30, 31)

Redemption or Salvation, is parallel to the term liberation from maya in Hinduism. Human bondage is the result of our ignorance. Wisdom illumines our minds. God grants wisdom to those who seek with sincere effort. The only solution to overcome maya is to attain wisdom.

*“This divine maya of mine
Is very hard to get over
But those who seek refuge in me alone,
Certainly cross over this maya.” (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 350)*

Human wisdom

Led by human wisdom, people stumble and fall down. Even the rulers and kings of the nations solely depend upon their little knowledge so that they discard God’s wisdom. This leads to the destruction of life. They fail to recognize God’s wisdom operating in the universe.

“Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak of God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understand this.” (1 Corinthians 2: 6-8)

In Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna utters that the fools and the people clinging to evil deeds lose their wisdom as the consequence of their evil actions. The maya surrounds them with darkness. They fail to recognize the sublimity of God’s wisdom. Therefore they dwell in the domain of devils.

*“The evil doers, the fools, the lowest among men;
The men whose wisdom is removed by maya and
Those of demonic nature
Do not seek refuge in me” (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 352)*

The nobility of wisdom

The nobility of wisdom is characterized by a number of qualities which wisdom possesses. The spirit of wisdom permeates into creation revealing its sublimity for a meaningful living. It is divine in nature. Incomparable in its power; the power to grasp the philosophy of life governing the universe. Wisdom delves deep in a pure mind enhancing the quantum of intelligence. It is holy, unique, and manifold as narrated in the Bible in the following manner;

*“There is in her a spirit that is Intelligent and holy,
Unique and subtle, manifold All powerful, overseeing all,
And penetrating through all spirits
That are intelligent pure and Altogether subtle”*

(Wisdom of Solomon 7:22,23)

Lord Krishna, extols the wisdom in a way, nothing can be compared to. He is the Intelligence of intelligent. He is the Brilliance of all brilliant. He is the master knowledge of everything. He is the most glorious. From His Intelligence human beings derive their intelligence in order to worship the Lord and discharge the duties of the earthly life flawless.

*“O, Partha, Know Me as the the
Eternal seed of all beings.
I am the intelligence of the intelligent
And the glory of glorious”* (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 342)

God does not bestow wisdom to those who are unspiritual. Because their spirits do not seek of God’s kingdom. They go after the worldly allurements. Spiritual blindness envelopes the reality of life.

“Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s spirit, for they are follishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14)

In Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna tells that he is not manifest to all. Human beings are so immersed in their ego that they cannot open their spiritual eye to see the Lord present everywhere in the form of wisdom. The world is ignorant and crawling in the darkness. God is omnipotent and omnipresent. He is the beginning and the end. One who knows this truth by wisdom knows Lord Krishna.

*“I am not manifest to all
As I am hidden by yoga Maya.
This ignorant world knows me not
As unborn and the imperishable”* (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 365)

The purpose of wisdom

Wisdom enables people to realize God, by setting aside the desire for material goods. Being righteous leads to attain God. Uprightness in heart elevates to the realm of happiness rendered by God. Amassing wealth through wickedness lasts no longer. The Bible speaks of the power of righteousness as being capable of freeing oneself even from death.

*“Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit
but righteousness delivers from death”* (Proverbs 10 : 2)

The same concept is noticed in Bhagavad Gita also. Lord Krishna tells his disciples that those who seek Him above all materials will overcome death. Steadfast love and constant search for Krishna will make a person superior among the multitude of people.

*“Those who realize Me as Superior to Material things
As Superior to the devas and as associated with
The essence of the sacrifice.
Such men of stable mind know Me
Even in the hour of death”* (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 371)

Wisdom in creation

The creation is the outcome of God’s wisdom. Every part of the creation is meticulously designed by the immeasurable knowledge of God. No power has ever superseded God’s power. Human being’s wisdom is a drop from God’s Wisdom .The Lord God is the universe.

“The Lord by wisdom founded the earth;

*by understanding he established the heavens;
by his knowledge the deeps broke open,
and the clouds drop down the dew.” (Proverbs 3:19, 20)*

The entire universe is the form of Krishna. He is the creator of the Universe. His presence permeates all parts of creation. Every creature speaks of Lord Krishna's power of wisdom. The universe is filled with life. And Krishna is the Source of all life.

*“My Prakriti is eightfold:
They are the earth, water, fire, wind,
Ether, mind, intellect and egoism” (Srimad Bhagavad Gita 331)*

The eight fold concept of Lord Krishna is also witnessed in The Bible.

*“Ages ago I was set up At the first, before the
Beginning of the earth When there were no depths I was brought forth
When there were no springs abounding with water. Proverbs (8:23-24)*

Thus The Bible and The Bhagavad Gita proclaim the source, greatness and the value of wisdom who is God Himself. Wisdom proceeds from God. People strive for their real identity in the light of their Creator. Human soul is ever longing to merge with the supreme soul. Wisdom alone can lead a human being into the ultimate aim of becoming divine.

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