



Bhagavad Gita

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Bhagavad Gita

Translated by Alladi Mahadeva Sastry

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I. THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

DHRITARASHTRA SAID:

1. What did Pandu's sons and mine do when they assembled together on the sacred plain of Kurukshetra, eager for battle, O Samjaya?

SAMJAYA SAID:

2. Having seen the army of the Pandavas drawn up in battle-array, prince Duryodhana then approached his teacher and spoke (these) words:

3. O teacher, look at this grand army of the sons of Pandu, marshaled by thy talented pupil, the son of Drupada.

4. Here are heroes, mighty archers, equal in battle to Bhima and Arjuna; Yuyudhana Virata, and Drupada, the master of a great car (maharatha).

5. Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana, and the valiant king of Kasi, Purujit and Kunti Bhoja, and that eminent man Saibya;

6. The heroic Yudhamanyu and the brave Uttamaujas; the son of Subhadra and the sons of Draupadi, all masters of great cars (maharathas).

7. But know, O best of the twice-born, who are the most distinguished among us, the leaders of my army; these I name to thee by way of example.

8. Thyself and Bhishma, and Karna, and also Kripa, the victor in war, Asvathaman and Vikarna, and also Jayadratha, the son of Samadatta.

9. And many other heroes who have given up their lives for my sake, fighting with various weapons, all well-skilled in battle.

10. This army of ours protected by Bhishma is inadequate, whereas that army of theirs which is under the protection of Bhishma is adequate.

11. And therefore do ye all, occupying your respective positions in the several divisions of the army, support Bhishma only.

12. His mighty grandsire, (Bhisma), the oldest of the Kauravas, in order to cheer him, sounded on high a lion's roar and blew his conch.

13. Then, all at once, conches and kettle-drums, cymbals, drums and horns were played upon, and the sound was a tumultuous uproar.

14. Then, too, Madhava and the son of Pandu, seated in a grand chariot yoked to white horses, blew their celestial conches.

15. Hrishikesa blew the Panchajanya; and Arjuna blew the Devadatta. Bhima, (the doer) of terrible deeds, blew his great conch Paundra.

16. Prince Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya, while Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughosha and the Manipushpaka.

17. The King of Kasi, an excellent archer, Sikhandin, the master of a great car, Dhrishtadyumna and Virata, and the unconquered Satyaki;

18. Drupada and the sons of Draupadi, O Lord of earth, and the son of Subhadra, of mighty arms, all together blew their respective conches.

19. That tumultuous sound rent the hearts of (the people) of Dhritarashtra's party, making both heaven and earth resound.

20-22. Then seeing the people of Dhritarashtra's party regularly marshaled, while the discharge of weapons began, Arjuna, the son of Pandu, whose ensign was a monkey, O King of earth, took up his bow and said thus to Krishna:

O Achyuta (Immortal), place my chariot between the two armies that I may just see those who stand here desirous to fight, and know with whom I must fight in this strife of battle.

23. I will observe those who are assembled here and are about to engage in battle desirous to do service in war to the evil-minded son of Dhritarashtra.

SAMJAYA SAID:

24-25. O descendant of Bharata, Hrishikesa (Krishna) thus addressed by Gudakesa (Arjuna) stationed that excellent car between the two armies in front of Bhisma and Drona and all the rulers of earth, and said: O son of Pritha, look at these assembled Kauravas.

26-27. Then the son of Pritha saw arrayed there in both the armies fathers and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and comrades, father-in-law and friends.

27-28. When the son of Kunti saw all the kinsmen standing, he was overcome with deepest pity and said thus in sorrow:

ARJUNA SAID:

28-29. Seeing these kinsmen, O Krishna, arrayed and desirous to fight, my limbs droop down, and my mouth is dried up. A tremor comes on my body and my hairs stand on end.

30. The Gandiva slips from my hand and my skin is intensely burning. I am also unable to stand and my mind is whirling round, as it were.

31. And, O Kesava, I see omens foreboding evil. Nor do I see any good from killing my kinsmen in battle.

32. I desire not victory, O Krishna, nor kingdom, nor pleasures. Of what avail is dominion to us, O Govinda? Of what avail are pleasures and even life?

33-34. They for whose sake dominion, enjoyments and pleasures are sought by us are here standing, having staked their life and wealth; teachers, fathers, sons as well as grandfathers; maternal uncles, father-in-law grandsons, brothers-in-law as also (other) relatives.

35. These, O slayer of Madhu, I do not wish to kill, though they kill me, even for the sake of dominion over the three worlds; how much less, for the sake of the earth!

36. O Janardana, what delight shall be ours after killing the sons of Dhritarashtra? On killing these felons, sin only will take hold of us.

37. We had then better not slay our own kinsmen, the sons of Dhritarashtra; for, how can we be happy, O Madhava, after slaying our own people?

38-39. Though these, whose intelligence is stricken by greed, perceive no evil in the extinction of families and no sin in treachery to friends, yet, O Janardana, should not we, who clearly see evil in the extinction of a family, learn to refrain from this sinful deed?

40. On the extinction of a family, the immemorial dharmas of that family disappear. When the dharmas disappear, impiety (adharma) overtakes the whole family.

41. By the prevalence of impiety, O Krishna, the women of the family become corrupt. Women corrupted, there will be intermingling of castes (varna-samkara), O descendent of Vrishnis.

42. Confusion of castes leads the family of these destroyers of families also to hell; for, their forefathers fall (down to hell), deprived of the offerings of pinda (rice-ball) and water.

43. By these evil deeds of the destroyers of families, which cause the intermingling of castes, the eternal dharmas of castes and families are subverted.

44. We have heard, O Janardana, that necessary is the dwelling in hell of the men whose family dharmas are subverted.

45. Alas! We have resolved to commit a great sin, in as much as we are endeavoring to slay our kinsmen out of a craving for the pleasures of dominion.

46. It would be better for me, if the sons of Dhritarashtra, with arms in hand, should slay me unarmed and unresisting in the battle.

SAMJAYA SAID:

47. Having said thus, Arjuna, sorrow-stricken in mind, cast aside his bow and arrows in the midst of the battle and sat down in the chariot.

II. SANKHYA YOGA

SAMJAYA SAID:

1. To him who was thus overcome with pity and afflicted and whose eyes were full of tears and agitated, the destroyer of Madhu spoke as follows:

THE LORD SAID:

2. Whence in (this) perilous strait has come upon thee this weakness cherished by the unworthy, debarring from heaven and causing disgrace, O Arjuna?

3. Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha. It does not become thee. Cast off this base weakness of heart and arise, O tormentor of foes.

ARJUNA SAID:

4. O slayer of Madhu, how shall I assail in battle with arrows Bhishma and Drona, who are worthy of worship, O slayer of enemies.

5. Better indeed in this world to live even upon alms than to slay the teachers of high honor. But, were I to slay these teachers, I should only in this world enjoy the pleasures of wealth, delights stained with blood.

6. And we know not which is the better alternative for us; nor do we know whether we shall conquer them or they will conquer us. Even the sons of Dhritarashtra, after killing whom we do not wish to live, stand arrayed against us.

7. My heart contaminated by the taint of helplessness, my mind confounded about Dharma, I ask Thee: tell me what is absolutely good. I am Thy pupil. Instruct me, who have sought Thy grace.

8. I do not indeed see what can dispel the grief which burns up my senses, even after attaining unrivalled and prosperous dominion on earth or even lordship over gods.

SAMJAYA SAID:

9. Having spoken thus to Hrishikesa, Gudakesa, the tormenter of foes, said to Govinda, 'I will not fight' and verily remained silent

10. To him who was grieving in the midst of the two armies, O descendant of Bharata, Hrishikesa as if smiling, spoke these words:

THE LORD SAID:

11. For those who deserve no grief thou hast grieved and words of wisdom thou speak. For the living and for the dead the wise grieve not.

12. Never did I not exist, nor thou, nor these rulers of men; and no one of us will ever hereafter cease to exist.

13. Just as in this body the embodied (Self) passes into childhood and youth and old age, so does He pass into another body. There the wise man is not distressed.

14. The sense-contacts it is, O son of Kunti, which causes heat and cold; pleasure and pain; they come and go, they are impermanent. Endure them bravely, O descendant of Bharata.

15. That wise man whom, verily, these afflict not, O chief of men, to whom pleasure and pain are same, he for immortality is fit.

16. Of the unreal no being there is; there is no non-being of the real. Of both these is the truth seen by the seers of the Essence.

17. But know that to be imperishable by which all this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of That, the Inexhaustible.

18. These bodies of the embodied (Self) who is eternal, indestructible and unknowable are said to have an end. Do fight, therefore, O descendant of Bharata.
19. Whoever looks upon Him as the slayer and whoever looks upon Him as the slain, both these know not a right. He slays not, nor is He slain.
20. He is not born, nor does He ever die; after having been, He again ceases not to be; nor the reverse. Unborn, eternal, unchangeable and primeval, He is not slain when the body is slain.
21. Whoso knows Him as indestructible, eternal, unborn and inexhaustible - How, O son of Pritha, and whom does such a man cause to slay and whom does he slay?
22. Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on others which are new, so the embodied (self) casts off worn-out bodies and enters others which are new.
23. Him weapons cut not, Him fire burns not and Him water wets not; Him wind dries not.
24. He cannot be cut, nor burnt, nor wetted, nor dried up. He is everlasting, all-pervading stable, firm and eternal.
25. He, it is said, is un-manifest, unthinkable and unchangeable. Wherefore, knowing Him to be such, thou hast better grieve not.
26. But even if thou thinks of Him as ever being born and ever dying, even then, O mighty-armed, thou ought not to grieve thus.
27. To that which is born, death is indeed certain; and to that which is dead, birth is certain. Therefore, about the unavoidable thing, thou ought not to grieve.
28. Beings have their beginning unseen, their middle seen, and their end unseen again. Why any lamentation regarding them?
29. One sees Him as a wonder; and so also another speaks of Him as a wonder; and as a wonder another hears of Him; and though hearing, none understands Him at all.
30. He, the embodied (Self) in every one's body, can never be killed, O descendant of Bharata. Wherefore thou ought not to grieve about any creature.

31. Having regard to thy own duty also, thou ought not to waver. For, to a Kshatriya, there is nothing more wholesome than a lawful battle.
32. Happy Kshatriya, O son of Pritha, find such a battle as this, come of itself, an open door to heaven.
33. Now if thou wouldst not fight this lawful battle, then having abandoned thy own duty and fame, thou shall incur sin.
34. People, too, will recount thy everlasting infamy; and to one who has been esteemed, infamy is more than death.
35. The great car-warriors will think thou hast withdrawn from the battle through fear; and having been hitherto highly esteemed by them, thou wilt incur their contempt.
36. Thy enemies, too, scorning thy power, will take many abusive words. What is more painful than that?
37. Killed, thou wilt reach heaven; victorious, thou wilt enjoy the earth. Wherefore, O son of Kunti, arise, resolved to fight.
38. Then, treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, success and defeat, prepare for the battle and thus wilt thou not incur sin.
39. This, which has been taught to thee is wisdom concerning Sankhya. Now listen to wisdom concerning Yoga, which possessing thou shall cast off the bond of action.
40. There is no loss of effort here, there is no harm. Even a little of this devotion delivers one from great fear.
41. Here, O son of Kuru, there is one thought of a resolute nature. Many-branched and endless are the thoughts of the irresolute.
- 42-44. No conviction of a resolute nature is formed in the mind of those who are attached to pleasures and power and whose minds are drawn away by that flowery speech which the unwise - enamored of Vedic utterances, declaring there is nothing else, full of desire, having svarga as their goal - utter, (a speech) which promises birth as there ward of actions and which abounds in specific acts for the attainment of pleasure and power, O son of Pritha.
45. The Vedas treat of the triad of the gunas. Be, O Arjuna, free from the triad of the gunas, free from pairs, free from acquisition and preservation, ever remaining in the Sattva and self-possessed.

46. What utility there is in a reservoir by the side of an all-spreading flood of water, the same(utility) there is in all Vedas for an enlightened Brahmana.

47. Thy concern is with action alone, never with results. Let the fruit of action be not thy motive, nor let thy attachment be for inaction.

48. Steadfast in devotion do thy works, O Dhananjaya, casting off attachment, being the same in success and failure. Evenness is called Yoga.

49. Verily action is far inferior to devotion in wisdom (buddhi-yoga), O Dhananjaya. In wisdom (buddhi) seek thou shelter. Wretched are they whose motive is the fruit.

50. He who is endued with wisdom casts off here both good deeds and bad deeds. Wherefore apply thyself to devotion. In regard to actions devotion is a power.

51. For, men of wisdom cast off the fruit of action; possessed of knowledge (and) released from the bond of birth, they go to the place where there is no evil.

52. When thy mind shall cross beyond the mire of delusion, then wilt thou attain to a disgust of what is yet to be heard and what has been heard.

53. When thy mind, perplexed by what thou hast heard, shall stand firm and steady in the Self, then wilt thou attain Yoga.

ARJUNA SAID:

54. What, O Kesava! Is the description of one of steady knowledge, who is constant in contemplation? How does one of steady knowledge speak, how sit, how move?

THE LORD SAID:

55. The Lord said: When a man, satisfied in the Self alone by himself, completely casts off all the desires of the mind, then is he said to be one of steady knowledge.

56. He whose heart is not distressed in calamities, from whom all longing for pleasures has departed, who is free from attachment, fear and wrath, he is called a sage, a man of steady knowledge.

57. Whoso, without attachment anywhere, on meeting with anything good or bad, neither exults nor hates, his knowledge becomes steady.

58. When he completely withdraws the senses from sense-objects, as the tortoise (withdraws) its limbs from all sides, his knowledge is steady.

59. Objects withdraw from an abstinent man, but not the taste. On seeing the Supreme, his taste, too, ceases.
60. The dangerous senses, O son of Kunti, forcibly carry away the mind of a wise man, even while striving (to control them).
61. Restraining them all, a man should remain steadfast, intent on Me. His knowledge is steady whose senses are under control.
62. When a man thinks of objects, attachment for them arises. From attachment arises desire; from desire arises wrath.
63. From wrath arises delusion; from delusion, failure of memory; from failure of memory, loss of conscience; from loss of conscience he is utterly ruined.
64. He attains peace, who, self-controlled, approaches objects with the senses devoid of love and hatred and brought under his own-control.
65. In peace there is an end of all his miseries; for, the reason of the tranquil-minded soon becomes steady.
66. There is no wisdom to the unsteady, and no meditation to the unsteady, and to the un-meditative no peace; to the peace-less, how can there be happiness?
67. For, the mind which yields to the roving senses carries away his knowledge, as the wind (carries away) a ship on water.
68. Therefore, O mighty-armed, his knowledge is steady whose senses have been entirely restrained from sense-objects.
69. What is night to all beings, therein the self-controlled one is awake. Where all beings are awake, that is the night of the sage who sees.
70. He attains peace, into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean, which, filled from all sides, remains unaltered; but not he who desires objects.
71. That man attains peace, who, abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment, without selfishness, without vanity.
72. This is the Brahmic state, O son of Pritha. Attaining to this, none is deluded. Remaining in this state even at the last period of life, one attains to the felicity of Brahman.

III. KARMA YOGA

ARJUNA SAID:

1. If it be thought by Thee that knowledge is superior to action, O Janardana, why then dost Thou, O Kesava, direct me to this terrible action?
2. With an apparently perplexing speech, Thou confuses as it were my understanding. Tell me with certainty that one (way) by which I may attain bliss.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

3. In this world a twofold path was taught by Me at first, O sinless one: that of Sankhyas by devotion to knowledge and that of Yogins by devotion to action.
4. Not by abstaining from action does man win action-less-ness, nor by mere renunciation does he attain perfection.
5. None, verily, even for an instant, ever remains doing no action; for everyone is driven helpless to action by the energies born of Nature.
6. He who, restraining the organs of action, sits thinking in his mind of the objects of the senses, self-deluded, he is said to be one of false conduct.
7. But whoso, restraining the senses by mind O Arjuna, engages in Karma-Yoga, unattached, with organs of action, he is esteemed.
8. Do thou perform (thy) bounden duty; for action is superior to inaction. And even the maintenance of the body would not be possible for thee by inaction.
9. Except in the case of action for Sacrifice's sake, this world is action-bound. Action for the sake there of, do thou, O son of Kunti, perform, free from attachment.
10. Having first created mankind together with sacrifices, the Prajapati said, By this shall ye propagate; let this be to you the cow of plenty.
11. With this do ye nourish the Gods and the Gods shall nourish you; thus nourishing one another, ye shall attain the supreme good.
12. Nourished by the sacrifice, the Gods shall indeed bestow on you the enjoyments ye desire. Whoso enjoys - without offering to Them - Their gifts, he is verily a thief.
13. The righteous, who eat the remnant of the sacrifice, are freed from all sins; but sin do the impious eat who cook for their own sakes.

14. From food creatures come forth; the production of food is from rain; rain comes forth from sacrifice; sacrifice is born of action;
15. Know thou that action comes from Brahman and that Brahman comes from the Imperishable. Therefore, the all-pervading Brahman ever rests in sacrifice.
16. He who follows not here the wheel thus set in motion, who is of sinful life, indulging in senses, he lives in vain, O son of Pritha.
17. That man, verily, who rejoices only in the self, who is satisfied with the Self, who is content in the Self alone - for him there is nothing to do.
18. For him, there is here no interest whatever in what is done or what is not done. Nor is there in all beings any one he should resort to for any object.
19. Therefore, without attachment, constantly perform the action which should be done; for, performing action without attachment, man reaches the Supreme.
20. By action only, indeed, did Janaka and others try to attain perfection. Even with a view to the protection of the masses thou should perform (action).
21. Whatsoever a great man does, that alone the other men do; whatever he sets up as the standard, that the world follows.
22. I have nothing whatsoever to achieve in the three worlds, O son of Pritha, nor is there anything unattained that should be attained; yet I engage in action.
23. For, should I not ever engage in action, unwearied, men would in all matters follow My path, O son of Pritha.
24. These worlds would be ruined if I should not perform action; I should be the cause of confusion of castes and should destroy these creatures.
25. As ignorant men act attached to work, O Bharata, so should the wise man act, unattached from a wish to protect the masses.
26. Let no wise man cause unsettlement in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to action; he should make them do all actions, himself fulfilling them with devotion.
27. Actions are wrought in all cases by the energies of Nature. He whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks 'I am the doer'.

28. But he who knows the truth, O mighty-armed, about the divisions of the energies and (their) functions, is not attached, thinking that the energies act upon the energies.

29. Those deluded by the energies of Nature are attached to the functions of the energies. He who knows the All should not unsettle the unwise who know not the All.

30. Renouncing all action in Me, with thy thought resting on the Self, being free from hope, free from selfishness, devoid of fever, do thou fight.

31. Men who constantly practice this teaching of Mine with faith and without caviling, they too are liberated from actions.

32. But those who, carping at this, My teaching, practice it not - know them as deluded in all knowledge, as senseless men doomed to destruction.

33. Even the man of knowledge acts in conformity with his own nature; (all) beings follow (their) nature; what shall coercion avail?

34. Love and hate lie towards the object of each sense; let none become subject to these two; for, they are his enemies.

35. Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well discharged. Better is death in one's own duty; the duty of another is productive of danger.

ARJUNA SAID:

36. But by what dragged on, O Varshneya, does a man, though reluctant, commit sin, as if constrained by force?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

37. It is desire, it is wrath, born of the energy of Rajas, all-devouring, all sinful; that, know thou, is the foe here.

38. As fire is surrounded by smoke, as a mirror by rust, as the foetus is enclosed in the womb, so is this covered by it.

39. Covered, O son of Kunti, is wisdom by this constant enemy of the wise, in the form of desire, which is greedy and insatiable.

40. The senses, mind and reason are said to be its seat; veiling wisdom through these, it deludes the embodied.

41. Therefore, O lord of the Bharatas, restrain the senses first, do thou cast off this sinful thing which is destructive of knowledge and wisdom.

42. They say that the senses are superior; superior to the senses is mind; superior to mind is reason; one who is even superior to reason is He.

43. Then knowing Him who is superior to reason, subduing the self by the self, slay thou, O mighty-armed, the enemy in the form of desire, hard to conquer.

IV. JNANA YOGA

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. I taught this imperishable Yoga to Vivasvat (Sun); Vivasvat taught it to Manu; Manu taught to Ikshvaku.

2. This, handed down thus in succession, the King-sages learnt. This yoga, by long lapse of time, has been lost here, O harasser of foes.

3. That same ancient Yoga has been to-day taught to thee by Me, seeing that thou art My devotee and friend; for, this is the Supreme Secret.

ARJUNA SAID:

4. Later is Thy birth and prior the birth of Vivasvat; how am I to understand that Thou taught this Yoga in the beginning?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

5. Many births of Mine have passed, as well as of thine, O Arjuna; all these I know, thou knows not, O harasser of foes.

6. Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet ruling over My own nature, I am born by My own Maya.

7. Whenever there is a decay of religion, O Bharata and an ascendancy of irreligion, then I manifest Myself.

8. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the firm establishment of religion, I am born in every age.

9. Whoso knows thus My divine birth and action in truth is not born again on leaving this body; he comes to Me, O Arjuna.

10. Free from passion, fear and anger, absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire (tapas) of wisdom, many have reached My being.

11. Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I reward them; My path do men follow in all things O son of Pritha.

12. They who long after success in actions sacrifice here to the Gods; for, soon in this world of man accrues success from action.
13. The fourfold caste has been created by me according to the distribution of energies and actions; though I am the author thereof, know Me as non-agent and immutable.
14. Actions pollute Me not, nor have I a desire for the fruit of actions. He who knows Me thus is not bound by actions.
15. Thus knowing, men of old performed action in the hope of liberation: therefore do thou also perform action as did the ancients in the olden time.
16. What is action? What is inaction - As to this, even the wise are deluded. I shall teach thee such action, by knowing which thou shall be liberated from evil.
17. For, thou hast to know something even of action, something to know of unlawful action, and something to know of inaction; hard to understand is the nature of action.
18. He who can see inaction in action, who can also see action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is devout, he is the performer of all action.
19. He whose engagements are all devoid of desires and purposes and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of wisdom, him the wise call a sage.
20. Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content, dependent on none, though engaged in actions, nothing at all does he do.
21. Free from desire, with the mind and the self-controlled, having relinquished all possessions doing mere bodily action, he incurs no sin.
22. Satisfied with what comes to him by chance, rising above the pairs of opposites, free from envy, equanimous in success and failure, though acting he is not bound.
23. Of the man whose attachment is gone, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge, who acts for the sake of sacrifice - his whole action melts away.
24. Brahman is the offering, Brahman the oblation; by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman; Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.

25. Other Yogins resort to sacrifices to Gods; In the fire of Brahman others offer the self by the self.
26. Others offer hearing and other senses in the fires of restraint; others offer sound and other objects in the fires of the senses.
27. And others sacrifice all the functions of the senses and the functions of the vitality in the wisdom-kindled fire of the Yoga of Self-restraint.
28. Others are sacrificers by their wealth, sacrificers by austerity, sacrificers by yogas, sacrificers by reading and knowledge, ascetics of rigid vows.
29. Others offer prana (outgoing breath) in apana (incoming breath) and apana in prana, restraining the passages of prana and apana, absorbed in Pranayama (restraint of breath).
30. Others, with regulated food, offer life-breaths in life-breaths. All these are knowers of sacrifice, whose sins are destroyed by sacrifice.
31. Eating of ambrosia, the remnant of the sacrifice, they go to Eternal Brahman. This world is not for the non-sacrificer; whence the other? - O best of Kurus.
32. Thus manifold sacrifices are spread at the mouth of Brahman. Know them all as born of action. Thus knowing, thou shall be liberated.
33. Superior is wisdom-sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects, O harasser of thy foes. All action, without exception, O son of Pritha, is comprehended in wisdom.
34. Know this: by long prostration, by enquiry, by service, those men of wisdom who have realized the truth will teach thee wisdom.
35. Knowing which, thou shall not again thus fall into error, O Pandava; and by which, thou wilt see all beings in thy Self and also in Me.
36. Even should thou be the most sinful of all the sinful, thou shall verily cross all sin by the bark of wisdom.
37. As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does wisdom-fire reduce all actions to ashes.
38. Verily, there exists here no purifier equal to wisdom. He who is perfected by Yoga finds it in time in himself by himself.

39. He obtains wisdom who is full of faith, who is devoted to it and who has subdued the senses. Having obtained wisdom, he before long attains to the Supreme Peace.

40. The ignorant, the faithless and one of doubting self, is ruined. There is neither this world, nor the other, nor happiness, for one of doubting self.

41. Him who has renounced actions by Yoga, whose doubts have been cloven as under by wisdom, who is self-possessed, actions bind not, O Dhananjaya.

42. Therefore with the sword of wisdom cleave asunder this doubt of the Self lying in the heart and born of ignorance and resort to Yoga. Arise, O Bharata.

V. SAMNYASA YOGA

ARJUNA SAID:

1. Renunciation of actions, O Krishna, Thou praisest and again Yoga. Tell me conclusively that which is the better of the two.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

2. Renunciation and yoga through action both lead to the highest bliss; but, of the two, Yoga through action is esteemed more than renunciation of action.

3. He should be known as a perpetual renouncer who neither hates nor desires: for, free from the pairs of opposites, O mighty-armed, he is easily set free from bondage.

4. Children, not the wise, speak of Sankhya and Yoga as distinct. He who is rightly devoted to even one obtains the fruits of both.

5. That state which is reached by Sankhyas is reached by Yogins also. He sees, who sees Sankhya and Yoga as one.

6. But renunciation, O mighty-armed, is hard to attain except by Yoga; a sage equipped with Yoga before long reaches Brahman.

7. He who is equipped with Yoga, whose mind is quite pure, by whom the self has been conquered, whose senses have been subdued, whose Self has become the Self of all beings - though doing, he is not tainted.

8-9. 'I do nothing at all' - thus would the truth-knower think, steadfast - though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, letting go, seizing, opening and closing the eyes - remembering that the senses move among sense-objects.

10. He who does actions, offering them to Brahman, abandoning attachment, is not tainted by sin, as a lotus leaf by water.
11. By the body, by the mind, by the intellect, by mere senses also, Yogins perform action, without attachment, for the purification of the self.
12. The steady-minded one, abandoning the fruit of action, attains the peace born of devotion. The unsteady one, attached to the fruit through the action of desire, is firmly bound.
13. Renouncing all actions by thought and Self-controlled, the embodied one rests happily in the nine-gated city, neither at all acting nor causing to act.
14. Neither agency nor objects does the Lord create for the world, nor union with the fruits of actions. But it is the nature that acts.
15. The Lord takes neither the evil nor even the good deed of any; wisdom is enveloped by un-wisdom; thereby mortals are deluded.
16. But to those whose un-wisdom is destroyed by wisdom of the Self, like the sun wisdom illuminates that Supreme.
17. With their consciousness in That, their Self being That, intent on That, with That for their supreme goal, they go never again to return, their sins shaken off by means of wisdom.
18. In a Brahmana endued with wisdom and humility, in a cow, in an elephant, as also in a dog and in a dog-eater, the wise see the same.
19. Even here birth is overcome by them whose mind rests on equality. Spotless, indeed and equal is Brahman; wherefore in Brahman they rest.
20. He who knows Brahman can neither rejoice on obtaining the pleasant, nor grieve on obtaining the unpleasant - steady-minded, un-deluded, resting in Brahman.
21. With the self unattached to external contacts, he finds the joy which is in the Self; with the Self engaged in the contemplation of Brahman he attains the endless joy.
22. For, those delights which are born of contacts are only generators of pain, having a beginning and an end, O son of Kunti; a wise man rejoices not in them.
23. He that is able, while still here, to with-stand, before liberation from the body, the impulse of desire and anger, he is a Yogin, he is a happy man.

24. Whoso has his joy within and his pastime within and whoso has his light within only, that Yogin attains Brahman's bliss, himself becoming Brahman.

25. The sages attain Brahman's bliss - they whose sins have been destroyed and doubts removed, who are self-controlled and intent on the welfare of all beings.

26. To the devotees who are free from desire and anger, who have controlled their thought and who have known the self, Brahman's bliss exists everywhere.

27-28. Shutting out all external contracts and fixing the sight between the eye-brows, equalizing the out-going and the in-going breaths which pass through the nostrils, controlling the senses, mind and intellect, having moksha as his highest goal, free from desire, fear and anger - the sage who ever (remains thus) is verily liberated.

29. On knowing Me - the Lord of all sacrifices and austerities, the Great Lord of all Worlds, the Friend of all beings - he goes to Peace.

VI. DHYANA YOGA (Atma-Samyama Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. He who, without depending on the fruits of action, performs his bounden duty, he is a Samnyasin and a Yogin; not he who is without fire and without action.

2. Do thou, O Pandava, know Yoga to be that which they call renunciation; no one, verily, becomes a Yogin who has not renounced thoughts.

3. For a devotee who wishes to attain to Yoga, action is said to be the means. For the same (devotee), when he has attained to Yoga, quiescence (Sama) is said to be the means.

4. When a man, renouncing all thoughts, is not attached to sense-objects and actions, then he is said to have attained to Yoga.

5. Let a man raise himself by himself, let him not lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself, he alone is the enemy of himself.

6. To him who has conquered himself by himself, his own self is the friend of himself, but to him who has not (conquered) himself, his own self stands in the place of an enemy like the (external) foe.

7. The self-controlled and serene man's Supreme Self is steadfast in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, as also in honor and disgrace.
8. The Yogin whose self is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom, who remains unshaken, who has conquered the senses, he is said to be a saint - for whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are equal.
9. He is esteemed, who is of the same mind to the good-hearted, friends, foes, the indifferent, the neutral, the hateful, relatives, the righteous and the un-righteous.
10. Let the Yogin try constantly to keep the mind steady, remaining in seclusion, alone, with the mind and body controlled, free from desire and having no possessions.
11. Having in a cleanly spot established a firm seat, neither too high nor too low, with cloth, skin and Kusa grass thereon.
12. Making the mind one-pointed, with the actions of the mind and the senses controlled, let him, seated there on the seat, practice Yoga for the purification of the self.
13. Holding erect and still the body, the head and the neck, firm, gazing on the tip of his nose, without looking around;
14. Serene-minded, fearless, firm in the vow of godly life, having restrained the mind, thinking on Me and balanced let him sit, looking up to Me as the Supreme.
15. Thus always keeping the mind balanced, the Yogin, with the mind controlled, attains to the Peace abiding in Me, which culminates in Nirvana (moksha).
16. Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much, nor for him who does not eat at all, nor for him who is addicted to too much sleep, nor for him who is (ever) wakeful, O Arjuna.
17. To him whose food and recreation are moderate, whose exertion in actions is moderate, whose sleep and waking are moderate, to him accrues Yoga which is destructive of pain.
18. When the well-restrained thought is established in the Self only, without longing for any of the objects of desire, then he is said to be a Saint.
19. 'As a lamp in a sheltered spot does not flicker' - this has been thought as the simile of a Yogin of subdued thought, practicing Yoga in the Self.

20. When thought is quiescent, restrained by the practice of Yoga; when, seeing the Self by the self, he is satisfied in his own Self;
21. When he knows that Infinite Joy which, transcending the senses, can be grasped by reason; when, steady (in the Self), he moves never from the Reality;
22. When, having obtained it, he thinks no other acquisition superior to it; when, therein established, he is not moved even by a great pain;
23. This severance from union with pain, be it known, is called union (Yoga). That Yoga must be practiced with determination and with un-depressed heart.
24. Abandoning without reserve all fancy-born desire, well-restraining all the senses from all quarters by the mind;
25. Little by little let him withdraw, by reason (buddhi) held in firmness; keeping the mind established in the Self, let him not think of anything.
26. By whatever cause the wavering and unsteady mind wanders away, from that let him restrain it and bring it back direct under the control of the Self.
27. Supreme Bliss verily comes to this Yogin, whose mind is quite tranquil, whose passion is quieted, who has become Brahman, who is blemish-less.
28. Thus always keeping the self steadfast, the Yogin, freed from sins, attains with ease to the infinite bliss of contact with the (Supreme) Brahman.
29. The Self abiding in all beings and all beings (abiding) in the Self, sees he whose self has been made steadfast by Yoga, who everywhere sees the same.
30. He who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, to him I vanish not, nor to me does he vanish.
31. Whoso, intent on unity, worships Me who abide in all beings, that Yogin dwells in Me, whatever his mode of life.
32. Whoso, by comparison with himself, sees the same everywhere, O Arjuna, be it pleasure or pain, he is deemed the highest Yogin.
- ARJUNA SAID:
33. This Yoga in equanimity, taught by Thee, O Destroyer of Madhu - I see not its steady continuance, because of the restlessness (of the mind).

34. The mind verily, is, O Krishna, restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate. Thereof the restraint I deem quite as difficult as that of the wind.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

35. Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to restrain and restless; but by practice, O son of Kunti and by indifference it may be restrained.

36. Yoga, me thinks is hard to attain for a man of uncontrolled self; but by him who (often) strives, self-controlled, it can be acquired by (proper) means.

ARJUNA SAID:

37. He who strives not, but who is possessed of faith, whose mind wanders away from Yoga - having failed to attain perfection in Yoga, what end, O Krishna, does he meet?

38. Having failed in both, does he not perish like a raven cloud, supportless, O mighty-armed and perplexed in the path to Brahman?

39. This doubt of mine, O Krishna, do Thou dispel completely; for none other than Thyself can possibly destroy this doubt.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

40. O Partha, neither in this world nor in the next is there destruction for him; none, verily, who does good, My son, ever comes to grief.

41. Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and having dwelt there for eternal years, he who failed in Yoga is reborn in a house of the pure and wealthy.

42. Else, he is born in family of wise Yogins only. This, verily, a birth like this, is very hard to obtain in this world.

43. There he gains touch with the knowledge that was acquired in the former body and strives more than before for perfection, O son of the Kurus.

44. By that very former practice is he borne on, though unwilling. Even he who merely wishes to know of Yoga raises superior to the Word-Brahman.

45. Verily, a Yogin who strives with assiduity, purified from sins and perfected in the course of many births, then reaches the Supreme Goal.

46. A Yogin is deemed superior to men of austerity and superior to even men of knowledge; he is also superior to men of action; therefore be thou a Yogin, O Arjuna.

47. Of all Yogins, whoso, full of faith, worships Me with his inner self abiding in Me, he is deemed by Me as most devout.

VII. VIJNANA YOGA

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. With the mind intent on me, O Partha, practicing Yoga and finding refuge in Me, how in full without doubt thou shall know Me, that do thou hear.

2. I shall fully teach thee this knowledge combined with experience, which being known, nothing more besides here remains to be known.

3. Among thousands of men, one per chance strives for perfection; even among those who strive and are perfect, only one per chance knows me in truth.

4. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, thought (Manas) and reason (Buddhi), egoism (Ahamkara) - thus is My Prakriti divided eight-fold.

5. This is the inferior (Prakriti); but distinct from this know thou My superior Prakriti, the very life, O mighty-armed, by which this universe is upheld.

6. Know that all beings have their birth in these. So, I am the source and dissolution of the whole universe.

7. There is naught else higher than I, O Dhananjaya; in Me all this is woven as clusters of gems on a string.

8. I am the rapidity in water, O son of Kunti. I am the light in the moon and the sun. I am the syllable Om in all the Vedas, sound in ether, humanity in men.

9. And I am the agreeable odour in the earth and the brilliance in the fire, the vitality in all beings and I am the austerity in ascetics.

10. Know Me, O Partha, as the eternal seed of all beings; I am the intelligence of the intelligent, the bravery of the brave.

11. And of the energetic I am the energy devoid of passion and attachment; and in (all) beings I am the desire unopposed to Dharma, O lord of the Bharatas.

12. And whatever beings are of Sattva or of Rajas or of Tamas, know them to proceed from Me; still, I am not in them, they are in me.

13. Deluded by these three (sorts of) things composed of gunas, this entire world knows not Me as distinct from them and immutable.
14. Verily this Divine Illusion of Mine, made up of gunas, is hard to surmount. Whoever seeks Me alone, they cross over this Illusion.
15. Not Me do the evil-doers seek, the deluded, the vilest of men, deprived of wisdom by Illusion, following the ways of the Demons.
16. Four kinds of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna - the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the wise man, O lord of the Bharatas.
17. Of them the wise man, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels; for, excessively dear am I to the wise and he is dear to Me.
18. Noble indeed are all these; but the wise man, I deem, is the very Self; for, steadfast in mind, he resorts to Me alone as the unsurpassed goal.
19. At the end of many births, the man of wisdom comes to me, (realizing) that Vasudeva is the all: he is the noble-soul (Mahatman), very hard to find.
20. Those whose wisdom has been led away by this or that desire resort to other Gods, engaged in this or that rite, constrained by their own nature.
21. Whatever devotee seeks to worship with faith what form so ever, that same faith of his I make unflinching.
22. Possessed of that faith he engages in the worship of that (form); thence he obtains his desires, these being indeed ordained by me.
23. That result indeed is finite, (which accrues) to those men of small intellect. Worshippers of Gods (Devatas) go to Gods (Devatas); My devotees come unto Me.
24. The foolish regard me as the un-manifested coming in manifestation, knowing not My higher, immutable, unsurpassed nature.
25. I am not manifest to all, veiled (as I am) by Yoga-Maya. This deluded world knows not Me, unborn and imperishable.
26. I know, O Arjuna, the past and the present and the future beings, but Me nobody knows.
27. From the delusion of pairs caused by desires and aversion, O Bharata, all beings are subject to illusion at birth, O harasser of thy foes.

28. Those mortals of pure deeds whose sin has come to an end, who are freed from the delusion of pairs, they worship Me with a firm resolve.

29. Whoever resorting to Me strive for liberation from decay and death, they realise in full that Brahman, the individual Self and all action.

30. Those who realize Me in the Adhibhuta (physical region), in the Adhidaiva (the divine region) and in the Adhiyajna (region of Sacrifice), realize Me even at the time of departure, steadfast in mind.

VIII. ABHYASA YOGA

ARJUNA SAID:

1-2. What is that Brahman? What about the Individual Self (Adhyatma)? What is action (Karma), O Purushottama? And what is declared to be the physical region (Adhibhuta)? And what is the divine region (Adhidaiva) said to be? And how and who is Adhiyajna (the Entity concerned with Sacrifice) here in this body, O Madhusudana, and how at the time of death art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

3. Brahman is the Imperishable (Akshara), the Supreme. The Ego is said to be the Individual Self (Adhyatma, He who dwells in the body). The offering which causes the origin of physical beings is called action (Karma).

4. The physical region (Adhibhuta) is the perishable existence and Purusha or the Soul is the divine region (Adhidaivata). The Adhiyajna (Entity concerned with Sacrifice) is Myself, here in the body, O best of the embodied.

5. And whoso, at the time of death, thinking of Me alone, leaves the body and goes forth, he reaches My being; there is no doubt in this.

6. Of whatever Being thinking at the end a man leaves the body, Him alone, O son of Kunti, reaches he by whom the thought of that Being has been constantly dwelt upon.

7. Therefore at all times do thou meditate on Me and fight; with mind and reason fixed on Me thou shall doubtless come to Me alone.

8. Meditating with the mind engaged in the Yoga of constant practice, not passing over to anything else, one goes to the Supreme Purusha, the Resplendent, O son of Pritha.

9-10. Whoso meditates on the Sage, the Ancient, the Ruler, smaller than an atom, the Dispenser of all, of unthinkable nature, glorious like the Sun, beyond the darkness, (whoso meditates on such a Being) at the time of death, with a steady mind endued with devotion and strength of Yoga, well fixing the life-breath betwixt the eye-brows, he reaches that Supreme Purusha Resplendent.

11. That Imperishable Goal which the knowers of the Veda declare, which the self-controlled and the passion-free enter, which desiring they lead the godly life - That Goal will I declare to thee with brevity.

12-13. Having closed all the gates, having confined mind in the heart, having fixed his life-breath in the head, engaged in firm Yoga, uttering Brahman, the one-syllable 'Om', thinking of Me, whoso departs, leaving the body, he reaches the Supreme Goal.

14. Whoso constantly thinks of me and long, to him I am easily accessible, O son of Pritha, to the ever-devout Yogin.

15. Having attained to Me, they do not again attain birth, which is the seat of pain and is not eternal, they having reached highest perfection.

16. (All) worlds including the world of Brahma are subject to returning again, O Arjuna; but, on reaching Me, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth.

17. They - those people who know day and night - know that the day of Brahma is a thousand yugas long and the night is a thousand yugas long.

18. From the Un-manifested all the manifestations proceed at the coming on of day; at the coming on of night they dissolve there only, in what is called the Un-manifested.

19. This same multitude of beings having come into being again and again, is dissolved at the coming on of night, not of their will, O son of Pritha and comes forth at the coming on of day.

20. But that other eternal Un-manifested Being, distinct from this Un-manifested (Avyakta) - He does not perish when all creatures perish.

21. What is called the Un-manifested and the Imperishable, That, they say, is the highest goal; which having reached none return. That is My highest place.

22. Now, that Highest Purusha, O son of Pritha, within Whom all beings dwell, by Whom all this is pervaded, is attainable by exclusive devotion.

23. Now, in what time departing, Yogins go to return not, as also to return, that time will I tell thee, O chief of the Bharatas.

24. Fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern solstice - then departing, men who know Brahman reach Brahman.

25. Smoke, night-time and the dark fortnight, the six months of the southern solstice - attaining by these to the lunar light, the Yogin returns.

26. These bright and dark Paths of the world are verily deemed eternal; by the one a man goes to return not, by the other he returns again.

27. Knowing these paths, O son of Pritha, no Yogin is deluded; wherefore at all times be steadfast in Yoga, O Arjuna.

28. Whatever fruit of merit is declared to accrue from the Vedas, sacrifices, austerities and gifts - beyond all this goes the Yogin on knowing this; and he attains to the Supreme Primeval Abode.

IX. SOVEREIGN WISDOM AND SECRET (Raja-Vidya Raja-Guhya Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. To thee who dost not cavil, I shall now declare this, the greatest secret, knowledge combined with experience, which having known thou shall be liberated from evil.

2. The Sovereign Science, the Sovereign Secret, the Supreme Purifier is this; immediately comprehensible, unopposed to Dharma, very easy to perform, imperishable.

3. Persons having no faith in this Dharma, O harasser of thy foes, without reaching Me, remain verily in the path of the mortal world.

4. By Me all this world is pervaded, My form un-manifested. All beings dwell in Me; and I do not dwell in them.

5. Nor do those beings dwell in Me; behold My Divine Yoga! Sustaining all the beings, but not dwelling in them, is My Self, the cause of beings.

6. As the mighty wind moving everywhere rests ever in the Akasa, so, know thou, do all beings, rest in Me.

7. All beings, O son of Kunti, go into My Prakriti at the end of a kalpa. I send them forth again at the beginning of (the next) kalpa.

8. Resorting to My Prakriti, I again and again send forth the whole multitude of beings, powerless under the control of the Prakriti.
9. Nor do these acts, O Dhananjaya, bind Me, remaining like one unconcerned, unattached to those acts.
10. By Me presiding, Prakriti produces the moving and the unmoving; because of this, O son of Kunti, the world revolves.
11. Fools disregard Me clad in human form, not knowing My higher being as the Great Lord of beings.
12. Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge, devoid of discrimination, partaking only of the delusive nature of Rakshasas and Asuras.
13. The Mahatmas, O son of Pritha, partaking of the nature of the Devas, worship Me with mind turned to no other, knowing (Me) as the imperishable source of all beings.
14. Always talking of me, strenuous, firm in vows and reverent, they worship Me with love, always devout.
15. Worshipping by the wisdom-sacrifice, others adore Me, the All-faced, in various ways, as One, as different.
16. I am kratu, I am yajna, I am svadha, I am aushadha, I am mantra, Myself the butter, I am fire, I the act of offering.
17. I am the father of this world, the mother, the dispenser and grandshire; I am the knowable, the purifier, the syllable 'Om' and also the Rik, the Saman and the Yajus also.
18. I am the Goal, the Sustainer, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Shelter and the Friend, the Origin, Dissolution and Stay, the Treasure-house, the Seed imperishable.
19. I give heat, I hold back and send forth rain, I am the immortality as well as death, existence and non-existence, O Arjuna.
20. Men of the three Vedas, the soma-drinkers, purified from sin, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the goal of heaven; they reach the holy world of the Lord of the Gods and enjoy in heaven the heavenly pleasures of the Gods.

21. They, having enjoyed that spacious world of Svarga, their merit (punya) exhausted, enter the world of the mortals; thus following the Dharma of the Triad, desiring (objects of) desires, they attain to the state of going and returning.
22. Those men who, meditating on Me as non-separate, worship Me all around - to them who are ever devout, I secure gain and safety.
23. Even those who, devoted to other Gods, worship Them with faith, worship Myself, O son of Kunti, in ignorance.
24. I am indeed the Enjoyer, as also the Lord, of all sacrifices; but they do not know Me in truth; whence they fail.
25. Votaries of the Gods go to the Gods; to the Pitris go the votaries of the Pitris; to the Bhutas go the worshippers of the Bhutas; My worshippers come to Myself.
26. When one offers to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water - that I eat, offered with devotion by the pure-minded.
27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, in whatever austerity thou engagest, do it as an offering to Me.
28. Thus shalt thou be liberated from the bonds of actions which are productive of good and evil results; equipped in mind with the Yoga of renunciation and liberated, thou shalt come to Me.
29. The same I am to all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear; but whoso worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I am also in them.
30. If one of even very evil life worships Me, resorting to none else, he must indeed be deemed righteous, for he is rightly resolved.
31. Soon he becomes righteous and attains eternal peace; do thou, O son of Kunti, proclaim that my devotee never perishes.
32. For, finding refuge in Me, they also who, O son of Pritha, may be of a sinful birth - women, vaisyas as well as sudras - even they attain to the Supreme Goal.
33. How much more then the holy Brahmanas and devoted royal saints! Having reached this transient joyless world, do thou worship Me.

34. Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me. Thus steadied, with Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shall reach Myself, the Self.

X. DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS (Vibhuti Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. Again, O mighty-armed, listen to My Supreme word, which I, from a desire for thy well-being, shall speak to thee who art delighted.

2. Neither the hosts of the Gods nor the Great Rishis know my origin; for I am the source of all the Gods and the Great Rishis.

3. He who knows Me as unborn and beginning-less, as the great Lord of the worlds, he among mortals is un-deluded, he is liberated from all sins.

4-5. Intelligence, wisdom, non-illusion, patience, truth, self-restraint, calmness, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fear and security; innocence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, beneficence, fame, shame, (these) different kinds dispositions of beings arise from Me alone.

6. The seven Great Rishis as well as the four ancient Manus, with their being in Me, were born of mind; and theirs are these creatures in the world.

7. He who knows in truth this glory and power of Mine is endowed with unshaken Yoga; there is no doubt of it.

8. I am the source of all; from Me everything evolves; thus thinking the wise worship Me, endowed with contemplation.

9. With their thought on me, with their life absorbed in Me, instructing each other and ever speaking of Me, they are content and delighted.

10. To these, ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give that devotion of knowledge by which they come to me.

11. Out of mere compassion for them, I abiding in their self, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the luminous lamp of wisdom.

ARJUNA SAID:

12-13. The Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Light, the Supreme Purifier art Thou. All the Rishis declare Thee as Eternal, Divine Purusha, the Primal God, Unborn, Omnipresent; so said the divine sage Narada, as also Asita, Devala and Vyasa; and Thou Thyself also sayest (so) to me.

14. I believe to be true all this which Thou says to me; for neither the Gods nor the Danavas, O Lord, know Thy manifestation.
15. Thou Thyself knows Thyself as the Self, O Purusha Supreme, O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of Gods, O Ruler of the world.
16. Thou should indeed tell, without reserve, of Thy divine Glories, by which Glories Thou remain pervading all these worlds.
17. How shall I, ever meditating, know Thee, O Yogin; in what several things, O Lord, art Thou to be thought of by Me?
18. Tell me again in detail, O Janardana, of Thy power and Glory, for there is no satiety for me in hearing the immortal.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

19. Now will I tell thee of My heavenly Glories, in their prominence, O best of the Kurus; there is no limit to My extent.
20. I am the Self, O Gudakesa, seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning and the middle, as also the end, of all beings.
21. Of the Adityas I am Vishnu; of the radiances, the resplendent Sun; I am Marichi of the Maruts; of the asterisms, the Moon.
22. Of the Vedas I am the Sama-Veda, I am Vasava of the Gods and of the senses I am the mind, I am the intelligence in living beings.
23. And of the Rudras I am Sankara, of the Yakshas and Rakshasas the Lord of wealth and of the Vasus I am Agni, of the mountains I am the Meru.
24. And of the household priests of Kings, O son of Pritha, know Me the chief one, Brihaspati; of generals I am Skanda, of lakes I am the Ocean.
25. Of the Great Rishis I am Bhrigu; of words I am the one syllable 'Om'; of offerings I am the offering of Japa (silent repetition), of unmoving things the Himalaya.
26. Of all trees (I am) the Asvattha and Narada of divine Rishis, Chitraratha of Gandharvas, the sage Kapila of the saints (Siddhas).
27. Know Me among horses as Uchchaisravas, born of Amrita, of lordly elephants the Airavata and of men the king.
28. Of weapons I am the thunderbolt, of cows I am the Kamadhuk, I am the progenitor Kandarpa, of serpents I am Vasuki.

29. And Ananta of snakes I am, I am Varuna of water-being and Aryaman of Pitris I am, I am Yama of controllers.
30. And Prahlada am I of Diti's progeny, of reckoners I am Time and of beasts I am the lord of beasts and Vainateya of birds.
31. Of purifiers I am the wind, Rama of warriors am I, of fishes I am the shark, of streams I am the Ganges.
32. Of creations I am the beginning and the middle and also the end; of all knowledges I am the knowledge of the Self and Vada of disputants.
33. Of letters the letter 'A' am I and dvandva of all compounds; I am, verily, the inexhaustible Time; I am the All-faced Dispenser.
34. And I am all-seizing Death and the prosperity of those who are to be prosperous; of the feminine (I am) Fame, Fortune and Speech, Memory, Intelligence, Constancy, Endurance.
35. Of Samans also I am the Brihat-Saman of metres Gayatri am I, of months I am Margasirsha, of seasons the flowery season.
36. I am the gambling of the fraudulent, I am the splendor of the splendid, I am victory, I am effort, I am the goodness of the good.
37. Of the Vrishnis I am Vasudeva, of the Pandavas I am Dhananjaya and of the saints I am Vyasa, of the sages I am Usanas the sage.
38. Of punishers I am the scepter, of those who seek to conquer I am the polity and of things secret I am also silence, the knowledge of knowers am I.
39. And what is the seed of all being, that also am I, O Arjuna. There is no being, whether moving or unmoving, that can exist without me.
40. There is no end of My heavenly Glories, O harasser of thy foes; but the details of My Glory have been declared only by way of instance.
41. Whatever being is glorious, prosperous, or strong, that know thou to be a manifestation of a part of My Splendor.
42. But, of what avail to thee is this vast things being known, O Arjuna? I stand sustaining this whole world by one part (of Myself).

XI. THE UNIVERSAL FORM (Visvarupa-Sandarsana Yoga)

ARJUNA SAID:

1. By that speech which has been delivered by Thee for my benefit - that highest secret which is called Adhyatma - this, my delusion, is gone.
2. The origin and the dissolution of beings, verily, have been heard by me in detail from thee, O Lotus-eyed, as also Thy inexhaustible greatness.
3. So it is, as Thou, Supreme Lord, hast declared Thyself to be. (Still) I desire to see Thy form as Isvara, O Purusha Supreme.
4. If Thou, O Lord, think it possible for me to see it, do Thou, then, O Lord of Yogins, show me Thy Eternal Self.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

5. See, O son of Pritha, My heavenly forms, by hundreds and thousands, of different sorts and of various colors and shapes.
6. Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Asvins and also the Maruts; behold many marvels never seen before, O Bharata.
7. Now behold here in My body, Gudakesa, the whole world established in one - including the moving and the unmoving - and whatever else thou desire to see.
8. Thou art not indeed able to see Me with this thy eye alone; I give thee a divine eye; behold My lordly Yoga.

SANJAYA SAID:

9. Having thus spoken, O King, then, Hari, the great Lord of Yogins, showed to the son of Pritha the Supreme Form as Isvara.
10. Containing many mouths and eyes, possessed of many wondrous sights, of many heavenly ornaments, of many heavenly weapons held up. Such a form He showed.
11. Wearing heavenly garlands and vestures, anointed with heavenly unguents, all-wonderful, resplendent, boundless, with faces on all sides.
12. If the splendor of a thousand suns were ever to present itself at once in the sky that would be like the splendor of that Mighty Being.
13. There, in the body of the God of Gods, the son of Pandu then beheld the whole world established in one and separated into many groups.

14. Then he, Dhananjaya, filled with amazement, with his hair standing on end; bowed down with his head and with joined palms, thus addressed the God.

ARJUNA SAID:

15. I see all the gods, O God, in thy body, as also hosts of various classes of beings; Brahma, the Lord, seated on the lotus-seat and all Rishis and heavenly serpents.

16. I see Thee of boundless form on every side with multitudinous arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes; neither Thy end nor the middle nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the Universe, O Universal Form.

17. I see Thee with diadem, club and discus; a mass of splendor shining everywhere, very hard to look at, all around blazing like burning fire and sun and immeasurable.

18. Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme Being worthy to be known. Thou art the great Abode of this Universe; Thou art the undying Guardian of the Eternal Dharma, Thou art the ancient Purusha, I deem.

19. I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, infinite power, of manifold arms; the sun and the moon being Thy eyes, the burning fire Thy face; heating the whole Universe with Thy radiance.

20. This space betwixt heaven and earth and all the quarters are filled by Thee alone. Having seen This, Thy marvelous and awful form, the three worlds are trembling, O High-soul Being.

21. In to Thee, indeed, enter these hosts of Suras; some extol Thee in fear with joined palms; May it be well! Thus saying, bands of great Rishis and Siddhas praise Thee with hymns complete.

22. The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus and Sadhyas, Visvas and Asvins, Maruts and Ushmapas, hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas - they are all looking at Thee, all quite astonished.

23. Having seen Thy immeasurable Form, possessed, O Mighty-armed, of many mouths and eyes, of many arms and thighs and feet, and of many stomachs and fearful with many tusks, the worlds are terrified and I also.

24. On seeing Thee (Thy Form) touching the sky, blazing in many colors, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, I am terrified at heart and find no courage nor peace, O Vishnu.

25. Having seen Thy mouths which are fearful with tusks and resemble Time's Fires, I know not the four quarters, nor do I find peace; do Thou gracious, O Lord of Gods and Abode of the Universe!

26-27. And all the sons of Dhritarashtra, with hosts of princess, Bhishma, Drona and that son (Karna) of a charioteer, with the warrior chiefs of ours, enter hurrying into Thy mouth, terrible with tusks and fearful to behold. Some are found sticking in the gaps betwixt the teeth with their heads crushed to powder.

28. As many torrents of rivers flow direct towards the sea, so do these heroes in the world of men enter Thy flaming mouths.

29. As moths hurriedly rush into a blazing fire for destruction, just so do these creatures also hurriedly rush into Thy mouths for destruction.

30. Thou lick up devouring all worlds on every side with Thy flaming mouths, filling the whole world with flames. Thy fierce rays are blazing forth, O Vishnu.

31. Tell me who thou art, so fierce in form. I bow to Thee, O God Supreme; have mercy. O desire to know Thee, the original Being. I know not indeed Thy doing.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

32. I am the mighty world-destroying Time, now engaged in destroying the worlds. Even without thee, none of the warriors arrayed in hostile armies shall live.

33. Therefore do thou arise and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled dominion. By Myself have they been already slain; be thou a mere instrument, O Savyasachin.

34. Drona and Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors - these, killed by Me, do thou kill; fear not, fight, thou shall conquer the enemies.

SANJAYA SAID:

35. Having heard that speech of Kesava, the crowned one (Arjuna), with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, stammering, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

ARJUNA SAID:

36. It is meet, O Hrishikesa, that the world is delighted and rejoices by Thy praise; Rakshasas fly in fear to all quarters and all hosts of Siddhas bow to Thee.

37. And how should they not, O Mighty Being, bow to Thee, Greater (than all else), the Primal Cause even of Brahma, O Infinite Being, O Lord of Gods, O Abode of the Universe; Thou art the Imperishable, the Being and the non-Being, That which is the Supreme.

38. Thou art the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha; Thou art the Supreme Abode of all this, Thou art the Knower and the Knowable and the Supreme Abode. By Thee is all pervaded, O Being of infinite forms.

39. Thou art Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon, Prajapati and the Great Grand-Father. Hail! Hail to Thee! a thousand times and again and again hail! Hail to Thee!

40. Hail to thee before and behind! Hail to Thee on every side! O All! Thou, infinite in power and infinite in daring, pervade all, wherefore Thou art All.

41-42. Whatever was rashly said by me from carelessness or love, addressing Thee as O Krishna, O Yadava, O friend, looking on Thee merely as a friend, ignorant of this Thy greatness - in whatever way I may have insulted Thee for fun while at play, on bed, in an assembly, or at meals, when alone, O Achyuta, or in company - that I implore Thee, Immeasurable, to forgive.

43. Thou art the Father of this world, moving and unmoving. Thou art to be adored by this (world), Thou the Greatest Guru; (for) Thy equal exists not; whence another, superior to Thee, in the three worlds, O Being of un-equaled greatness?

44. Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body, I implore Thee, adorable Lord, to forgive. It is meet Thou should bear with me as the father with the son, as friend with friend, as the lover with the beloved.

45. I am delighted, having seen what was unseen before; and (yet) my mind is confounded with fear. Show me that form only, O God; have mercy, O God of Gods, O Abode of the Universe.

46. I wish to see Thee as before, crowned, possessed of the club, with the discus in the hand, in Thy former form only, having four arms, O Thousand-armed, O Universal Form.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

47. By Me, gracious to thee, O Arjuna, this Supreme Form has been shown - by my sovereign power - full of splendor, the all, the Boundless, the Original Form of Mine, never before seen by any other than thyself.

48. Not by study of the Vedas and of the sacrifices, nor by gifts, nor by rituals, nor by severe austerities, can I be seen in this Form in the world of man by any other than thyself, O hero of the Kurus.

49. Be not afraid nor bewildered on seeing such a terrible form of Mine as this; free from fear and cheerful at heart, do thou again see this My former form.

SANJAYA SAID:

50. Having thus spoken to Arjuna, Vasudeva again showed His own form; and the Mighty Being, becoming gentle in form, consoled him who was terrified.

ARJUNA SAID:

51. Having seen Thy gentle human form, O Janardana, now I have grown serene and returned to my nature.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

52. Very hard to see is this Form of Mine which thou hast seen; even the Devas ever long to behold this Form.

53. Not by Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by gifts, nor by sacrifice, can I be seen in this Form as thou hast seen Me.

54. But by un-distracted devotion can I, of this Form, be known and seen in reality and entered into, O harasser of thy foes.

55. He who works for Me, who looks on Me as the supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who is without hatred for any being, he comes to Me, O Pandava.

XII. BHAKTI YOGA

ARJUNA SAID:

1. Those devotees who, always devout, thus contemplate Thee and those also who (contemplate) the Imperishable, the Unmanifest - which of them are better versed in Yoga?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

2. Those who, fixing their thought on Me, contemplate Me, always devout, endowed with supreme faith, those in my opinion are the best Yogins.

3-4. Those who ever contemplate the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Un-manifest, the Omnipresent and the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the Immutable, the Eternal - having restrained all the senses, always equanimous, intent on the welfare of all beings - they reach Myself.

5. Greater is their trouble whose thoughts are set on the Un-manifest; for, the Goal, the Un-manifest, is very hard for the embodied to reach.

6-7. But those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in Me, regarding Me Supreme, meditating on Me with exclusive devotion (Yoga); for them whose thought is fixed on Me, I become before long, O son of Pritha, the deliverer out of the ocean of the mortal samsara.

8. Fix thy mind in Me exclusively, apply thy reason to Me. Thou shalt no doubt live in Me alone hereafter.

9. If thou art unable to fix thy thought steadily on Me, then by yoga of constant practice do thou seek to reach Me, O Dhananjaya.

10. (If) thou art not equal to practice either, then be thou intent on (doing) actions for My sake. Even doing actions for My sake, thou shall attain perfection.

11. If thou art unable to do even this, then take refuge in devotion to Me, do thou abandon the fruits of all actions, self-controlled.

12. Better indeed is knowledge than practice; than knowledge is meditation more esteemed; than meditation the abandonment of the fruits of actions; on abandonment, peace follows immediately.

13-14. He who hates no single being, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egoism, to whom pain and pleasure are equal, who is enduring, ever content and balanced in mind, self-controlled and possessed of firm conviction, whose thought and reason are directed to Me, he who is (thus) devoted to Me is dear to Me.

15. He by whom the world is not afflicted and who is not afflicted by the world, who is free from joy, envy, fear and sorrow, he is dear to Me.

16. He who is free from wants, who is pure, clever, unconcerned, untroubled, renouncing all undertakings, he who is (thus) devoted to Me is dear to Me.

17. He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing good and evil, he who is full of devotion is dear to Me.

18-19. He who is the same to foe and friend and also in honor and dishonor; who is the same in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain; who is free from attachment; to whom censure and praise are equal; who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion; that man is dear to me.

20. They, verily, who follow this immortal Law described above, endued with faith, looking up to me as the Supreme and devoted, they are exceedingly dear to Me.

XIII. MATTER AND SPIRIT (Kshetra Kshetrajna Vibhaga Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. This, the body, O son of Kunti, is called Kshetra; him who knows it, they who know of them call Kshetrajna.
2. And do thou also know Me as Kshetrajna in all Kshetras, O Bharata. The knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetrajna is deemed by Me as the knowledge.
3. And what that Kshetra is and of what nature and what its changes; and whence is what; and who He is and what His powers; this hear thou briefly from Me.
4. Sung by sages, in many ways and distinctly, in various hymns, as also in the suggestive words about Brahman, full of reasoning and decisive.
5. The Great Elements, Egoism, Reason, as also the Un-manifested, the ten senses and one and the five objects of the senses.
6. Desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, courage- the Kshetra has been thus briefly described with its modifications.
7. Humility, modesty, innocence, patience, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, stead-fastness, self-control;
8. Absence of attachment for objects of the senses and also absence of egoism; perception of evil in birth, death and old age, in sickness and pain;
9. Un-attachment, absence of affection for son, wife, home and the like and constant equanimity on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable;
10. Unflinching devotion to Me in Yoga of non-separation, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of men;
11. Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of the knowledge of truth. This is declared to be knowledge and what is opposed to it is ignorance.

12. That which has to be known I shall describe; knowing which one attains the Immortal. Beginning-less is the Supreme Brahman. It is not said to be 'sat' or 'asat'.

13. With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes and heads and mouths everywhere, with hearing everywhere, That exists enveloping all.

14. Shining by the function of all the senses, (yet) without the senses; unattached, yet supporting all; devoid of qualities.

15. Without and within (all) beings; the unmoving as also the moving. Because subtle, That is incomprehensible; and near and far away is That.

16. And undivided, yet remaining divided as it were in beings; supporter of beings, too is That, the Knowable; devouring, yet generating.

17. The Light even of lights, That is said to be beyond darkness. Knowledge, the Knowable, the Goal of knowledge, (It) is implanted in the heart of every one.

18. Thus the Kshetra, as well as knowledge and the Knowable, have been briefly set forth. My devotee, on knowing this, is fitted for My state.

19. Know thou that Prakriti as well as Purusha are both beginning-less; and know thou also that all forms and qualities are born of Prakriti.

20. As the producer of the effect and the instruments, Prakriti is said to be the cause; as experiencing pleasure and pain, Purusha is said to be the cause.

21. Purusha, when seated in Prakriti, experiences the qualities born of Prakriti. Attachment to the qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs.

22. Spectator and Permitter, Supporter, Enjoyer, the Great Lord and also spoken of as the Supreme Self, (is) the Purusha Supreme in this body.

23. He who thus knows Purusha and Prakriti together with qualities, whatever his conduct, he is not born again.

24. By meditation some behold the Self in the self by the self, others by Sankhya Yoga and others by Karma Yoga.

25. Yet others, not knowing thus, worship, having heard from others; they, too, cross beyond death, adhering to what they heard.

26. Whatever being is born, the unmoving or the moving, know thou, O best of the Bharatas, that to be owing to the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna.
27. He sees who sees the Supreme Lord, remaining the same in all beings, the undying in the dying.
28. Because he who sees the Lord, seated the same everywhere, destroys not the self by the self, therefore he reaches the Supreme Goal.
29. He sees, who sees all actions performed by Prakriti alone and the Self not acting.
30. When a man realizes the whole variety of beings as resting in the One and is an evolution from that (One) alone, then he becomes Brahman.
31. Having no beginning, having no qualities, this Supreme Self, imperishable, though dwelling in the Body, O son of Kunti, neither acts nor is tainted.
32. As the all-pervading Akasa is, from its subtlety, never soiled, so the Self seated in the body everywhere is not soiled.
33. As the one sun illumines all this world, so does the embodied One, O Bharata, illumines all bodies.
34. They who by the eye of wisdom perceive the distinction between Kshetra and Kshetrajna and the dissolution of the Cause of beings - they go to the Supreme.

XIV. THE THREE GUNAS (Gunatraya Vibhaga Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. I shall again declare that sublime knowledge, the best of all knowledges; which having learnt, all the sages have passed to high perfection from here.
2. They who, having resorted to this knowledge, have attained to unity with Me, are neither born in the creation, nor disturbed in the dissolution.
3. My womb is the great Brahman; in that I place the germ; thence, O Bharata, is the birth of all beings.
4. Whatever forms are produced, O son of Kunti, in any wombs whatsoever, the Great Brahman is their womb, I the seed-giving Father.

5. Sattva, Rajas, Tamas - these gunas, O mighty-armed, born of Prakriti, bind fast in the body the embodied, the indestructible.
6. Of these, Sattva, which, from its stainlessness, is lucid and healthy, binds by attachment to happiness and by attachment to knowledge, O sinless one.
7. Know thou Rajas (to be) of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment; it binds fast, O son of Kunti, the embodied one by attachment to action.
8. But, know thou Tamas to be born of un-wisdom, deluding all embodied beings; by headless-ness, indolence and sloth, it binds fast, O Bharata.
9. Sattva attaches to happiness, rajas to action, O Bharata, while Tamas, enshrouding wisdom, attaches, on the contrary, to heedlessness.
10. Sattva arises, O Bharata, predominating over Rajas and Tamas; and Rajas, over Sattva and Tamas; so Tamas, over Sattva and Rajas.
11. When at every gate in this body there shoots up wisdom-light, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant.
12. Greed, activity, the undertaking of works, unrest, desire - these arise when Rajas is predominant, O lord of the Bharatas.
13. Darkness, heedlessness, inertness and error - these arise when Tamas is predominant, O descendant of Kuru.
14. If the embodied one meets death when Sattva is predominant, then he attains to the spotless regions of the knowers of the Highest.
15. Meeting death in Rajas, he is born among those attached to action; and dying in Tamas, he is born in the wombs of the irrational.
16. The fruit of good action, they say, is Sattvic and pure; while the fruit of rajas is pain and ignorance is the fruit of tamas.
17. From Sattva arises wisdom and greed from Rajas; heedlessness and error arise from Tamas and also ignorance.
18. Those who follow Sattva go upwards; the Rajasic remain in the middle; and the Tamasic, who follow in the course of the lowest guna, go downwards.
19. When the seer beholds not an agent other than the gunas and knows Him who is higher than the gunas, he attains to My being.

20. Having crossed beyond these three gunas, which are the source of the body, the embodied one is freed from birth, death, decay and pain and attains the immortal.

ARJUNA SAID:

21. By what marks, O Lord, is he known who has crossed beyond those three gunas? What is his conduct and how does he pass beyond those three gunas.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

22. Light and activity and delusion present, O Pandava, he hates not, nor longs for them absent.

23. He who, seated as a neutral, is not moved by gunas; who, thinking that gunas act, is firm and moves not;

24. He to whom pain and pleasure are alike, who dwells in the Self, to whom a clod of earth and stone and gold are alike, to whom the dear and the undear are alike, who is a man of wisdom, to whom censure and praise are same;

25. The same in honor and disgrace, the same towards friends and enemies, abandoning all undertakings - he is said to have crossed beyond the gunas.

26. And he who serves Me with unfailing Devotion of Love, he, crossing beyond those three gunas, is fitted for becoming Brahman.

27. For I am the abode of Brahman, the Immortal and the Immutable, the Eternal Dharma and the unfailing Bliss.

XV. THE SUPREME SPIRIT (Purushotama-Prapti Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. They speak of the indestructible Asvattha having its root above and branches below, whose leaves are the metres. He who knows it knows the Vedas.

2. Below and above are its branches spread, nourished by the gunas, sense-objects its buds; and below in the world of man stretch forth the roots ending in action.

3. Its form is not perceived as such here, neither its end nor its origin nor its existence. Having cut asunder this firm-rooted Asvattha with the strong sword of dispassion.

4. Then That Goal should be sought for, whither having gone none return again. I seek refuge in that Primeval Purusha whence streamed forth the Ancient Current.
5. Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, their desires having completely turned away, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the un-deluded reach that Goal Eternal.
6. That the sun illumines not, nor the moon, nor fire; That is My Supreme Abode, to which having gone none return.
7. A ray of Myself, the eternal Jiva in the world of Jivas, attracts the senses, with Manas the sixth, abiding in Prakriti.
8. When the Lord acquires a body and when He leaves it, He takes these and goes, as the wind takes scents from their seats.
9. The ear, the eye and the touch, the taste and the smell, using these and the Manas, he enjoys the sense-objects.
10. Him who departs, stays and enjoys, who is conjoined with gunas, the deluded perceive not; they see, who possess the eye of knowledge.
11. Those who strive, endued with Yoga, perceive Him dwelling in the self; though striving, those of unrefined self, devoid of wisdom, perceive Him not.
12. That light which residing in the sun illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire, that light do thou know to be Mine.
13. Penetrating the earth I support all beings by (My) Energy; and having become the watery moon I nourish all herbs.
14. Abiding in the body of living beings as Vaisvanara, associated with Prana and Apana, I digest the four fold food.
15. And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge, as well as their loss; it is I who am to be known by all the Vedas, I am indeed the author of the Vedanta as well as the knower of the Vedas.
16. There are these two beings in the world the perishable and the imperishable; the perishable comprises all creatures, the immutable is called the imperishable.
17. But distinct is the Highest Spirit spoken of as the Supreme Self, the indestructible Lord who penetrates and sustains the three worlds.

18. Because I transcend the perishable and am even higher than the imperishable, therefore am I known in the world and in the Veda as 'Purushottama', the Highest Spirit.

19. He who, un-deluded, thus knows Me, the Highest Spirit, he, knowing all, worships Me with his whole being, O Bharata.

20. Thus, this most Secret Science has been taught by Me, O sinless one; on knowing this, (a man) becomes wise, O Bharata and all his duties are accomplished.

XVI. SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALISM (Daivasura Sampat Vibhaga Yoga)

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

1. Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga; alms-giving, self-restraint and worship, study of one's own (scriptures), austerity, uprightness;

2. Harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion to creatures, un-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness;

3. Energy, forgiveness; fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride; these belong to one born for a divine lot, O Bharata.

4. Ostentation, arrogance and self-conceit, anger as also insolence and ignorance, belong to one who is born, O Partha, for a demoniac lot.

5. The divine nature is deemed for liberation, the demoniac for bondage. Grieve not, O Pandava; thou art born for a divine lot.

6. There are two creations of beings in this world, the divine and the demoniac. The divine has been described as length; hear from Me, O Partha, of the demoniac.

7. Neither action nor inaction do the demoniac men know; neither purity nor good conduct nor truth is found in them.

8. They say, the universe is unreal, without a basis, without a Lord, born of mutual union, brought about by lust; what else?

9. Holding this view, these ruined souls of small intellect, of fierce deeds, rise as the enemies of the world for its destruction.

10. Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding unwholesome views through delusion, they work with unholy resolve;
11. Beset with immense cares ending only with death, sensual enjoyment their highest aim, assured that that is all;
12. Bound by hundreds of bands of hope, given over to lust and wrath, they strive to secure by unjust means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyment.
13. This to-day has been gained by me; this desire I shall attain; this is mine and this wealth also shall be mine in future.
14. That enemy has been slain by me and others also shall I slay. I am the Lord. I enjoy, I am successful, strong and healthy.
15. I am rich and well-born. Who else is equal to me? I will sacrifice, I will give, I will rejoice. Thus deluded by un-wisdom.
16. Bewildered by many a fancy, entangled in the snare of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall into a foul hell.
17. Self-honored, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices in name with hypocrisy, without regard to ordinance.
18. Given over to egotism, power, haughtiness, lust and anger, these malicious people hate Me in their own and others' bodies.
19. These cruel haters, worst of men, I hurl these evil-doers forever in the worlds into the wombs of the demons only.
20. Entering into demoniac wombs, the deluded ones, in birth after birth, without ever reaching Me, O son of Kunti, pass into a condition still lower than that.
21. Triple is this, the gate to hell, destructive of the self; LUST, WRATH and GREED. Therefore, these three, one should abandon.
22. A man who is released from these, the three gates to darkness, O son of Kunti, does good to the self and thereby reaches the Supreme Goal.
23. He who, neglecting the scriptural ordinance, acts under the impulse of desire, attains not perfection, nor happiness, nor the Supreme Goal.
24. Therefore, the scripture is thy authority in deciding as to what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Now, thou ought to know and perform thy duty laid down in the scripture-law.

XVII. THE THREEFOLD FAITH (Shraddhatraya-Vibhaga Yoga)

ARJUNA SAID:

1. Whoso Worship, setting aside the ordinance of the scripture, endued with faith - what faith is theirs? Is it Sattva, or Rajas, or Tamas?

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

2. Threefold is that faith born of the individual nature of the embodied - Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. Do thou hear of it.

3. The faith of each is in accordance with his nature, O Bharata. The man is made up of his faith; as a man's faith is, so is he.

4. Sattvic men worship the Gods; Rajasic the Yakshas and the Rakshasas; the others - Tamasic men - the Pretas and the hosts of Bhutas.

5. Those men who practice terrific austerities not enjoined by the scripture, given to hypocrisy and egotism, endued with the strength of lust and passion;

6. Weakening all the elements in the body - fools they are - and Me who dwell in the body within; know thou these to be of demoniac resolves.

7. The food also which is dear to each is three fold, as also worship, austerity and gift. Do thou hear of this, their distinction.

8. The foods which increase life, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are savory and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable, are dear to the Sattvic.

9. The foods that are bitter, sour, saline, excessively hot, pungent, dry and burning, are liked by the Rajasic, causing pain, grief and disease.

10. The food which is stale, tasteless, putrid and rotten, refuse and impure, is dear to the Tamasic.

11. That worship is Sattvic which is offered by men desiring no fruit, as enjoined in the Law, with a fixed resolve in the mind that they should merely worship.

12. That which is offered, O best of the Bharatas, with a view to reward and for ostentation, know it to be a Rajasic worship.

13. They declare that worship to be Tamasic which is contrary to the ordinances, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of mantras and gifts and which is devoid of faith.

14. Worshipping the Gods, the twice-born, teachers and wise men - purity, straight forwardness, continence and abstinence from injury are termed the bodily austerity.
15. The speech which causes no excitement and is true, as also pleasant and beneficial and also the practice of sacred recitation, are said to form the austerity of speech.
16. Serenity of mind, good-heartedness, silence, self-control, purity of nature - this is called the mental austerity.
17. This threefold austerity, practiced by devout men with utmost faith, desiring no fruit, they call Sattvic.
18. That austerity which is practiced with the object of gaining good reception, honor and worship and with hypocrisy, is said to be of this world, to be Rajasic, unstable and uncertain.
19. The austerity which is practiced out of a foolish notion, with self-torture, or for the purpose of ruining another, is declared to be Tamasic.
20. That gift which is given - knowing it to be a duty to give - to one who does no service, in place and in time and to a worthy person, that gift is held Sattvic.
21. And that gift which is given with a view to a return of the good, or looking for the fruit, or reluctantly, that gift is held to be Rajasic.
22. The gift that is given at a wrong place or time, to unworthy persons, without respect or with insult, that is declared to be Tamasic.
23. OM, TAT, SAT : this has been taught to be the triple designation of Brahman. By that were created of old the Brahmanas and the Vedas and the sacrifices.
24. Therefore, with the utterance of 'Om', are the acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, as enjoined in the scriptures, always begun by the students of Brahman.
25. With 'Tat', without aiming at the fruits, are the acts of sacrifice and austerity and the various acts of gift performed by the seekers of moksha.
26. The word 'Sat' is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and so also, O Partha, the word 'Sat' is used in the sense of an auspicious act.

27. Devotion to sacrifice, austerity and gift is also spoken of as 'Sat'; and even action in connection with these is called 'Sat'.

28. Whatever is sacrificed, given, or done and whatever austerity is practiced, without faith, it is called 'asat', O Partha; it is naught here or here-after.

XVIII. CONCLUSION (Moksha-Samnyasa Yoga)

ARJUNA SAID:

1. 'Of Samnyasa' O Mighty-armed, I desire to know the truth, O Hrishikesa, as also of 'tyaga', severally, O Slayer of Kesin.

THE BLESSED LORD SAID:

2. Sages understand 'Samnyasa' to be the renouncement of interested works; the abandonment of the fruits of all works, the learned declare, is 'tyaga'.

3. That action should be abandoned as an evil, some philosophers declare; while others (declare) that acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up.

4. Learn from Me the truth about this abandonment, O best of the Bharatas; abandonment, verily, O best of men, has been declared to be of three kinds.

5. Practice of worship, gift and austerity should not be given up; it is quite necessary; worship, gift and austerity are the purifiers of the wise.

6. But even those actions should be performed, setting aside attachment and the fruits; this, O son of Pritha, is My firm and highest belief.

7. Verily, the abandonment of an obligatory duty is not proper; the abandonment thereof from ignorance is declared to be Tamasic.

8. Whatever act one may abandon because it is painful, from fear of bodily trouble, he practices Rajasic abandonment and he shall obtain no fruit whatever of abandonment.

9. Whatever obligatory work is done, by Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, by abandoning attachment and also the fruit, that abandonment is deemed to be Sattvic.

10. He hates not evil action, nor is he attached, to a good one - he who has abandoned, pervaded by Sattva and possessed of wisdom, his doubts cut asunder.

11. Verily, it is not possible for an embodied being to abandon actions completely; he who abandons the fruits of actions is verily said to be an abandoner.
12. The threefold fruit of action - evil, good and mixed - accrues after death to non-abandoners, but never to abandoners.
13. These five factors in the accomplishment of all action, know thou from Me, O mighty-armed, as taught in the Sankhya which is the end of action.
14. The seat and actor and the various organs and the several functions of various sorts and the Divinity also, the fifth among these.
15. Whatever action a man does by the body, speech and mind, right or the opposite, these five are its causes.
16. Now, such being the case, verily, he who as untrained in understanding, looks on the pure Self as the agent, that man of perverted intelligence sees not.
17. He who is free from egotistic notion, whose mind is not tainted - though he kills these creatures, he kills not, he is not bound.
18. Knowledge, the object known, the knower, (form) the threefold impulse to action; the organ, the end, the agent, from the threefold basis of action.
19. Knowledge and action and the agent are said in the science of gunas to be of three kinds only, according to the distinction in gunas. Hear thou duly of them.
20. That by which a man sees the one Indestructible Reality in all beings, inseparable in the separated - that knowledge know thou as Sattvic.
21. But that knowledge which by differentiation, sees in all the creatures various entities of distinct kinds, that knowledge know thou as Rajasic.
22. But that which clings to one single effect as if it were all, without reason, having no real object and narrow, that is declared to be Tamasic.
23. An action which is ordained, which is free from attachment, which is done without love or hatred by one not desirous of the fruit, that action is declared to be Sattvic.
24. But the action which is done by one longing for pleasures, or done by the egotistic, costing much trouble, that is declared to be Rajasic.

25. The action which is undertaken from delusion, without regarding the consequence, loss, injury and ability, that is declared to be Tamasic.
26. Free from attachment, not given to egotism, endowed with firmness and vigor, unaffected in success and failure, an agent is said to be Sattvic.
27. Passionate, desiring to attain the fruit of action, greedy, cruel, impure, subject to joy and sorrow, such an agent is said to be Rajasic.
28. Unsteady, vulgar, unbending, deceptive, wicked, indolent, desponding and procrastinating, (such) an agent is said to be Tamasic.
29. The threefold division of intellect and firmness according to qualities, about to be taught fully and distinctively (by Me), hear thou, O Dhananjaya.
30. That which knows action and inaction, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, fear and absence of fear, bondage and liberation, that intellect is Sattvic, O Partha.
31. That by which one wrongly understands Dharma and Adharma and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, that intellect, O Partha, is Rajasic.
32. That which, enveloped in darkness, sees Adharma as Dharma and all things perverted, that intellect, O Partha, is Tamasic.
33. The firmness which is ever accompanied by Yoga and by which the activities of thought, of life-breaths and sense-organs, O Partha, are held fast, such a firmness is Sattvic.
34. But the firmness with which one holds fast to Dharma and pleasures and wealth, desirous of the fruit of each on its occasion, that firmness, O Partha, is Rajasic.
35. That with which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, depression and lust, that firmness, O Partha, is Tamasic.
36. And now hear from Me - O lord of the Bharatas - of the threefold pleasure, in which one delights by practice and surely comes to the end of pain.
37. That which is like poison at first, at the end, like nectar that pleasure is declared to be Sattvic, born of the purity of one's own mind.
38. That pleasure which arises from the contact of the sense-organ with the object, at first like nectar, in the end like poison that is declared to be Rajasic.

39. The pleasure which at first and in the sequel is delusive of the self, arising from sleep, indolence and heedlessness, that pleasure is declared to be Tamasic.

40. There is no being on earth, or again in heaven among the Devas, that can be free from these three gunas born of Prakriti.

41. Of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, as also of Sudras, O Parantapa, the duties are divided according to the qualities born of nature.

42. Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also uprightness, knowledge, wisdom, faith - these are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of nature.

43. Bravery, boldness, fortitude, promptness, not flying from battle, generosity and lordliness are the duties of the Kshatriyas, born of nature.

44. Ploughing, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the Vaisyas, born of nature. And of the nature of service is the duty of the Sudra, born of nature.

45. Devoted each to his own duty, man attains perfection; how one, devoted to one's own duty, attains success, that do thou hear.

46. Him from whom is the evolution of (all) beings, by whom all this is pervaded - by worshipping Him with his proper duty, man attains perfection.

47. Better is one's own duty (though) destitute of merits, than the duty of another well performed. Doing the duty ordained according to nature one incurs no sin.

48. The duty born with oneself, O son of Kunti, though faulty, one ought not to abandon; for, all undertakings are surrounded with evil, as fire with smoke.

49. He whose reason is not attached anywhere, whose self is subdued, from whom desire has fled, he by renunciation attains the supreme state of freedom from action.

50. How he who has attained perfection reaches Brahman, that in brief do thou learn from Me, O son of Kunti - that supreme consummation of knowledge.

51. Endued with a pure reason, controlling the self with firmness, abandoning sound and other objects and laying aside love and hatred;

52. Resorting to a sequestered spot, eating but little, speech and body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, endued with dispassion;

53. Having abandoned egotism, strength, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, free from the notion of mine, and peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman.

54. Becoming Brahman, of serene self, he neither grieves nor desires, treating all beings alike; he attains supreme devotion to Me.

55. By Devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then, knowing Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me.

56. Doing continually all actions whatsoever, taking refuge in Me - by My Grace he reaches the eternal un-decaying Abode.

57. Mentally resigning all deeds to Me, regarding Me as the Supreme, resorting to mental concentration, do thou ever fix thy heart in Me.

58. Fixing thy heart in Me, thou shalt, by My Grace, cross over all difficulties; but if from egotism thou wilt not hear (Me), thou shalt perish.

59. If, indulging egotism, thou think 'I will not fight', vain is this, thy resolve; nature will constrain thee.

60. Bound (as thou art), O son of Kunti, by thy own nature-born act, that which from delusion thou likes not to do, thou shalt do, though against thy will.

61. The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, whirling by Maya all beings (as if) mounted on a machine.

62. Fly unto Him for refuge with all thy being. O Bharata; by His Grace shalt thou obtain supreme peace (and) the eternal resting place.

63. Thus has wisdom, more secret than all that is secret, been declared to thee by Me; reflect thou over it all and act as thou pleasest.

64. Hear thou again My word supreme, the most secret of all; because thou art My firm friend, therefore will I tell thee what is good.

65. Fix thy thought on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, do homage to Me. Thou shalt reach Myself. The truth do I declare to thee; (for) thou art dear to Me.

66. Abandoning all righteous deeds, seek me as thy sole refuge; I will liberate thee from all sins; do thou not grieve.

67. This (which has been taught) to thee is never to be taught to one who is devoid of austerities, nor to one who is not devoted, nor to one who does not do service, nor to one who speaks ill of Me.

68. He who with supreme devotion to Me will teach this Supreme Secret to My devotees, shall doubtless come to Me.

69. Nor is there any among men who does dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than he.

70. And he who will study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I shall have been worshipped by the sacrifice of wisdom, I deem.

71. And the man also who hears, full of faith and free from malice even he, liberated, shall attain to the happy worlds of the righteous.

72. Has it been heard by thee, O Partha, with an attentive mind? Has the delusion of ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya?

ARJUNA SAID:

73. Destroyed is delusion and I have gained recognition through Thy Grace, O Achyuta. I am firm, with doubts gone. I will do Thy word.

SANJAYA SAID:

74. Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Vasudeva and the high-souled Partha, which makes the hair stand on end.

75. Through the grace of Vyasa have I heard this Supreme and most secret Yoga direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it.

76. O King, remembering every moment this wonderful and holy dialogue between Kesava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.

77. And remembering every moment the most wonderful Form of Hari, great is my wonder, O king and I rejoice again and again.

78. Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Arjuna, the archer, there fortune, victory, prosperity and polity are established, I deem.

Bhagavad Gita [Verses]

Song of the Lord [In English Verses]

Translated by P. R. Ramachander

Chapter-1: Arjuna's State of Grief

Chapter-2: Way of Discriminative Logic

Chapter-3: Way of Action

Chapter-4: State of Action, Wisdom and Renunciation

Chapter-5: Renunciation of Action

Chapter-6: Art of Meditation

Chapter-7: Knowledge and Realization

Chapter-8: Non Decaying Ultimate Spirit

Chapter-9: Active Knowledge which is the Secret

Chapter-10: Manifestations of God

Chapter-11: Seeing of the Universal Form

Chapter-12: Path of Devotion

Chapter-13: Discrimination between Arena and Performer

Chapter-14: Three Quality States

Chapter-15: Knowledge of Supreme Being

Chapter-16: Division of Divine and Demonic Attributes

Chapter-17: Three Kinds of Faith

Chapter-18: Way to Renunciation and Relinquishment

An Introduction to Bhagawad Gita [A translation into free verse]:

The followers of Sanathana Dharma (otherwise called as Hindus) did not fall back on any single prophet or a single book as the basis of the irreligion. Right from the beginning, this religion (thought process) had a pluralistic view. On one hand the religion appeared to depend on rituals, prayers and rites and on the other hand it appeared to depend on a very democratic exchange of philosophic ideas between the teacher and the student as in the Upanishads, which were at the end of the Vedas. Not all Upanishads were discussion of philosophy and many of them did indeed discuss rituals and prayers to individual God. The sum total of the Hindu philosophic thought was individual research aided under the direction of the Guru. The thought process slipped down to worship of individual gods and epic stories (Puranas) about the Gods were written down.

The person who compiled and systematized all the religious knowledge contained in the initial Vedas as well as the stories of Individual Gods was a sage called Veda Vyasa. (Veda means knowledge and Vyasa means essay writer.) He compiled the information available on different Gods in to 18 epics besides compiling the four Vedas. The most encyclopedic epic of them all

was called the Mahabharata. The main theme of this epic was the struggle for supremacy in India by the hundred sons of King Drutharashtra (called Kauravas) and the 5 sons of his younger brother Pandu called the Pandavas. At the end of struggle is a war between them. On the first day of the war, Arjuna the most valorous among the Pandava brothers appeared in the battle field driven by Lord Krishna who is his cousin, mentor and guide. But once Arjuna faced the prospect of killing his own cousins aided by his teachers, uncle and grandfather, he suddenly felt aghast and decided that, even starving to death would be a better option than killing them all. Lord Krishna then advises him (possibly the first recorded psychological counseling). Arjuna is not easily convinced. The next 700 stanzas of conversation between them in the battle field is Bhagawad Gita (The song of the Lord). Apart from simple advice to him, that Arjuna should fight, Lord Krishna summarizes the entire Hindu thought process on Sanathana Dharma in these 700 verses. By the blessing of Veda Vyasa all these was seen and heard by Sanjaya (collector and reporter) to Drutharashtra and were called the Bhagawad Gita. This was considered as a summary of Hindu religious thought and was revered by all Hindus. For a long time, this state of thought existed.

Things changed with the writing of a commentary to this great work by Adi Sankara, who proved that this great book provided support to his interpretation of Hindu philosophy of Advaita (non-dualism). The great Ramanuja who came out with a different philosophy called Visisthadvaita (specialized non dualism) again wrote a commentary and claimed that Gita supported his system of philosophy. It was again followed by another interpretation to gather support to the philosophy of Dvaita (dualism) propounded by sage Madhwa. After this period Bhagawad Gita became the most important religious book of Hindus. Several more commentaries and translations to Indian languages followed. The great commentators were Abhinava Guptha, Nimbarka, Vallabha and Gnaneswar in Marathi etc. The book became so popular in the Hindu psyche that, Hindus took oath on Bhagawad Gita like Christians took oath on Bible. In 1785 Charles Wilkins published an English translation of the Bhagavad Gita, which was the first time that a Sanskrit book had been translated directly into a European language. In 1808 passages from the Gita were part of the first direct translation of Sanskrit into German, appearing in a book through which Friedrich Schlegel, who became known as the founder of Indian philology in Germany. Edwin Arnold was the first one to publish a translation into English verse in 1885. Many commentaries and translations followed with great regularity. Mahatma Gandhi who also wrote a commentary was so impressed by this great work that he wrote: "I find solace in the Bhagavad Gita that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. When disappointment stares me in the face and all alone I see not one ray of light, I go back to the Bhagavad Gita. I find a verse here and a verse there and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies - and my life has been full of external

tragedies - and if they have left no visible, no indelible scar on me, I owe it all to the teaching of Bhagawad Gita".

The first chapter of Gita details the back ground circumstances, which lead to this teaching. In the second chapter Lord Krishna tells Arjuna that he should fight because It is his duty and that by killing a body he does not kill a soul and the highest form of action is when action is done without bothering about the fruits of such action. In this connection he also tells him that inaction is a great sin. Later at the request of Arjuna he explains about the difference between, deeds which take you to heaven but you are reborn later and that deed which once for all merges you with the lord. Some of the prominent approaches explained by him are:

1. Doing action without bothering about fruits of such action.
2. Simple and steadfast devotion, surrendering all results to him.
3. Physical meditation of the highest order by which one becomes him.
4. The path through intelligent search of the God.
5. Simple and pure renunciation.

During this discussion, he also shows him his supreme form, tells him, in which beings his presence will be felt more, the differences between the three states of Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas, the differences between the four varnas and so on. In short it is concise encyclopedia of all that for which Hinduism stands for.

Thousands of translations, interpretations and commentaries of the Bhagawad Gita in English as well as various other languages are already available. As mentioned before Edwin Arnold attempted to do a translation in English verse. Recently a similar effort was made by Sanderson Beck. The present translation is done in free English verse in as simple language as possible. I have tried to understand what has been written in Gita and wrote what I have understood, after reading various translations and commentaries, in a simple verse form. Not being a great scholar, I have not attempted for a commentary on what is the implication of each verse.

I dedicate my translation to the lay English reader interested in Hindu philosophy with a request to him to treat this translation as an appetizer. I am hoping that my effort would make him read several, more scholarly commentaries on Gita by very great souls and try to clear his various doubts. I am making this request because I have still not understood the treasure house of Gita and am doing exactly that.

Given below are what great people all over the world told about Bhagawad Gita from a collection published by Sri M. P. Bhattathiri (www.tamilnation.org)

When I read the Bhagavad-Gita and reflect about how God created this universe everything else seems so superfluous. [Albert Einstein]

When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to Bhagavad-gita and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Those who meditate on the Gita will derive fresh joy and new meanings from it every day. [Mahatma Gandhi]

In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonical philosophy of the Bhagavad-gita, in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial. [Henry David Thoreau]

The Bhagavad-Gita has a profound influence on the spirit of mankind by its devotion to God which is manifested by actions. [Dr. Albert Schweitzer]

The Bhagavad-Gita is a true scripture of the human race a living creation rather than a book, with a new message for every age and a new meaning for every civilization. [Sri Aurobindo]

The idea that man is like unto an inverted tree seems to have been current in by gone ages. The link with Vedic conceptions is provided by Plato in his Timaeus in which it states behold we are not an earthly but a heavenly plant. This correlation can be discerned by what Krishna expresses in chapter 15 of Bhagavad-Gita. [Carl Jung]

The Bhagavad-Gita deals essentially with the spiritual foundation of human existence. It is a call of action to meet the obligations and duties of life; yet keeping in view the spiritual nature and grander purpose of the universe. [Nehru]

The marvel of the Bhagavad-Gita is its truly beautiful revelation of life's wisdom which enables philosophy to blossom into religion. [Herman Hesse]

I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad-gita. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us, nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us. [Ralph Waldo Emerson]

In order to approach a creation as sublime as the Bhagavad-Gita with full understanding it is necessary to attune our soul to it. [Rudolph Steiner]

From a clear knowledge of the Bhagavad-Gita all the goals of human existence become fulfilled. Bhagavad-Gita is the manifest quintessence of all the teachings of the Vedic scriptures. [Adi Sankara]

The Bhagavad-Gita is the most systematic statement of spiritual evolution of endowing value to mankind. It is one of the most clear and comprehensive summaries of perennial philosophy ever revealed; hence its enduring value is subject not only to India but to all of humanity. [Aldous Huxley]

The Bhagavad-Gita was spoken by Lord Krishna to reveal the science of devotion to God Which is the Essence of all spiritual knowledge. The Supreme Lord Krishna's primary purpose for descending and incarnating was to relieve the world of any demoniac and negative, undesirable influences that are opposed to spiritual development, yet simultaneously it is His incomparable intention to be perpetually within reach of all humanity. [Ramanuja]

The Bhagavad-Gita is not separate from the Vaishnava philosophy and the Srimad Bhagavatam fully reveals the true import of this doctrine which is transmigration of the soul. On perusal of the first chapter of Bhagavad-Gita one may think that they are advised to engage in warfare. When the second chapter has been read it can be clearly understood that knowledge and the soul is the ultimate goal to be attained. On studying the third chapter it is apparent that acts of righteousness are also of high priority. If we continue and patiently take the time to complete the Bhagavad-Gita and try to ascertain the truth of its closing chapter we can see that the ultimate conclusion is to relinquish all the conceptualized ideas of religion which we possess and fully surrender directly unto the Supreme Lord. [Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati]

The Mahabharata has all the essential ingredients necessary to evolve and protect humanity and that within it the Bhagavad-Gita is the epitome of the Mahabharata just as ghee is the essence of milk and pollen is the essence of flowers. [Madhvacarya]

Yoga has two different meanings - a general meaning and a technical meaning. The general meaning is the joining together or union of any two or more things. The technical meaning is a state of stability and peace and the means or practices which lead to that state. The Bhagavad Gita uses the word with both meanings. Lord Krishna is a real Yogi who can maintain a peaceful mind in the midst of any crisis. [Mata Amritanandamayi Devi]

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Chapter-1

Arjuna's State of Grief

[Drutharashtra, the blind and Pandu were brothers. Drutharashtra being elder was the king. He had 100 sons (kauravas). Pandu had five sons (Pandavas). The great epic Mahabharatha is the story of the rivalry between the Kauravas and Pandavas. After all possible methods have been tried to reconcile their conflict, a decision of war is arrived at. This war takes place in Kuru Kshethra (The land of the Kurus). Since Drutharashtra is blind, he cannot see. His mentor and progenitor Veda Vyasa, gives the power to see everything that happens in the battlefield to one Sanjaya (literally correspondent) and report it to Drutharashtra. Bhagwad Gita starts at this point. Arjuna whose chariot is being driven by Lord Krishna is aghast, when he realizes that to win the war he has to kill all the members of his family as well as his teachers. He feels that this is not the right thing to do. Chapter I of Bhagwad Gita ends with Arjuna expressing his inability to continue with the war. Seventeen chapters follow in which Lord Krishna convinces him that he must fight. During these teaching and discussion, all aspects of Indian philosophy are concisely presented.]

Drutharashtra asked:

Oh Sanjaya, what are my sons and Pandavas, who are eager to fight,
Doing in the holy battle field of Kursukshethra? 1

Sanjaya said:

After seeing the pandavas aligned in the battle field,
The King Duryodhana approached his teacher and asked? 2

I am seeing the great army of the sons of Pandu, my teacher,
Well arranged by the son of Drupada, who is your great disciple. 3

I am seeing among them great warriors like Bheema and Arjuna,
And also great warriors like Yuyudhana, Virata and Drupadha. 4
Yuyudhana - Sathyaki, the cousin of Krishna
Virata - The king of Virata country
Drupada - The father of Draupadi

Among them also are great heroes like Drushta Kethu, Chekithana
The King of Kasi and Purujit, Kunthi Bhoja and the great King Shaibhya. 5
Drushta Kethu - Son of Shishupala
Chekithana - A warrior from Vrushni clan
Purujit Kuntibhoja - Brother of Kunti
Shaibhya - Father in law of Yudhishtira

The very powerful Yudhamanyu and the great warrior Uthamoujas.
And sons of Darupadi and Subadhra, all of whom are great warriors. 6
Yudhamanyu and Uthamoujas - Two panchala warriors

Our army also has great warriors and I am listing them,
Oh great twice born, for your understanding. 7

You, Bheeshma.Karna, Krupa who is a war winner,
Aswathama, Vikarna and Soumadathi are among them. 8
Krupa - Another teacher, who is brother in law of Drona
Vikarna - Brother of Duryodhana
Soumadathi - Son of Somadatha.

There are many more warriors, who are prepared to sacrifice,
Their lives for my sake and they are well armed and experts in war. 9

The strength of our army lead by Bheeshma is beyond measure,
As against their limited strength, which is protected by Bhima. 10

(This sloka could also mean:-

The strength of our army lead by Bheeshma is not sufficient,
As against their needed strength, which is protected by Bhima. 10)

And so please prepare your army and hold it in readiness,
And all of you at any cost protect the great Bheeshma. 11

Then the old man of the Kuru clan, the great Bheeshma,
Blew his conch like a roar of lion to reassure Him. 12

All of a sudden several conches, drums, cymbals and gongs,
Blew in unison, and that sound echoed and re-echoed and became great. 13.

Then Arjuna and Krishna sitting on a great chariot,
Drawn by white horses, blew their divine conches also. 14

Lord Krishna blew his conch called Pancha Janya, Arjuna blew his
Devadatha
And the Bhima with fire in his stomach blew his conch poundram. 15

The king Yudhishtira, who is the son of Kunthi, blew his conch Anantha
Vijaya,
Nakula his conch Sugosha and Sahadeva his conch Mani pushpaka. 16

The great archer Kashyapa, the great charioteer Shikandi,
Drushtadhyumna, Virata, Sathyaki who has never faced defeat, 17

The King Drupada, sons of Draupadi, the great son of Subadhra,
Blew their conches separately again and again. 18

That sound shattered the hearts of the sons of Drutharashtra,
And also echoed and re-echoed in the earth and the sky. 19

Seeing these state of affairs of the sons of Drutharashtra,
The hero with a monkey in his flag realizing that the time was ready for war,
Held his bow aloft and Oh king, told like this to Krishna. 20

Arjuna said:

Please position this chariot in the middle of armies, oh Krishna,
So that I can see all those who have come ready for this battle,
Summoned by the evil minded sons of Drutharashtra,
And who have wished for this war and decide on all those
Whom I should fight, when the war commences. 21-23

Sanjaya said:

The Lord Krishna, when told like this by Arjuna,
Took and placed the chariot in the middle of the armies,
And told him, Please see the great warriors,
Of the Kuru clan lead by Bheeshma and Drona. 24-25

After seeing his in-laws, friends in the two armies,
And also his grandfather, his teacher, uncles, brothers,
Sons and grandsons, Arjuna was overcome with compassion,
And getting in to the clutches of sorrow, told the following words. 26

Arjuna said:

I am seeing my people here, Krishna, who are ready for the war,
My body becomes weak, my face becomes dry,
My body is entirely covered with sweat, my hairs stand erect,
My bow Gandiva is getting out of my grip,
My whole body burns and I am not able to even to stand erect.
My life seems to be leaving me and my mind gets upset. 27-30

I am seeing bad omens, Krishna which are counter-productive,
I do not see anything which will lead me to fame,
By killing all these people who are my own people. 31

I do not desire victory Krishna, or country or pleasure,
What is the use in having this country Govinda,
And what is the use in having a pleasure filled life?
For what is the point in having a country or even life, after
Killing teachers fathers, sons, grandfather,
Uncles, in laws, grandsons, brother in laws and all relatives.
Even if they want to kill me. Oh killer of Madhu,
And even if I am going to be the king of the three worlds,
I am not interested in killing them for this trifle of land. 32-35

What happiness will I ever get by killing these sons of Drutharashtra,
For even though they deserve to be killed, only sin will get attached to me. 36

Oh Krishna, though the sons of Drutharashtra deserve to be killed,
Since they are our relations, how can we get pleasure out of such an action?
Though I am seeing that they do not realize in their mind,
The sin of destroying a family and treachery to their friends,
How can we who realize the sin which results in destruction of family,
Not know that we have to withdraw from committing such a sin? 37-38

When families are killed, the just life* of the society perishes,
And by the loss of just life, injustice tends to grow aloft. 39

* The actual word is Dharma

When injustice occupies the land, good women lose their virtue,
And when they lose their virtue, there is mixture of the castes. 40

The mixture of castes leads the families and
Those who destroy them to hell, for their ancestors
Will not be worshipped with rice balls and water. 41

Because of the sins of those who destroy families,
And those who lead to such a mixture of castes,
The just duties of the castes as also the families cease to exist. 42-43

Oh Krishna, I have heard that those who destroy,
The just duties of families live forever in the portals of hell. 44

Alas! We are just getting prepared to do a very great sin,
By killing our own people for the sake of ruling over a country. 45

If the armed sons of Drutharashtra kill me, who am not armed,
That would lead me to lot of useful pleasure. 46

Sanjaya said:

After telling thus Arjuna became extremely sad,
Divested himself of his arms and sat in his chariot. 47

Thus ends the First Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Arjuna's State of Grief.

Chapter-2

Way of Discriminative Logic

[In this chapter Lord Krishna tries to clear the fuddled mind of Arjuna using discriminative logic. He tells him that he is not killing anything, because the soul cannot be killed. After establishing this he tells him, that he can command (order about) only his own actions but is helpless in getting the results that he desires.]

Sanjaya said:

To him who is completely weakened by compassion,
Who was with eyes filled with copious tears,
And who was imprisoned by worries,
Lord Sri Krishna, the killer of Madhu, told thus. 1

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna who is faced with a dangerous situation.
How come this inglorious thought came in to you?
Which is ungentlemanly, which bars your way to heaven,
And which would become a blot to your fame. 2

Oh Arjuna, do not go in this path of thought which is fit to the unmanly,
And cast away this minor weakness of mind and raise up to fight. 3

Arjuna said:

Oh killer of Madhu, who is fit for worship,
How can I kill Bheeshma and Drona,
Who are fit to be worshipped by me,
By shooting several arrows at them. 4

It would rather give fame to eat alms got as charity,
Than to kill such teachers who are very great people,
For I would be forced to enjoy the pleasures,
Which are soaked in the blood of these great ones. 5

I do not know whether it is better for us to win over the enemy,
Or the enemies to attain a victory over us, but I know,
That against me are arraigned the sons of Drutharashtra,
By killing whom, I will not have any wish to live further. 6

My conduct has lost its sharpness due to ignorance,
And due to that I am not able to know, what is my rightful action,
And so please tell me which path would lead to me to fame,
For I am your student and have surrendered to you. 7

Even if I get a country with no enemies, and one with riches,
Or even if I get the kingship of the great heaven,
I do not see any way that would drive away,
My blasting sorrow which wilts my sense organs. 8

Sanjaya said:

Arjuna who can kill his enemies,
Told Lord Krishna who is beyond meditation,
That he would not participate in the war,
And simply sat there, in a continued silence. 9

Oh Drutharashtra, the King of entire India.
Then Sri Krishna smilingly told as follows to Arjuna,
Who sat grieving in the middle of the two armies. 10

Lord said:

You are sorrowing for those who do not merit such sorrow,
And also talking and arguing like a very learned man,
In spite of the fact that wise men do not sorrow,
Over people who are alive or those people who are no more. 11

There was never a time, when I was not there,
There was no time when you or these kings were not there,
And in future also there will be never a time,
When we both and these kings will not be there. 12

Clearly understanding the fact that,
All individuals with this body, will attain,
States of childhood, youth and old age,
And after death the soul will reach another body.
Brave (learned?) men never get worried. 13

Oh Arjuna, we are able to feel the heat or cold,
Or pass through the state of joy and sorrow,
Due the interaction of sense organs with these feelings,
Oh Bharatha, learn to tolerate and understand them,
As they are unstable and appear and then vanish. 14

Oh king among men, that wise man,
Who is not affected by these feelings,
Who considers pain and pleasure alike,
Would become suitable for immortality. 15

Philosophers and wise men know that,
That which is not there, does not exist,
For it would never start to exist,
And that which is there would,
Never cease to exist and be forever. 16

Please know that, that which fills all this
Universe is the one that never dies,
And that never undergoes change,
And none can cause destruction to it. 17

You start fighting in this battle, Arjuna,
For the soul*, which is perennial and stable,
Is beyond destruction and beyond proper understanding,
And is said to occupy this very perishable body. 18

* I am using the English word 'soul' for 'Atma'. Some authors use the word
'embodied self'

He who thinks that he is killing this soul,
And he who considers that the soul has died,
Are both ignorant, for this soul,
Can either kill nobody, nor can anybody kill it. 19

This soul is never born nor ever dies,
It never comes to existence and later vanishes,
And this soul which is permanent, perennial and old,
Never dies when the body dies. 20

Hey Arjuna, how can he who knows this soul as,
That which cannot be wounded, perennial and never ever is born,
Ever kill someone or get someone else killed. 21

Like a man leaving out old worn out cloths,
And start wearing new cloths when necessary,
This soul leaves the body which becomes useless,
And moves on to newer bodies. 22

This soul cannot be hurt by arrows,
It can never be burnt by fire,
It can never be made wet,
And it can never be dried by any wind. 23

This soul can never be cut nor burnt,
It can never be made wet or dried,
This is perennial, goes everywhere,
And is stable, immobile and ancient. 24

This soul can never be seen, is beyond thought,
Beyond actions and the one which cannot be separated,
And once you realize this perennial truth,
You do not have the right to sorrow for it. 25

Oh great warrior, If you are under the impression,
That this soul is one which is daily born and dying daily,
Even then, you do not have the right to sorrow for it. 26

For all that is born, certainly dies,
And all that dies is born again,
And so on, a matter which cannot be corrected,
You do not have the right to sorrow. 27

What is the point in showing sorrow,
For that which was unclear before birth,
Clear in the central period of time,
And again becoming unclear after death? 28

Some view it with awe,
Others talk about it with awe,
Some others hear about it with awe,
But there is none among them,
Who clearly knows anything about it. 29

This soul which daily lives inside the body,
Can never be killed at any time, Arjuna,
So you do not have to sorrow about.
The death of any being in this world. 30

Even viewing it from the aspect,
Of just action* as applicable to you,
You need not have to worry about it,
Because for one belonging to the kingly race,
There is nothing which brings more fame than war. 31

* I am using the phrase 'just action' instead of Dharma, fully realizing that the word Dharma has much bigger connotation.

This war which came in an accidental fashion,
Actually keeps the doors of heaven open,
And is available only to those lucky of the kingly clan,
Who participate whole heartedly in this war. 32

If you are not going to fight,
This war as per the holy tenets,
Then your fame and dharma would die,
And you would be engulfed in sin. 33

Instead of talking about your fame,
All beings would talk about your ill fame,
And such talk of ill fame is,
Worse than the state of death. 34

All great heroes would think,
That you have ran away from the war out of fear,
And all of them having good opinion about you,
Will think of you in a very debased manner. 35

Your enemies would berate your heroism,
And start talking words which should not be uttered,
And what is there more sorrowful than hearing those words? 36

Oh Arjuna, if you are killed in this war,
Certainly you will reach heaven,
And if you are victorious you will,
Taste the kingship of a kingdom,
And so get up and start fighting. 37

Get engaged in this war,
Keeping pain and pleasure equally,
And loss and profit equally,
And then only you will not,
Suffer the results of sin. 38

I was till now talking to you about,
The discriminative system of philosophy,
And now I am going to talk to you
About the path of action, knowing which
You can get freed from the ties of duties. 39

There is no waste of efforts in this,
And contra effects will never result,
Even a slight practice of this type of action,
Protects you from greatest fears known. 40

Hey son of Kuru clan, there is only one
Type of this wisdom which is fixed in goal,
But the brains of those who are wavering,
Have no definite goal and travels in many ways. 41

Oh Arjuna, these ignorant men,
Find pleasure in the flowery words of Veda,*
And will ever argue with pride,

That there is nothing greater. 42

* Reference is made here to the Karma Kanda of Vedas, which prescribe specific rites for specific fruits.

They will tell you, those actions,
Results of actions and repeated births
Are meant for experiencing joy,
And they would drown themselves in desires. 43

They will tell you words which are similar
To the fruit less flowering tree,
And since they travel behind desires,
Will not have time for any meditation.* 44

* The word Samadhi indicates a state of oneness of mind attained through meditation.

(This sloka could also mean:-
These people attached to enjoyment and position
Are without wisdom and would never get
In their mind stable thoughts and directions. 44)

Oh Arjuna, Vedas deal with the three aspects of action,
But you have to become one above, the three states of action,
Win over the plurality of thoughts and have a mind,
Not wandering behind earning and upkeep of wealth
Become happy in yourself and enjoy the bliss of the soul. 45

To the wise man, Vedas are only as useful
As the little spools of water which are contained
In the limitless water which is filled everywhere. 46

You have only ownership of your actions,*
But you do not have anything to do with what results,
So please do not do any action with
Interest in the results but please
Forever never decide on doing no action. 47

* The word used here is Karma. It could mean Duty/action, the load of previous actions on you and so on.

Oh Arjuna, when done bereft of any attachment,
With equal emphasis given to gains and losses,
If you are able to perform actions,
Then it is called the state of Yoga.* 48

* Discipline of the soul.

Oh Arjuna, action laced with wisdom,
But not attached to the results of such action,
Is far above action done with desire to its fruits,
And so take recourse to such an action,
For those who desire for results from actions are miserable. 49

He who is wise leaves out of this life,
Actions which are good and those which are bad,
And so make attempts for attaining such a state of yoga,
For yoga indicates skill in doing duties. 50

The learned one, who is wise, leaves out the fruits of actions,
Cuts off the ties imposed by birth and death,
And they certainly reach the state of no sorrow. 51

Oh Arjuna, When your wisdom crosses
The confused knowledge of illusion,
Then the body that we see is really the soul,
You would start going away from the knowledge,
Which you know and are going to know. 52

When your wisdom which is tossed here and there,
Hearing the multi wisdom of the Vedic words,
Becomes stable in the knowledge of the soul,
Then you would reach the stage of perennial yoga. 53

Arjuna asks:

What are the properties of the stable minded*
Who is in the state of pure meditation, Oh Kesava?
What does he talk and converse about?
Does he sit and walks like other men? 54

* Word used is 'Sthitha Pragna' which can be translated as men of steady wisdom also.

Lord said:

The stable minded is the one, who has
Forsaken all desires and fluttering of the mind, Oh Arjuna,
And becomes contented and happy,
With his soul seeking pleasure only from the soul. 55

He would not get worried because of sorrows,
Would never get happiness from pleasures,
Would not have fear, anger and avarice,
And would be called the sage who is stable. 56

The one who is not attached to anything that he sees,
And reaching the state bereft of good or bad,
Without loving or hating such states,
Is the one who is called the stable minded. 57

Like a turtle withdrawing all his
Limbs from all sides in to his shell,
When one is able to withdraw in to himself,
His sense organs from the sensual pleasures,
His wisdom is that which is stable. 58

The pull of the sense organs go away
From one who lives without any food,
But in him, the desire for such pleasures remains,
Till he sees and attains the divine state 59

Oh Son of Kunthi, Is it not true that even in a
Man who is wise, trying to control his senses
The sense organs, which are tumultuous,
Pull his mind, with force in to some other way. 60

The man with a stable mind controls,
All the sense organs properly,
And considers me as the supreme,
And would live with peace. 61

He who thinks constantly of a thing,
Develops attachment to such a thing,
And from such an attachment desire develops,
And from desire is born the anger. 62

From anger is born the great illusion,
The great illusion leads to bewilderment,
This leads to destruction of wisdom,
This in turn leads to the total destruction. 63

But he who does not have likes or dislikes,
Who enjoys everything using the senses
Which are under his full control,
And who follows freedom with restraint,
Attains the state of clear headedness. 64

This clear headedness brings to an end,
All the sorrows that he ever has,
And due to this, he, within a short time,
Is able to establish his stable wisdom. 65

He who does not attain the state,
Of stable wisdom, does not have,
Capability to take correct decisions,
Nor does he have thought of the ultimate,
And he who does not think of the ultimate,
Does not ever have peace of mind,
And how can pleasure, ever come to him? 66

This is because the mind which follows,
The ever wavering pull of senses,
Would also drive his mind,
Like the wind driving a boat. 67

So, oh great hero, he whose senses,
Completely control their hankering,
Is the one who is steadily intelligent. 68

The sage who has complete control of his mind,
Is awake during the night of all beings,
When their mind is dark with ignorance;
And that time when all beings are awake,
Is the night for the sage who sees the truth. 69

Similar to the rivers traveling and merging,
In to the ocean which is always full and stable,
He in whom desires merge within him,
Is the one who attains peace and
The one who chases desires is not peaceful. 70

He who forsakes all desires,
And remains without any attachment,
Without thinking of me and mine,
Reaches the state of peace. 71

Oh Arjuna, this is the state of union with the divine,
Anyone who reaches this will not drown in desires,
He would stand steadfastly till the end of his life,
And would attain the salvation, merging with the divine. 72

Thus ends the Second Chapter of Bhgawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Way of the Discriminative Logic.

Chapter-3

Way of Action

[The Lord explains to Arjuna that everyone has to do his duty. But if he does it without attachment to the results, he achieves his objective. He also explains that becoming slave to the senses and carrying out actions to satisfy them is wrong.]

Arjuna asked:

Hey God, if you feel that, wisdom is superior to action,
Why are you pushing me to do this savage war? 1

You seem to enchant my brain by your conflicting words,
Please tell me decisively that, by which I will get fame. 2

Lord said:

Oh sinless one, in the times ancient, I had taught
Two distinct ways of paths to follow,
The path of wisdom for the discriminatory and
The path of action to those performers of action. 3

The being does not become, one bereft of action,
Just because he does not begin an action,
And by renunciation of everything,
He does not reach the divine, perfect state. 4

None can remain for even for a fraction of time,
Without doing any action whatsoever,
For by fundamental laws of nature,
One is forced to indulge in some action or other. 5

He who claims control of the senses of action,
But mentally is a slave to the objects of these senses,
Is living in delusion and is a pretender. 6

Oh Arjuna, on the other hand,
The one who controls his senses,
And is able to do action without attachment,
Excels and is deemed as great. 7

Because, action at any time is better than inaction,
You continue to perform the action entrusted to you,
For in the state of inaction you may not
Be able to even move your body. 8

Except a sacrificial worship of the ultimate,
All other actions carried out
Are those which lead to a bondage,
And so Arjuna, do the duties in a proper manner,
Sacrificing it to God and without attachment. 9

During times of yore, Lord Brahma,
Created man along with sacrificial worship and told him,
You would grow with sacrifices and multiply,
For this would give you all that you want. 10

Worship gods with sacrifice and let gods entertain you with this,
And you would gain great good by this mutual support. 11

Gods who are worshipped by sacrifices,
Would grant you all that you want,
And enjoying, what they have given to you,
Without giving them something back to them is indeed a theft. 12

The saints who do sacrificial worship and live
With whatever is left after the worship with them
Do get rid of all the sins committed by them,
While those sinners, who only cook for their eating only,
Do live eating always their sins. 13

All beings are born out of food,
All food is born out of rain,
All rain is born out of sacrifices,
And all sacrifices are born out of actions. 14

All actions are born out of Vedas,
All Vedas are born out of perennial God,
And so the Vedas which are spread everywhere,
Is based always on sacrificial worship. 15

Oh Arjuna, he who does not follow,
This rotating wheel of evolution,
Worships pleasures of sense organs,
And wastes his life in sin. 16

But that man who finds enjoyment in soul,
Gets contended with the soul,
And gets pleasures only from the soul,
Does not have any actions left to be done. 17

Such a one does not get anything by doing any action,
Nor does he lose anything by not doing it,
And he would not find anything to depend or desire,
In all things and in all events. 18

So perform all actions that should be done,
In a very proper way, without attachment,
For the man who does actions without attachment,
Attains a state of the supreme divine. 19

Don't you know that great ones like Janaka,
Attained the top divine state by performing action,
Also you should become the one to do your duties.
For putting the world in right track and guide them.
Because ordinary people follow,
The actions done by great and special people
And they also follow all their ideas
Of what is considered as great. 20- 21

Oh Arjuna, I do not have even an iota of work,
That I should do in all these three worlds,
Also there is nothing that I need to attain,
Or left to be attained, but still I always work. 22

Oh Arjuna, if I fail to keep myself busy,
Without rest by doing work, it is for sure,
Those men would follow me in all my ways. 23

If I do not do my work, this world,
Would totally perish and I would become,
Responsible for mixing of communities,
And consequent destruction of all people. 24

Oh Arjuna, the wise man should do his duties,
Without attachment for the sake of the upkeep of the world,
In a fashion similar to the ordinary people,
Who do their duties with attachment. 25

He should not create confusion,
Among the non-wise and lead them,
By doing all his actions properly,
And make such people follow his path. 26

All actions in this world are done,
Due to innate property of nature,

And only the self-centered one,
Who is ignorant thinks that he does it. 27

But, oh great warrior, he who knows,
The differentiation and function of the senses,
Would understand that these senses,
Would act through sense objects,
And would never get attached to them. 28

Those who are deceived by the natural instincts,
Think that they do the work and are responsible for it,
And the man who is completely wise,
Should not upset these ignorant souls. 29

Dedicate all the work you do to me,
And understanding that you are the soul,
Do actions without desire and attachment,
And undertake this war in the state of peace. 30

Those men who follow this advice of mine,
With sincerity devoid of jealousy,
Would be freed from the bondage of duties. 31

But those men who find fault with this advice of mine,
And do not follow it and get drowned in ignorance,
Would waste their life as they are not wise. 32

Even if a man is wise, he still would,
Follow the dictates of nature, for,
All our thoughts flow from innate nature,
And how can restraint help greatly? 33

In case of every organ of the senses,
Likes and dislikes are inbuilt,
And so one should never be controlled by them,
For, definitely these are his great enemies. 34

Duties faultily done according to our innate nature are always better than,
Well and properly executed duties as done or taught by others,
For even death by doing our own duty is to be preferred,
As the travel in the path charted by others is dangerous. 35

Arjuna asked:

Oh Lord of Vrushnis, then why are the men,
Being forced without willingness to do sinful actions? 36

Lord said:

Please know as your enemies are, your acts of passion,
Acts of fury, acts done for the sake of self,
Acts of great food consumption and
Acts creating other greatly sinful actions. 37

Similar to fire being hidden by smoke,
The mirror being hidden because of dirt,
And the fetus is being hidden by womb,
Desire keeps wisdom in hiding. 38

The wisdom of man is hidden,
By the fire of his desire,
This is his constant enemy,
And has the shape of passion,
And can never ever be satiated. 39

It is generally believed that desire,
Lives in the mind and sense organs,
And because of this, it hides wisdom,
And enchants the soul, which lives in the body. 40

Oh greatest among the Bharathas, please,
Keep under control your sense organs,
And then destroy this sinful passion, which
Kills the knowledge and realization. 41

People say sense organs are great,
But Mind is greater than sense organs,
Wisdom is greater than the mind,
And that which is beyond wisdom is the soul. 42

Oh great warrior, thus understanding,
That which is beyond wisdom,
Control the mind and the senses,
And by having a stable mind,
Destroy desire, which is but,
An enemy which can never be conquered.. 43

Thus ends the Third Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Way of Action.

Chapter-4 State of Action, Wisdom and Renunciation

[Here the path of action and the path of wisdom are compared. It is concluded that wisdom is like a boat which helps us to cross the ocean of sin.]

Lord said:

This imperishable yoga was taught by me to the Sun God,
He taught it to Manu his son, and Manu told it to Ikshuvaku. 1

Kingly sages inherited this knowledge,
Oh, tormentor of enemies, but this great knowledge
Eventually disappeared from the world. 2

Since you are my friend as well as my devotee,
This old knowledge is being told by me to you today,
Even though this knowledge is a great secret. 3

Arjuna asked:

How can I accept this in my mind,
When I know that you were born,
Much later than the sun god,
And you claim to have taught him this? 4

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna, the tormentor of enemies,
I know that I and you have passed through,
Several births and deaths so far,
And also I know, you do not know about it. 5

Though I am birth less and deathless,
And also the god of all the beings that are born,
I have full control on my innate nature,
And appear similar to this form, by use of illusion.* 6
* Word illusion is being used for Maya.

Oh Bharatha, whenever the righteousness suffers,
And wickedness raises its head,
Then I create myself by my own illusion,
And appear from time to time to save Dharma. 7

I come in to this world, myself from eons to eons,
For protecting the righteous,
And for destroying the wicked,
And also to establish righteousness. 8

Oh Arjuna, he, who knows correctly,
The fact of my divine births and duties,
Would not have one more birth after his death,
But would come directly to me and attain me. 9

Many of those who do not have desire, fear and anger
Many of those who have become mine,
And many of those who have surrendered to me,
Become purified by the sacred flame of knowledge,
And eventually would come and attain me. 10

I bless my devotees in the way,
In which they choose to worship me,
And Oh Arjuna, in whichever way they choose,
It is my way in all respects entirely. 11

Desiring for good rapid results of action done,
In this world they worship the gods,
For in the man's world the results,
Of action are received very rapidly. 12

I propounded the four fold differences in men
According to their inborn nature and choice of action,
Though I am the one who is the author,
Understand me as stable and the one who is not the doer. 13

He who knows that actions,
Do not get attached to me,
And that I do not have,
Any attachment towards results of actions,
Is never chained or tied by any action. 14

Understanding this great tenet,
Our forefathers who wanted salvation,
Did do several such actions,
And so carry out actions like those of your ancestors. 15

Even greatly wise people are befuddled,
In classifying action from inaction,
And I will tell you about that action,
Which would make you free from bad things. 16

Lots have to be learned about actions that has to be done,
Lots have to be learned about action which should not be done,
Lots have to be learned about inaction,
And so it is difficult to charter the path of this differentiation. 17

That man indeed is greatly intelligent,
Who sees inaction in action and action in inaction,
And he being a greatly Wise man,
Would do all his actions with a peaceful mind. 18

That man whose actions are devoid,
Of sensory gratification and determination
Is the one in whom the fire of his wisdom,
Has burnt his actions and is declared as 'learned',
By those who have very great wisdom. 19

He forsakes interest in results of his actions,
And is always satisfied with his life,
And also does not depend on any one,
And is seen to indulge in concentrated action,
But is perceived as one who does not do anything. 20

He is without any desires and controls his mind and body,
He forsakes ownership of all assets and only does,
Those actions which are absolutely necessary,
And never suffers any bad effects at any time. 21

He becomes happy with anything that he gets accidentally,
He is the one, who has crossed the state of duality,
He is without jealousy, has same emotions towards victory and defeat,
And he does not get tied up by his action in spite of doing it. 22

He is always without attachment, free from everything,
And concentrates his mind on wisdom only,
And his actions done with the spirit of sacrifice,
Vanish because they are completely dissolved. 23

The act of sacrifice is God,
The material that is being sacrificed is God,
This material is being sacrificed in fire which is god,
This sacrifice that is being performed is by God,
And so the one who attains the Samadhi,
By performing actions, attains God. 24

[Brahman is translated here as God though it has a wider and much fuller meaning. 'Samadhi' is the state in which one becomes one with God.]

Some yogis perform sacrifices to please gods,
And others sacrifice their soul in the fire of ultimate God,
And conduct the sacrifices using Ultimate God.* 25

* Here Brahman is translated as Ultimate God to differentiate it from the concept of Gods in the first line.

Yet others sacrifice their organs of hearing,
In the fire of self-control and yet others,
Sacrifice their organs of speech,
In the fire of sense organs. 26

Others sacrifice activities of all sense organs,
And all activities of the soul,
In the fire of self-control,
Burning them by the aid of the light of wisdom. 27

There are yet others, who sacrifice money,
Or penance or yoga or recitation of Vedas,
Others who take up austere vows,
With unflagging and unflinching devotion. 28

There are others, who sacrifice outgoing breath,
In the incoming breath or incoming breath
In outgoing breath and others who
Stop inhaling and exhaling and hold their breath. 29

Some others control their food and sacrifice,
Breathe in to breath and all these people,
Who know what a sacrifice is
Are purified by the methods adopted by them. 30

Oh great one among the kurus, those who eat,
The remnants of food offered in sacrifices attain
The perennial godhead and there is no world
For those who do not perform sacrifices. 31

There are several methods of sacrifices,
Spread before us by the great Vedas,
Please understand that they are a part of our actions,
And understanding this gets you freedom from chains of life. 32

Oh tormentor of enemies, understand that,
The sacrifices of wisdom is superior to those of wealth,
For, hey Arjuna, Wisdom fulfills the entire gamut of actions
And eventually ends up in the earning of divine knowledge. 33

Please learn and understand this,
With humility, with enquiry and with service,
From those wise men who have realized the truth,
Who will instruct you in this type of wisdom. 34

Oh Pandava, Once you understand this wisdom,
You would not be troubled by illusions of this sort,
And because of that you would see all beings
Of the world within me and within you. 35

Even if you are the greatest sinner possible,
Among all the sinners of the world,
You would cross all the sins of yours,
With the help of this boat of wisdom. 36

Similar to the fact that a raging fire,
Turns in to ashes all the wood that is on its way,
The fire of wisdom would turn
All your actions in to ashes. 37

In this world there is no greater,
Purifier than the wisdom that one has,
And over time the one who learns yogas,
Becomes an ace and automatically gets it. 38

He who is in search of wisdom,
He who controls all his sense organs,
And he who learns everything with sincerity,
Attains the state of great wisdom,
And after attaining that state soon, he attains great peace. 39

He who is not wise, he who does not believe,
And he who always doubts everything,
Will eventually perish and
This world does not exist for them who doubts,
And also the other worlds and pleasure,
Does not exist for them forever. 40

Oh Arjuna, the one who destroys actions by yoga,
The one who breaks doubts using his wisdom,
And the one who stands self-possessed,
Are not stopped by duties or actions. 41

And so cut this doubt about the soul,
Born out of ignorance with,

The sword of wisdom and,
Be stable in the state of yoga. 42

Thus ends the Fourth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The State of Action, Wisdom and Renunciation.

Chapter-5 Renunciation of Action

[Arjuna wants clarification as to the need for practice of action, when one is not interested in its results. Lord Krishna tells him that nobody can remain without doing any action and also that the ultimate self does not participate in the performance of action. He re-emphasizes the importance of renouncing results of action.]

Arjuna asked:

You praise renunciation of action,
As well as the practice of the path of action,
Please take a decision yourself,
And tell me which of them is better? 1

Lord said:

Renunciation as well as path of action
Will both take you to the higher state in life,
But among them path of positive action
Is better than renunciation of action. 2

The one who does not hate or desire is a hermit,
And so the one who gets freedom from
Plurality of action easily gets freedom
From the bondage of day to day life. 3

Ignorant children would say that knowledge,
Is very different from action with renouncement,
But the learned would not agree with them,
For anyone who concentrates on any of these,
Would get the results from what he chose.. 4

That state which is attained by discriminative logic,
Is also attained by the practice of positive action,
He who sees discriminative logic and positive action,
As the same is the one who really sees. 5

Oh heroic one, renunciation of action is very difficult,
Without first performing selfless positive action,
And it is also true that one who is wedded to action,
Attains the ultimate more quickly and speedily. 6

He who is engaged in selfless action,
Who has a very clean and clear mind,
Who has won over the hankerings of the body,
Who has total control over his senses,
And who sees himself in all beings,
Is not tainted by action even if he does it. 7

The man who is a true practitioner,
Of the path of selfless action,
Feels that he is not doing any action,
Even during the time he sees, he hears,
He touches, he smells, he eats,
He walks, he sleeps or even when he breaths. 8

When one talks or leaves what he holds,
Or holds on tightly, or opens his eyes,
Or closes his eyes, he determines,
That these are because senses are
Performing the job towards the sense objects,
And not because he has done any of them. 9

He who does all his actions, sacrificing them,
To the godhead and without any desires,
Is not affected by it, similar to the fact,
That lotus leaf does not become wet because of water. 10

The learned and wise men forsake all attachment,
And carry out actions with body or mind or brain,
Or senses without the sense of the feeling of I,
For purifying their mind and soul. 11

He who does positive action, leaves out
The fruits of his action and attains,
Mental stability and peace by practice of such action,
But the one who does actions for achieving results
Is bound by the expectations of the results that he wishes. 12

The one who has mastered control over his senses,
Does renunciation of all actions and exists peacefully,
And happily in the city with nine holes [body],
Doing nothing and is getting done nothing. 13

The God was never an actor, nor did he create persons,
Nor did he create actions, nor unification of actions with results,
And all these are controlled only by universal ignorance 14

The god does not receive the sins of any one,
Nor does he accept good deeds done by people,
And this knowledge is hidden by ignorance,
And because of it, beings get under delusion 15

In those whom ignorance is destroyed,
Due to the knowledge of the soul,
Their wisdom shines like a bright sun,
And throws light on the highest being. 16

Those whose mind is set on God,
Those who think God is their soul,
Those who remain in the concept of God,
And those who consider God as their refuge,
Attain the state of no return,
With their sins being winnowed off by wisdom. 17

The learned view with equanimity,
The humble or a wise Brahmin,
Or a cow, or an elephant or a dog,
Or the one who eats a dog. 18

Those whose mind stands with equanimity,
Have won over re-birth here in this world itself,
For the ultimate truth is equal and faultless,
And due to that they stay with the ultimate truth. 19

He who realizes the ultimate truth,
Would have a very stable mind, would be devoid of any desires,
Would attain the life he likes, would not get elated with joy,
Or get sorry when he gets what he dislikes. 20

He who does not have attachment,
To the pleasure provided by the external,
Realizes the pleasure given by the soul,
And with his mind standing with ultimate truth,
He realizes the bliss, which never decays. 21

Oh son of Kunthi, those pleasures from the external,
Are really the birth places of all sorrows,
For they have a beginning and an end,
And so the wise man will not derive joy from them. 22

He who has strength to control emotions,
Caused due to passion and anger,
Even before he leaves his own body,
Is the one who is steadfast in yoga,
And he is the only human being who enjoys. 23

He who has well-being within him,
He who has joy within himself,
He who is enlightened within himself,
That Yogi is the Brahman even when he is alive,
And would get salvation by becoming absolutely free. 24

Those sages within whom, sins erode,
Within whom doubts fade away,
Within whom senses are under control,
And who wants only to do well to all others,
Would get salvation with absolute freedom. 25

Those sages who get freedom from desire and anger,
Who have mind which is peaceful and contended,
And who are able to realize their souls,
Would get salvation within this and in other worlds. 26

He who is able to keep external pleasures outside,
Concentrate his gaze in between the eyebrows,
Keep the airs of inhalation and exhalation equally within his nose,
Controls his mind, senses and thought completely,
Desires nothing except the true and ultimate salvation,
Is bereft of desire, fear and anger always,
And tries to engage himself in meditation,
Is always free from everything. 27-28

Thus ends the Fifth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Renunciation of Action.

Chapter-6 Art of Meditation

[In this chapter Lord Krishna tells about the techniques of yoga and meditation and tells him that, it is a superior method.]

Lord Krishna said:

He who carries out all his duties,
Without depending on the outcome,
And not the one who has forsaken fire,*
Or the one who does not do any action,
Is a great yogi or one who has renounced. 1

* Who has discontinued fire sacrifices

Oh Pandava, understand the word yoga,
As indicative of renunciation also,
For no one can become a great yogi,
Without relinquishing the fruits of actions from his mind. 2

For the sage who wants to climb up,
The ladder of Yoga, action is a must,
And only for the one who has attained yoga,
Inaction is said to be the means to retain it. 3

When surely there is no desire,
To those things hankered by senses,
When there is no thinking for fruit of actions,
He would have renounced everything,
And would be called a great yogi. 4

One should elevate oneself by one's self,
One should not ever lower oneself,
And surely self alone is one's friend,
And self alone is one's enemy. 5

He who has attained victory over self,
For himself is a very great friend,
And for the one who has not won over the self,
Self is a very great enemy. 6

For him who has won over his self,
Who is eternally peaceful within himself
Heat and cold are very much alike,
And so are sorrows and happiness

And honour and dishonour and he would,
Be always blessed with presence of the divine. 7

That yogi who becomes satiated,
By wisdom and his experiences,
Is immobile, a victor over his senses,
And would consider mud, stone and gold,
As one and the same and equal. 8

He becomes very special and great,
If he has the same relation with,
Good people, friends, enemies,
People who are neutral or middle,
People who hate or love,
And even people who are really bad. 9

That yogi should concentrate his mind,
Sitting alone with control over mind and body,
With no desires, with no wealth or assets,
And try to meditate and keep his mind stable, 10

He should choose a very clean place,
Which does not move, which is neither high nor low,
And spread skin and cloth over Durba grass,
And sit there concentrating his mind. 11

Sitting on that seat, with concentration of mind,
And controlling the works of mind and senses,
He should practice yoga for cleaning his mind. 12

Keeping his body, head and neck straight,
Adopting the position of no movement,
Becoming stable, without seeing here and there,
Concentrating vision on the tip of his nose,
With mind fully not roaming here and there,
Without fear, observing self-continenence,
Controlling his mind, thinking of only me,
He should have me as his supreme goal. 13-14

That practitioner of yoga, who concentrates,
With a controlled mind attains that peace,
Which is at the end of salvation,*
And which is situated in me. 15

* I have used salvation to denote Moksha.

Oh Arjuna, Yoga is not there,
For the one who eats too much,
Or the one who eats nothing at all.
It also is not there for the one,
Who loves to sleep and to him,
Who does not sleep at all, 16

To him who is moderate in his,
Food habits, walks, action,
Sleep and wakefulness,
Yoga helps to wipe away sorrow. 17

He is said to have attained yoga,
When his self-controlled mind,
Remains always fixed in the self,
And is free of all desires and joys. 18

The wise men compare the non-flickering,
Lamp kept in a windless place,
To the controlled mind of the yogi,
Practicing yoga within his self. 19

One should know that, that is called yoga,
When the mind which is controlled,
By practice of concentration, gets settled,
In which the self seeks the self and realizes the self,
And gets happiness in the self itself,
In which that state of bliss is realized,
Which is limitless, known only to the intellect,
Which is beyond the reach of senses,
In which one establishes himself,
And never moves down from it,
Which position once attained,
Makes one feel that no other gain,
Is better than that state and which position once attained,
Makes one feel that no great sorrow is worth worrying about.
This type of yoga which is worth practicing,
Should be learnt with strong mind and perseverance. 20-23

After controlling all desires which are born,
Out of the working of the mind, fully,
After preventing the sense organs,
From all sides, by use of the mind,
And using the wisdom along with courage,
You have to get peace slowly and surely.

You should make the mind position itself in the self,
And should not think of anything at all. 24-25

When the listless and unstable,
Mind wanders hither and thither,
It should be brought under control,
By using the self alone. 26

To the yogi with a peaceful mind,
Whose active pride has subdued,
Who is sinless and who has,
Become God himself,
Undiluted bliss surely reaches. 27

This yogi who is free from a tainted mind,
Who can control his mind always,
Attains the infinite bliss of union with the ultimate. 28

This man who is always absorbed in yoga,
Has a mind which sees the same Brahman,
In all the things that he sees,
And realizes that Brahman is made of all things. 29

He who sees me everywhere,
Sees everything within me,
Is always able to see me,
And I am able to see him always. 30

He who worships me, who am in all beings,
In the spirit of being single entity, is a yogi,
And wherever he is and whatever he does,
He always lives with me. 31

I believe that, he is best among yogis,
Oh Arjuna, Who sees other's pleasure and pain,
In the same way, as if it occurs to himself. 32

Arjuna asked:

Oh killer of Madhu, because my mind is in turmoil,
I am not able to understand this state,
Where everything is observed as equal and same,
And which is also permanent and stable. 33

Oh Krishna, Is not the mind always unstable,
Turbulent, restless, leading to pain
And something that cannot be controlled?
I think controlling it is as difficult as controlling wind. 34

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna, there is no doubt that,
Mind is restless and difficult to control,
But Oh son of Kunthi, it can be controlled,
By practice and detachment. 35

I believe that to him who cannot control his mind,
The practice of Yoga is extremely difficult to attain,
But if you practice with willingness and control,
It can be attained by practice of proper methods. 36

Arjuna said:

Oh Lord Krishna, The one who has deep faith,
But lacks will to put in sufficient effort,
Slips away during the practice of Yoga,
And since he cannot get the fruits of yoga,
What does he eventually attain? 37

Oh God, who is a great hero, does he who fails.
Not fall from both ways that he tries to the ultimate,
And like a split and scattered cloud vanish? 38

Oh Lord Krishna, I do not find any one,
Capable of completely answering,
This question of mine except yourself,
For is it not difficult to find people to solve problems? 39

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna, Such a one is not destroyed here.
And is also not destroyed after this life,
Oh son, anyone who does only good,
Would never ever attain a bad state. 40

The one who slips and fails in the path of yoga,
Would reach the land meant for people with good deeds,
Live there happily for several years,
And is born in a house of the pure and prosperous. 41

Or he is born in the clan of wise Yogis,
And such a birth is indeed rare in the world. 42

There he attains the use of wisdom,
Which was there in his previous body,
And son of Kurus, striving more than before,
He attains a state higher than earlier. 43

Though he does not understand
The practices of his previous birth,
He gets surely attracted to them,
And even one who tries to understand yoga,
Crosses the limit of the performer of Vedic rites. 44

But that yogi who practices steadfastly.
Gets the sins removed from him,
And gets better and better attainment,
In succeeding births and
Slowly reaches the greatest possible state. 45

Yogis are greater than sages,
Also greater than the learned,
Also greater than the performer of actions,
And so it is believed, he is great,
And so become a yogi, Oh Arjuna. 46

I have concluded firmly that the one,
Who salutes me with sincerity and
With his mind absorbed in me,
Is the greatest among yogis. 47

Thus ends the Sixth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Art of Meditation.

Chapter-7 Knowledge and Realization

[In this chapter Lord Krishna tells Arjuna, how he can be searched and researched by intelligence.]

Lord Said:

Oh Arjuna, by listening to me
With your mind fixed in me,
With your mind depending on me,
After learning yoga well,
You would know me completely,
And without any doubt, in your mind. 1

I would teach you fully that knowledge,
Together with realization and experience,
After learning which there would be,
Nothing left to learn in this world. 2

One in thousand men tries to become
Learned in the knowledge of perfection,
And only one of those learned men
Really know Me in reality. 3

My nature is split in to
The eight fold division of
Earth, water, fire, air, ether,
Mind, wisdom and pride. 4

But this is only my baser nature,
And different from this, Oh Arjuna,
Is my higher form, which is in the form of soul,
By which this entire world is sustained. 5

Please understand that all things,
Are born to these two forms of living and non-living,
And I am the origin and source of destruction,
To the entire world, consisting of these two forms. 6

Oh Arjuna, There is nothing,
Higher or bigger than me,
For like the beads strung on a thread,
Everything else is strung on me. 7

Oh Son of Kunthi, I am the taste of water,
The light of the Sun and the moon,
The letter Om of the Vedas,
The manhood in all men,
And the sound of the sky. 8

I am the earthy scent of mud,
And the glowing light of fire.
I am the soul of all the living,
And the austerity of the sages. 9

Oh Arjuna, understand me as the seed,
Which is primeval of everything that you see,
As the wisdom of the wise,
And the prowess of the heroic. 10

Oh greatest among the Bharata clan,
I exist among the strong ones as
The power without desire and attachment,
And as the desire not opposed to just duty,
Among all beings that roam. 11

Please know that that the serene,
Active and base states are born out of me,
But please do understand that I am,
Not in them but they are in me. 12

In the form of these three states,
The entire world exists in delusion,
And does not understand me,
Who is stable and outside of these three states. 13

This divine illusion of mine,
Which is based on these three states,
Is extremely difficult to surmount,
And those who surrender themselves to me,
Easily cross this divine illusion of mine. 14

Those ignorant people drowned in the mire of sin,
And those wicked souls, who have lost,
Their wisdom due to this deep delusion,
And those with the attitude of demons,
Do not take refuge in me or worship me. 15

Oh Arjuna, those who are distressed greatly,
Those who are in search of wisdom,
Those who are searching for wealth,
And also the wise man, are the four people,
Who always worship me. 16

Among them the wise man who is,
Daily in contact with me and who has devotion,
To the single entity is the best.
For it is for definite that I am very dear to him,
And he indeed is very dear to me. 17

Though all of them are great,
I am of the opinion that,
Among them the wise man is the best.
He being constantly in my communion,
Always tries to reach me,
As there are no other higher aims. 18

After several births, this wise man,
Realizing that everything is the universal godhead,
Reaches me and such a person is rare indeed. 19

There are others, who are swayed,
By particular desires that attract them,
Who are ignorant, follow particular rites,
For praying to particular deities, 20

To the person who wants to be a devotee,
For whichever god he addresses with faith,
I make his faith extremely unflinching. 21

He with type of stable faith worships the God of his choice,
With great willingness and gets fulfilled those desires,
Given to him by me. 22

But for them, who are of lesser wisdom,
That type of benefit would be temporary,
For those who worship demigods attain them only,
And those of my devotees always attain me. 23

Those ignorant ones do not understand,
My divine form which never changes,
Which does not have anything above it,
And think that I have attained a form [incarnation],
While I am never born and have no form. 24

I am not understood, by many people,
Because I am hidden by the divine illusion,
And this world which has lost its wisdom,
Does not understand me who am birth less,
As well as the one who undergoes no change. 25

Oh Arjuna, I understand clearly the past,
The present and the future happenings,
But no one understands and knows me. 26

Oh Terror to his enemies, Oh Arjuna,
Even as soon they are born, all beings,
Are born with the twin delusions,
Of desire and aversion. 27

But those who do good deeds,
Get rid of the effect of bad actions,
And get freedom from these twin ties of desire,
And would firmly worship me with devotion. 28

Those who try to surrender to me,
For getting rid of death and old age,
Would know about the ultimate truth,
And all about the science of the embodied self,*
And also the dynamic action in full. 29

* The word used is Adhyathma. This is explained in the next chapter.

Those who know me with the concerns,
Of beings, gods and sacrifices*
Fix that idea in their deep mind,
And know about me even at their death. 30

* The words used are Adhibhootham, Adhidaivam and Adhiyagnam. These are explained in the next chapter.

Thus ends the Seventh Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Knowledge and Realization.

Chapter-8 Non-Decaying Ultimate Spirit

[Several words indicated by the Lord in the last chapter are explained in this chapter. This chapter also describes the two types of death, one in which there is rebirth and another in which there is no rebirth.]

Arjuna asked:

Hey greatest among men, what is that Brahman?
What is Adhyathmam? What is karma?
What does Adhibhootha indicate in reality?
Which is really called Adhidaivatham? 1

Hey killer of Madhu, Who is Adhiyagna in this body?
How is it? And how does a man at his death bed,
Who has restrained himself, know about and realize you? 2

* See last two verses of Chapter 7.

Lord said:

The highest imperishable entity is Brahman,
Its existence as the embodied soul is Adhyathmam,
Those sacrifice which leads to origin and development,
Of all beings and events is called Karma. 3

The perishable body is called Adhibhootham,
The cosmic being who activates is Adhidaivam,
And Oh best among all beings, I myself am,
Called Adhiyagna of this body. 4

He who lives in this perishable body,
Even when the end is very near,
If he has memory of mine deeply within him,
Without any doubt reaches me. 5

Oh Son of Kunthi, he attains that,
Which had always occupied his mind
Or that which occupies his mind,
At the time of the parting of the soul. 6

So always keep thinking of me,
And also fight in the war and,
If you always keep your mind and brain,
On me, you will surely attain me. 7

Oh Arjuna, He who thinks of the Supreme Being,
With constant practice of yoga,
Which does not stray from thoughts to thoughts,
Attains him without any doubt. 8

He, who meditates at the time of the parting of the soul,
On Him, who knows everything that is to be known,
Who is ancient, who is ruler of everything,
Who is smaller than the atom, who is the sustainer of all,
Who has a form transcending thought, who is resplendent like the sun
And who is beyond darkness of ignorance with devotion and stable mind,
And fixes the life breath between his eye brows,
Using the great power and strength of yoga
Would definitely reach that Supreme Being. 9-10

I would tell you now in brief,
About that imperishable being,
Which is described as non-perishable,
By those with deep knowledge of Vedas,
And which is sought as a refuge by those aspirants,
Who have left out all desires,
And lead a life of abstinence,
With a deep desire of attaining that Being. 11

He who closes all doors to his senses,
Parks his mind in his heart,
Fixes the breath of life in his head,
And enters the state of yoga,
Chanting the letter Om,
Which is the single letter Brahman,
And leaves his body,
With my thought in his mind,
Attains the highest ever state. 12-13

Oh Arjuna, My access is very easy,
For him, who daily without any break,
Thinks about me only and does not,
Think of anything else and who,
Leads a life of a yogi with constant regularity. 14

Those great souls who have attained,
The highest state of salvation,
Reach me and do not take
The transient and sad rebirth. 15

Oh Arjuna, all the worlds including the word of Brahma, provide you
Temporary shelter which is not permanent.
Oh son of Kunthi, but once they reach me, they are never born again. 16

Those men who know Brahma's day,
As lasting for one thousand yugas,*
And his night lasting for one thousand yugas,
Are the only one who knows the day and night. 17

* One Yuga is 12000 deva years and the deva year is of 360 days, where
each of their day is man's one year. This can be known to yogis only.

When the day* comes, all beings,
Become separate and come out of
The state of absence of clarity,
And when the night comes they merge back. 18

* Reference here is to the Brahma's day when creation takes place.

All the crowd of living and the non-living beings,
Come to existence, several times during the day,
And during night they disappear and are absorbed,
And when again the day comes, they come out helplessly. 19

Besides this unclear,* and indiscernible beings,
There is another unclear and indiscernible entity,
Which is perennial and that entity,
Is stable and never gets destroyed. 20

* The first entity referred to is nature and the second the perennial Brahman.

That unclear entity which never gets destroyed,
Is referred to as the highest supreme goal,
And attaining that goal, one never returns,
And this is my supreme state. 21

Oh Arjuna, that in which every other thing,
Can exist inside, and that great supreme being,
Who pervades in every known place,
Can be easily attained by devotion,
Which is single pointed and perpetual. 22

Oh Arjuna, please hear from me,
About that period of times in which,
Yogis who depart, return or not return? 23

Those who die in the light caused by fire,
During day time, during the waxing period of moon,

During northern solstice and are the devotees of Brahman,
Would eventually attain the Brahman. 24

Those who die when there is smoke,
Or during night, during the waning phase of moon,
And during the southern solstice and are,
Well versed in yoga, attain the moon,
And return back to earth. 25

It is for sure that, these bright and dark paths,
Are considered to be two eternal paths,
By one path they do not return back and by the other they return back. 26

Oh Arjuna, the yogi who understands these paths,
Is never, ever disappointed and so be always,
Becomes endowed by being an expert in yoga. 27

The Yogi attains all the good things,
Assured by practice of the Vedic chant,
By performing fire sacrifices,
By ascetism and by charity,
Because of his clear understanding of the above. 28

Thus ends the Eighth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Non Decaying Ultimate Spirit

Chapter-9

Active Knowledge which is the Secret

[Lord Krishna points out that people with specific targets attain only them and the one who does all actions surrendering to the supreme spirit, reaches him and merges with him.]

Lord said:

I would tell you, who is bereft of jealousy,
That knowledge, which is extremely secret,
Which is full of real reasoning,
And which frees you from the curse of ignorance. 1

This is the king of all knowledge,
Greatest among secrets, holy,
Pure, one which can be experienced,
Very easy to follow, which is imperishable,
And which does not swerve from the just path. 2

Oh devotee of the supreme, those men,
Who are not interested in this dharma,
Do not attain me and reenter the path,
Of the ordinary world after their death. 3

This entire world is fully occupied,
By me, who is not visible to any one,
And all the materials here are within me,
But I am not within them always. 4

Also none of the beings are within me,
For please see my divine glory,
And realize that my soul sustains other beings,
Protects them but I am not within them. 5

Like the immeasurable air that wanders
All over, but is contained within the sky,
Understand that all beings are contained within me. 6

Oh son of Kunthi, all beings at the end of the cycle,
Merge within my nature completely and
I give rise to them again at the beginning of the new cycle. 7

These beings which are in the control of my nature,
Become completely dependent on my nature, and,
I give rise to them again at the beginning of the new cycle. 8

Oh Arjuna, these activities do not tie me up,
Because I am not attached to any activity,
And remain as if I am not interested in them. 9

Due to my supervision, Nature,
Gives birth to movable and immovable things,
Oh son of Kunthi, due to this,
All of them revolve between states of existence. 10

Not understanding me, who am lord of all beings,
And not understanding my exalted nature,
Fools disregard me, when I take the human form. 11

These ignorant people with vain desires,
With vain jobs, which are being done by them,
With vain wisdom and with shattered knowledge,
Would adopt deceptive demoniac forms. 12

But the great souls of this world,
Obey my godliness and without any doubts,
Worship me, who am at the beginning,
And at the end of all beings and things. 13

They always worship me with firm discipline,
With stable efforts and great devotion,
And serve me with steadfast love towards me. 14

Others worship me as the unified one,
Through the clear knowledge of my form,
And yet others worship me, who has faces all over,
As unified or as having separate forms. 15

I am the rituals, I am the sacrifice,
I am the offering to the manes,
I am the medicine, I am the chants,
I am the ghee, I am the fire and I am also the sacrificial offering in the fire. 16

I am the father and mother of this world,
I look after it; I am its grandpa, further,
I am the one to be understood,
I am purity; I am the letter Om,
And I am the Rik, Yajur and Sama Vedas. 17

I am the goal, I am the sustainer,
I am the Lord, I am the witness,
I am the abode, I am the refuge,
I am the friend, I am the source,
I am the destroyer, I am the support,
I am the repository and the eternal seed. 18

Oh Arjuna, I give rise to heat,
I restrain and let loose the rain,
I am the death as well as immortality,
I am the existence and non-existence. 19

Those who learn the three Vedas,
Worship me with fire sacrifices,
Get purified of their sins, by drinking Soma,

And request for going to the heaven.
Their good deeds take them to the land of Indra,
And they enjoy the same pleasures as
Merited by the holy devas. 20

They enjoy that extensive heaven,
And once the effect of their,
Good deeds is completely eroded,
Come back to this land of humans,
Thus, those that follow the path of the Vedas,
Who are infatuated by pleasure,
Spend their lives in going and coming. 21

I look after the welfare of those,
Stable minded and great devotees,
Who do not think of anything except me,
And worship me through meditation. 22

Oh Son of Kunthi, even those individuals,
Who worship other gods with steadfast devotion,
They really worship me, not following the right path. 23

For, am I not him who takes the fruit,
Of all sacrifices and also the,
God who grants blessings as a result of them?
But they do not realize me properly,
And return back to this mortal world. 24

While the people who worship devas, attain them
Those who worship the manes attain them,
Those who worship evil spirits attain them,
And those who worship me attain me. 25

If someone offers me with clean mind and great devotion,
Either a leaf or flower or fruits or water,
I happily accept that which is offered by him. 26

Oh son of Kunthi, whatever you do,
Be it eating or worshipping or giving in charity,
Or doing meditation with austerity,
Do it after, offering it to me. 27

By doing like this you would get freedom,
From the bonds of good and evil action,
And after getting freedom, you would,
Come to me with a heart of renunciation. 28

I am in equal measure in all beings,
As I do not hate anybody nor love anybody,
But those who worship me with great devotion,
Are within me and I am within them. 29

Even if a man with evil habits, worships me,
Without any other aim or desire,
I would consider him as a good man,
For he has taken the right decision. 30

He would become a righteous soul soon,
And reach the stable and peaceful state,
And so, Oh son of Kunthi, proclaim to this world,
That a devotee of mine never perishes. 31

Oh Arjuna, It is a fact that,
Women, businessmen, workers,
And people of other lower birth,
Once they surrender to me,
Reach me, the highest supreme goal. 32

When this is a fact, is it necessary,
To tell again, about the Brahmins with good deeds,
And great sages of royal nature?
So having reached this unpleasant and temporary world,
Worship only me with devotion and sacrifice. 33

Please become, one who thinks of me,
One who is my devotee, one who worships me,
And one who always salutes me.
For if you consider me as your divine goal,
Single mindedly, you would attain me. 34

Thus ends the Ninth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Active Knowledge which is the Secret.

Chapter-10

Manifestations of God

[Though God is everywhere and in everything, his manifestations stand out in some persons/things. Lord Krishna gives a brief list of such persons/things where his manifestation stands out.]

Lord said:

Oh mighty armed one, please again,
Hear my pleasant words,
Which are being told to you,
With a desire to do you good. 1

My greatness is not fully realized by devas,
Nor sages even though I am the primal cause,
Of all the devas and all the sages. 2

He among men, who knows me,
As the one without beginning,
One without birth and the,
God of all the worlds, is the one,
Who is really wise and is bereft of sins. 3

Intelligence, wisdom, freedom from delusion,
Patience, truthfulness, control over senses,
Tranquility, happiness, sorrow, birth, death,
Fear, freedom from fear, non-violence,
Balance in thought, contentment, austerity,
Charity, fame, notoriety, and other such properties,
Are born out of me in to all beings. 4-5

Those ancestors of the present day beings,
Like the seven sages, four sons of Brahma,
And all the Manus are strong persons like me,
And were born out of my mind. 6

There is no doubt that those who know,
This glory and power of mine, attain
The unshakable state of yoga. 7

The men who are wise realize,
That I am the source of everything,
And everything acts through my power,
And see me everywhere and in everything,
And constantly worship me. 8

They become happy and satisfied,
Keeping their thoughts on me,
Keeping their soul directed to me,
And teaching each other about me. 9

I give that divine wisdom which will,
Help them to reach and attain me,
To those who are very stable,
And who serve me with love and devotion. 10

For blessing them, I live in their heart,
And light the lamp of divine wisdom in them,
And drive away the darkness caused by ignorance. 11

Arjuna asked:

You are the divine Brahman,
And the sacred place of attainment,
And all great sages including Narada,
Asitha, Devala and Vyasa call you,
As the first God and eternal being,
Who is divine and the birth less one,
And you are also saying the same thing. 12-13

Oh Kesava, I realize fully,
That whatever you tell me is the truth,
But I know that neither the devas nor asuras,
Know anything about your divine form. 14

Oh greatest among all beings,
Oh creator of everything, Oh Lord of everything in this world,
Oh the great God of all gods, Oh ruler of all this earth,
I know that you alone know yourself. 15

So I think that it is only proper,
To request you to tell me those manifestations,
Through which you pervade this entire world. 16

Oh great yogi, be pleased to tell me,
How I should concentrate and think about you,
And fully understand you?
Please tell me in what all objects,
I should think and meditate about you. 17

Oh Janardhana please tell me in detail once more,
About your yogic power and your manifestations,
For I am still not satisfied by the nectar,
Which I have been drinking by my ears, so far. 18

Lord said:

Well, oh greatest among the Kuru clan,
I would tell you about my manifestations,
Which are important, for if I tell them on detail,
Such a narration will never end. 19

Oh Arjuna, I am the soul,
That resides in the heart of all beings,
And I am the beginning, middle and end,
Of all the beings that is known. 20

Of the sons of Adithi, I am Lord Vishnu,
Among the shining objects, I am the Sun God,
Among the Marut sons of Dithi, I am Marichi,
And among the stars, I am the moon. 21

Among the Vedas, I am the Sama Veda,
Among the devas, I am Indra,
Among the senses, I am the mind,
And within the animal, I am their brain. 22

Among the eleven Rudras, I am Lord Shiva,
Among the Yakshas, I am Kubhera,
Among the eight Vasus, I am the Fire God,
Among the peaks, I am the divine Meru. 23

Among the priests, I am the Brahaspathi,
Among the commanders, I am Lord Subramanya,
And among the water bodies, I am the sea. 24

Among the great sages, I am Bhruгу,
Among the words, I am the letter Om,
Among the sacrifices, I am the sacrifice of chanting,
And among the immovable, I am the Himalayas. 25

Among the trees, I am the holy banyan tree,
Among the deva sages, I am Narada,
Among the Gandharwas, I am Chithra Ratha,
And among the perfect souls, I am the sage Kapila. 26

Among the horses, I am Uchaisravas,
Born along with nectar, from the ocean of milk,
Among the great elephants, I am Iravatha,
And among men, know me as their king. 27

Among the weapons, I am the Vajrayudha,
Among the cows, I am the wish giving Kama Dhenu,
Among those who create, I am the god of love,
And among serpents, I am Vasuki. 28

Among the many hooded snakes, I am Adhi Sesha,
Among beings living in water, I am Varuna,
Among the manes, I am Aryama,
And among those who punish, I am Lord Yama. 29

Among the sons of Dithi, I am Prahladha,
Among the calculators, I am time,
Among the animals, I am the lion,
And among the birds, I am the eagle. 30

Among those who move fast, I am the wind,
Among the armed beings, I am Lord Rama,
Among the fishes, I am the shark,
And among the rivers, I am the Ganga. 31

Oh Arjuna, among those created beings,
I am their beginning, middle and end,
Among knowledge, I am the science of the soul,
And among those who argue, I am that argument which searches for the
truth. 32

Among the alphabets, I am the first letter Aa,
And among compound words, I am,
The two word combination with equal emphasis on both,
I am the also the deathless time, and I am the one with faces everywhere,
who protects. 33

I am the death that steals everything,
I am the originator of everything that is created,
Among the women, I am goddess Lakshmi and Saraswathi,
And I am also the goddess of fame, memory, stability, Wisdom and patience.
34

Among the songs of the Veda, I am the great Sama,
Among the meters, I am Gayathri,

Among the months, I am November-December,
And among the seasons, I am the flowering spring. 35

Among those who cheat, I am gambling,
I am the strength of those who are strong,
I am the victory, I am the steadfast effort,
And I am the goodness of the good. 36

Among the clan of Vrushnis, I am Krishna,
Among the Pandavas, I am Arjuna,
Among the great sages, I am Vyasa,
And among the poets I am Shukra. 37

In the hands of those who punish, I am the rod,
Among those who want to win, I am justice,
In matters which are secret, I am silence,
And among the wise, I am the wisdom. 38

Oh Arjuna, among all matters,
I am that which is their root,
If you ask me, whether there are,
Any moving or not moving things,
In which I am not there, the answer is no. 39

Oh tormentor of his enemies, there is no limit,
To my manifestations proving divinity,
And what has been told above
Is but in brief, the chronicle of my manifestations. 40

Anything which proves my manifestation,
Or looks like having the sign of glory,
Or exists as the greatly great power,
It has to be understood as
A part of my power which has materialized. 41

But Arjuna, What advantage would you get,
By the knowledge of these and please understand,
That I am firmly supporting all the worlds,
Using a small portion of my divine power. 42

Thus ends the Tenth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Manifestations of God

Chapter-11

Seeing of Universal Form

[Lord Krishna shows his universal form to Arjuna. Seeing that fearful form of the Lord, Arjuna is made to realize that all his enemies have already been killed and he is but an instrument in the hands of God.]

Arjuna asked:

The words you told with an aim to bless me,
Are very secret and clearly explain the science of the soul,
And those words have removed my delusion. 1

Oh lotus eyed one, have I not heard from you,
In detail about birth and death of all beings,
And also I heard about your perennial greatness. 2

Oh greatest God, I have realized you fully,
The way that you chose to explain to me,
But Oh greatest Lord, I also desire,
To see your great form in reality. 3

Oh Lord, if you think that I am fit to see that,
Oh God of all yogas, please be kind enough,
To show me that non-perishable form. 4

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna, please see my divine form,
Which is of different kinds, which is,
Of different hues and shapes and,
Which are in hundreds and thousands. 5

Please see in me the adithyas, Vasus,
Rudras, Aswini devas and Maruths,
Please also see my never before seen forms. 6

Oh Arjuna, now please see together
The entire stable and unstable world,
And also all that you wanted to see in me. 7

But you would not be able to see me,
Using the normal eyes that you have,
And I am giving you a divine sight,
Which would help you understand my godliness. 8

Sanjaya said:

Oh king, after telling these words,
Lord Hari who is the lord of all yoga,
Showed Arjuna his divine godly form. 9

That form had many faces and eyes,
Many greatly surprising sights,
Wearing many heavenly ornaments,
And armed with many divine weapons. 10

That form wore several celestial garlands and apparels,
Anointed with divine sandal paste and greatly wonderful,
Resplendent, limitless and having faces on all sides. 11

If by chance one thousand suns,
Adore the sky with their shine,
Then that great being's light,
Would be somewhat equal to it. 12

Then that son of Pandu saw in the body,
Of the great god of gods,
The entire world with all its divisions. 13

After this, that Arjuna filled with wonder,
And all his hairs of the body standing erect,
Started telling like this, after saluting Him. 14

Arjuna said:

Oh God of gods, I am seeing in your body,
All devas, similarly hosts of other beings,
Lord Brahma sitting on the lotus,
All sages and all celestial serpents. 15

Oh God of the universe, Oh God with universal form,
I see your limitless form with many hands, many bellies,
Many mouths and many eyes, wherever I turn,
And I am not able to see your end, beginning or middle. 16

I am seeing everywhere all around,
Your immeasurable form, wearing a crown,
Holding a mace and the holy wheel and which shines in all directions,
Which is a ball of light blinding my eyes, which appears like a fire burning
bright,
And which is resplendent like the Sun. 17

I believe, that you are imperishable, a divine form, a thing to be known,
The resting place of this universe, a person who never decays and
Always preserves the great tenets of eternal religion,
And that you are the primeval being. 18

I am seeing you as one without beginning, middle and end,
As one with limitless powers, with innumerable hands,
With Sun and moon as your eyes, with the raging fire as your mouth,
And one who heats the world by his light. 19

Oh great being, is it not true that the space
Between the sky and the earth is filled
Completely by your great form?
All directions and all the three worlds,
Are extremely afraid and trembling,
Seeing this wonderful and terrible form of yours. 20

Very many Gods are entering within you,
Very many of them, who are frightened,
Are praising you, with saluted hands,
While bands of great sages and perfect souls,
Are uttering the words, Let there be peace,
And are also singing your praise. 21

You are being seen with sense of awe.
By Rudras, Vasus, Sadhyas,
Viswedevas, Aswini devas, maruths
The manes who take vapour as food,
Gandharwas, Yakshas, Asuras
And hosts of perfect beings. 22

Oh great warrior, all the world and also me,
Are trembling with fear seeing your great form,
With several mouths, several faces, several eyes,
Several shoulders, thighs and feet,
And several bellies, several teeth and tusk. 23

Oh Vishnu, seeing your form which touches the sky,
Which is resplendent, which is multi colored,
Which has open mouths and which has broad eyes spitting fire,
I am having a trembling heart and am not able to,
Have even traces of courage and peace. 24

Oh Lord of all devas, seeing your mouth,
With tusks and resembling the fire at deluge,
I am benumbed and not able to see any directions.

And also I am not able to attain mental peace,
And so be pleased with me, Oh abode of the universe. 25

All the sons of Drutharashtra, along with,
Hoards of kings who rule the world,
And also Bheeshma, Drona, Karna, the son of a charioteer,
And also many of our own warrior chiefs,
Are rushing in to your very fearful jaws with teeth,
And some of them are seen with smashed heads,
Caught in between the spaces between your teeth. 26-27

Similar to the rushing of the currents of water,
To the great ocean, these human warriors,
Are entering your mouth, which has flames all around. 28

Similar to the moths rushing towards the flaming light,
Towards their destruction, the beings of the world,
Are also speedily rushing in to your mouth to die. 29

Hey Vishnu, You are swallowing the world,
By your mouth which is full of flames,
And also licking them from all sides,
And your fierce rays which glow,
Is filling the world with radiance and burning it. 30

Oh fierce looking God, please tell me who you are?
And let my salutations become yours and oh great deva,
Please show mercy on me as I am interested,
In knowing about you who is primeval,
As I have not really understood you properly. 31

Lord said:

I am the terrible time that destroys people,
And am here to destroy the world and even without you,
All those enemy soldiers who are assembled here,
Would not live for any more time. 32

So you please get up, win over the enemies,
And gain fame as well as enjoy the benefits,
Of the great kingdom which is filled with wealth,
Please also understand that I have already killed them,
And also understand that you are only an apparent,
Reason for killing them, Oh Arjuna.* 33

*Here Arjuna is addressed as one who is capable of using the bow with left hand.

Please kill Drona, Bheeshma, Jayadratha,
Karna and all other great warriors,
Who have been already killed by me,
Don't be afraid and become sad but fight. 34

Sanjaya said:

Hearing these words of Lord Kesava,
Arjuna trembled and saluted him,
And with great fear again saluted him,
And with a faltering voice asked. 35

Arjuna asked:

It is only proper that the world becomes extremely joyous,
And becomes attracted by singing your praise,
And the rakshasas get frightened and run everywhere
And all the host of perfected beings are saluting you. 36

Oh great being, Oh endless one, Oh God of Devas,
Oh abode of the world, why would they not,
Salute you, for you never ever decay,
You are the distinct, you are the indistinct,
And also that which is beyond both of them. 37

Oh Lord with endless form. Oh primeval God,
Oh ancient God, you are the supreme repository,
To this great universe, you know everything,
You are that which is knowable, and also
The highest abode that pervades everywhere. 38

You are the wind, you are the god of death,
You are the fire, you are God of rain,
You are the moon, you are the creator,
You are the great grand sire and to you,
I salute again, again and again,
And also thousands of salutations to you. 39

Oh God who is everything, salutations to you,
From the front and from behind and from all sides,
You are of limitless prowess and of limitless valour,
And you pervade in everything,
And you also become everything. 40

Without realizing, the greatness of yours,
And without knowing, this great form of yours,
Because of my ignorance, and affection to you,
I might have impertinently called you,
Hey you Krishna, hey you Yadhava,
And hey my pal and so Oh my lord Krishna,
I beseech you, who is immeasurable,
To pardon me for those insulting words,
Told when we were playing, when we were lying down,
While we were eating, while we were sitting together,
While we were alone or while we were in company 41-42

Oh God, who is the unrivalled power,
You are the father of this world, which is movable and immovable,
You are the Lord fit to be worshipped, you are greater than the greatest
being,
And there is none in three worlds equal to you,
And so how can there be any one greater than you? 43

Oh God therefore I prostrate before you,
Lying down on the ground before you,
And beg to you, who is the worshipful lord,
Please pardon all my mistakes and errors,
Similar to the father pardoning his son,
Similar to a friend pardoning his friend,
And similar to the lover pardoning his sweetheart. 44

Oh God, having seen that which I have not seen,
I am elated and happy with joy and also,
My mind is confused due to fear,
And so please show me your normal form,
Oh God, abode of the world, please be kind. 45

I want to see you wearing the crown,
Holding the mace and the wheel,
And Oh God with thousand arms,
Please become one with only four arms. 46

Lord said:

Oh Arjuna, having been pleased by you,
I have shown this universal resplendent form,
Which is beyond limits, which is primeval,
Using my divine power and this form,
Has not been seen by anybody other than you. 47

Oh great warrior of the clan of Kurus,
I cannot be seen by studies of Vedas,
Or sacrifices or by charity or by rituals,
Or by doing austere penances, in this form,
By anyone in this mortal world, other than you. 48

Please do not get afraid or deluded by seeing
This fearful form of mine and get rid of your fear,
Become happy and see that form of mine,
Which used to be seen by you before. 49

Sanjaya said:

The Lord after saying this to Arjuna,
Appeared before him, in his normal form,
And that great one cheered up,
The frightened Arjuna assuming,
His normal pleasant form. 50

Arjuna said:

Oh Lord Krishna, after seeing this human form
Of yours, I have become self-composed,
And have gone back to my normal self. 51

Lord said:

All the gods are ever desirous of seeing,
That rare form which was seen by you now
But have not been able to see it like you. 52

I cannot be seen in that form,
In which you have seen me now,
By either the Vedas or austerities
Or charity or fire sacrifices. 53

Oh scorcher of his enemies, please know,
That I can be seen or known or conversed to
In this great form by undivided concentrated devotion. 54

Oh Pandava, he attains me at the end,
Who considers me as the supreme goal,
Who is only devoted to me without attachment,
And who bears no ill will against any being. 55

Thus ends the Eleventh Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Seeing of the Universal Form.

Chapter-12

Path of Devotion

[This chapter tells us in detail about devotion to God. It clearly says the idol worship is inferior to the worship of the supreme formless entity. A very universal definition of devotion to god is also given.]

Arjuna asked:

Among your devotees, who worship,
You with a stable mind and with devotion,
And those who worship the imperishable,
Which cannot be known to the senses,
Who is the better one, Oh God? 1

Lord said:

I consider those devotees who with a stable mind,
And with great sense of devotion worshipping me,
As those who know the concept of devotion, well. 2

In spite of that, those devotees of the imperishable,
Which is beyond words, which cannot be seen by the eye,
Which is beyond the reach of mind, which is everywhere,
Which is without change, which is stable and eternal,
And which can never be destroyed by anything,
And who worship me, coupled with equanimity,
Controlling their senses well, and also pray for the welfare of everyone,
Surely and definitely reach me, without any doubt. 3-4

They find it hard to meditate on the abstract,
For the way to the abstract is difficult,
For those, who have attachment to this body. 5

But for those, who renounce all actions in me,
Believing me as their greatest goal,
And do not depend on any other method,
But meditate on me and worship me,

And have their mind fixed in me,
Would get freed from this sea of life with death,
And Oh Arjuna, I redeem them and protect them. 6-7

If you always keep your mind in me,
And let your intellect rest in me,
There is never any doubt at any time,
That you would live in me after that. 8

Oh Arjuna, but if you do not have
The capacity to keep your mind firmly in me,
Then you can attain me by steady practice of Yoga. 9

If you are not even able to practice yoga,
Do all actions of yours dedicated to me,
And such actions also would lead you to perfection. 10

In case where, even this cannot be done,
Then with deep sense of humility and
A mind, only thinking of surrender to me,
Be pleased to renounce the fruit of all your actions. 11

Knowledge is superior to yogic practice,
Meditation is superior to mere knowledge,
Renunciation is far superior to meditation,
For Renunciation speedily takes you to peace. 12

That great devotee is very dear to me,
Who does not hate anybody else,
Whose mind is filled with friendliness,
Who is also a store of mercy,
Who never claims anything as his,
Who is completely devoid of pride,
Who feels pain and pleasure as equal,
Who is always filled with joy,
Who is the one who likes yoga,
Whose decisions are always firm,
And who dedicates his mind and intellect to me. 13-14

That great devotee is very dear to me,
Who never puts the world in to trouble,
Who is never tormented by the world,
And who is free from elation, jealousy, fear and anxiety. 15

That great devotee is very dear to me,
Who does not want anything, who is pure,
Who is clever, who is extremely indifferent,
Who is never troubled and does not start.
Any action aiming at fruits of such action. 16

That great devotee is very dear to me,
Who never rejoices, who never hates,
Who never grieves, who never wants,
And who has renounced all good and bad. 17

That great devotee is very dear to me,
Who is alike to friend and foe,
Who behaves similarly in honour and dishonour,
Who is alike in heat and cold, who is alike in pain and pleasure,
Who is free from any attachment,
Who likes alike praise and censure,
Who is silent, who is satisfied with anything,
Who is without a home and who is stable. 18-19

All those great devotees, who practice this method,
Which is perennial and is as per Dharma,
According to the above said method and with faith,
Are those who consider me as their supreme goal,
And are extremely dear to me. 20

Thus ends the Twelfth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Path of Devotion.

Chapter-13

Discrimination between Arena and Performer

[The difference between the physical body, which performs actions and the ultimate spirit, which makes it act but never gets involved in the nature of action is clearly brought out here.]

Lord said:

Oh Son of Kunthi, those with knowledge tell,
That this body is called the Kshethra (Field/arena),
And he who knows this is called the Kshethagna (Farmer/performer) 1

[In one of the translations by Sri Swaroopananda there is one extra verse. It is

Arjuna asks:

I desire to learn Oh lord,
The difference between Nature and the Holy Spirit,
And also that between the field and the performer,
And also knowledge and the knower, in its entirety.]

Oh Arjuna, understand that in all kshetras,
I am the Kshethragna and I am of the opinion,
That knowledge about Kshethra and Ksethragna,
Is the only real and true knowledge. 2
(Kshethra - Arena and Kshethragna - The performer)

I would tell you in brief, what is Kshethra,
What is it like, what its modifications are,
Wherefrom it arose, who is the Kshethragna,
And what powers are those of the Kshethragna? 3

This has been sung differently by great sages,
This truth has been separately sung by the Vedas,
And also has been explained by words,
Which are causal and indicative of the Brahman. 4

In brief Kshethra is the five great elements,
And egoism, intellect, that truth which is not clear,
The ten sense organs, the mind, five sense objects,
Desire, aversion, happiness, misery, the body,
Intellect and patience, along with their modifications. 5-6

Humility, lack of snobbishness, non-violence,
Patience, honesty, service to the teacher, cleanliness, steadiness, self-control,
Non attachment to the sense organs, lack of egoism, seeing misery in
Birth, death, old age and sickness, non-attachment towards son, wife and
family,
Being even minded, stable equanimity when likes and dislikes are presented,
Unswerving devotion to me through yoga, attachment to clean places of
solitude,
Dislike for crowd, Constant unfaltering, action towards getting divine
knowledge,
And research for finding the true knowledge; all are called divine knowledge,
And all others are termed as ignorance. 7-11

I will now tell you about that,
Which should be achieved and,
When achieved leads to deathlessness.
For that is the highest, birth less Brahman,
Which is neither a being nor a non being. 12

It has arms and legs everywhere,
It has eyes, head and mouth everywhere,
And it has ears everywhere and exists
Pervading everything in the world. 13

Though it exists in the actions of sense organs,
It is completely bereft of all sense organs,
Though it is unattached to anything,
It sustains everything, though it is without properties,
It is the prime protector of all properties,
Though it is outside of all beings, it is also inside,
Though it is moving, it is also not moving,
And being subtle, it is difficult to understand,
And though it is far away, it is very near. 14-15

Though it is an undivided in beings,
It appears as if it is divided and,
It is known as the creator,
Maintainer and destroyer of beings. 16

It is described as the light of lights,
And is also mentioned as beyond darkness,
And it exists in the heart of every being,
As the knowledge, that is to be known,
And as that one which can be attained by knowledge. 17

Thus has been told in brief, the properties,
Of Kshethra, knowledge and the knowable.
Knowing which properly, my devotee,
Becomes fit to attain my being. 18

Know that, the principles of,
Nature and Purusha are beginning less,
And also understand that the differing,
Properties and shapes are born out of nature. 19

The nature is the creator of all effects and causes,
And the Purusha is said to be the cause of joy and sorrow. 20

In reality Purusha* resides in nature and
Experiences the properties of nature,
And the reason for his birth in good and bad forms,
Is because of his attachment to those properties. 21
* Literally a male but here the performer

The Purusha is the overseer, he who permits,
He, who nourishes, the consumer, the lord of lords,
And also supreme soul and is different from this body. 22

He who realizes the Purusha and Nature,
Along with these properties, whatever may be his mode of life,
Is surely, never born again. 23

Some people are able to see the soul,
Within themselves by meditation,
Some see it by the path of knowledge,
And others see it through the path of action. 24

Others though they do realize it in these ways,
Serve and worship, by hearing it from someone,
And they also definitely by their devotion,
Cross the state of life and death. 25

Oh Arjuna, please understand that all that exists,
Whether they are animate or inanimate,
Have come, in to being because of,
Interaction between arena and the performer. 26

He who is able to see that great God,
Who exists equally in all things and,
As Imperishable in all perishable objects, sees me. 27

Seeing that God who abides
Equally everywhere, he reaches
The higher self by not denying the real self. 28

He only sees, who sees that,
Only nature does all the actions of the world,
And knows that the soul is inactive. 29

When he realizes in his mind that the diversity of beings,
Ultimately belong to one source,
And they also emanate from one source,
He himself becomes the ultimate Brahman. 30

Oh son of Kunthi, the supreme self,*
Which is indestructible and without beginning,
And which is bereft of any properties,
Does not act, even if it is in the body, nor is it attached to anything. 31
* Supreme Soul / Brahman

Similar to the sky which is subtle,
Never gets contaminated by anything,
This supreme self which is located,
In every body, never gets affected by the body. 32

Just like one Sun is lighting everywhere,
This one real soul illuminates all bodies, Oh Arjuna. 33

Those who perceive the difference between,
The nature and the Supreme Purusha,
And see through their eye of knowledge,
That all beings that are born merge in nature,
Reach and merge with the supreme Self. 34

Thus ends the Thirteenth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Discrimination between Arena and the Performer.

Chapter-14

Three Quality States

[Every individual is the mixture of goodness, emotion and delusion. His personality is determined by which of these predominates and is noticed. To merge with the infinite and attain immortality, one has to transcend these three quality states.]

Lord said:

I would tell you again about that knowledge,
Which is the highest among all knowledge,
Knowing which the sages attain supreme salvation. 1

Those who follow this knowledge,
And have attained my supreme nature,
Are not born at time of the creation and also never die at the time of deluge. 2

Oh descendent of Bharatha, the great nature,
Is my place of creation and I place the germ in that,
And from that are created all beings and things. 3
(The trigger mechanism is kept by the Lord and this makes nature to act.)

Oh Arjuna, in whichever wombs, whatever is born,
For all of them mother is the great nature,
And I am the seed giving father. 4

Oh great warrior, the three qualities,
Which are called as Sathwa, Rajas and Thamas,*
Are born of nature and bind tightly that Nature,
Which is changeless, in to this body. 5
* Good, emotional and base qualities respectively.

Oh sinless one, of them the quality of Sathwa,
Is resplendent because of its nature of purity,
And its freedom from evil and it binds the embodied self,
By its attachment, to happiness and knowledge. 6

Oh Arjuna, on the other hand the quality of Rajas
Is of the form of emotion and creates in the self,
The sources of desire and attachment,
And binds the embodied self by attachment to action. 7

Oh Arjuna, The quality of Thamas is created by ignorance,
And creates in all embodied beings, delusion,
And binds it, using sleep, laziness and madness. 8

Oh Arjuna quality of Sathwa leads you to happiness,
Quality of Rajas to work with attachment,
And the quality of Thamas, weakens wisdom,
And leads you to the sense of delusion. 9

Oh Arjuna, Sathwa tries to rise you up,
Overpowering Rajas and Thamas,
Rajas overpowers Sathwa and Thamas,
And Thamas overpowers Sathwa and Rajas. 10
[All of them are present in every one but one dominates.]

When you see the sparkling light of wisdom,
Manifesting through all sense openings,
This should make you realize that,
The quality of Sathwa predominates. 11

Oh Arjuna when the quality of Rajas predominates,
You would see greed, restlessness, activity,
Lack of peace, attachment and desire. 12

Oh son of Kurus, When Thamas predominates,
Ignorance, laziness, inadvertence and delusion,
Come up to the fore and are noticed. 13

If the embodied self attains death,
When quality of Sathwa predominates,
He would reach the divine worlds,
Meant for pure and great beings. 14

If the embodied self attains death,
When the quality of Rajas predominates,
He is born among those who are attached to work,
And when Thamas predominates,
He is born among irrational people. 15

They say that virtuous actions lead
To the quality of Sathwa and purity,
The result of quality of Rajas is sorrow,
And the result of quality of Thamas is ignorance. 16

While wisdom is born out of quality of Sathwa,
Greed is born out of the quality of Rajas,
And ignorance, delusion and inadvertence,
Are only born out of the quality of Thamas. 17

While those with quality of Sathwa go to higher spheres,
Those with the quality of Rajas are in middle spheres,
And those with the baser quality of Thamas,
Travel to the lower spheres. 18

When the one who sees, does not see,
Another one who does action other than qualities and,
Realizes that which is beyond the states of qualities,
He eventually attains my being. 19

He crosses these three qualities,
Which made the embodied self,
And attains that great state and
Travels beyond birth, death and old age,
And attains the state of immortality. 20

Arjuna asked:

How do we recognize the one,
Who has transcended these three qualities?
How does he behave and,
How does he cross these qualities? 21

Lord said:

Oh Pandava, the transcended one does not hate,
The light of the mind due to Sathwa,
The state of activity due to Rajas,
The state of delusion due to Thamas,
When these properties come up,
And he does not feel sorry when they cease. 22

He who appears indifferent and unconcerned,
Who is not rocked by these three qualities,
Who is stable in knowing that only qualities function,
Who is steady and stable,
Who considers pain and pleasure alike,
Who abides within his own self,
Who considers stone and gold is of equal worth,
Who considers like and dislike as same,
Who is courageous in his stability,
Who considers praise and blame as similar,
Who considers honour and dishonour as equal,
Who has same attitude towards friend and foe,
And renounces all actions started by him,
Is called the one beyond the effect of qualities. 23-25

The one who serves me with stable devotion,
Easily crosses the effect of qualities,
And becomes suitable for becoming the supreme being,
For am I not the embodiment of that Brahman,
And also the gateway for immutable immortality,
And matchless and absolute joy. 26-27

Thus ends the Fourteenth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Three Quality States.

Chapter-15 Knowledge of Supreme Being

[The entanglement with the day to day life is compared to a Banyan tree which starts growing from the top (Brahman - Supreme godhead) and grows and spreads down in this material world. The only method to put an end to this perennial entanglement is to cut the stem of this tree, by detachment. It is also mentioned that a soul taking a new body, brings the memories from the old body when it leaves. The nature of the imperishable Supreme Being is explained.]

Lord Said:

People talk about the endless banyan tree,
With its roots above and branches below,
And whose leaves are the Vedas,
And he, who knows this, knows the Vedas. 1

Its branches which are nurtured by the three qualities,
Grow both below and above, with the senses as its shoots,
And its roots which are stretched below,
Produce actions in this human world. 2

Thus its form is not experienced here,
As it has no beginning nor end and nor existence,
And this well entrenched banyan tree should be,
Cut by a strong sense of detachment,
And then, one should search and travel,
By that way by which, those who travel never return,
Determining within oneself, that he seeks,
Refuge in that primeval being,
From whom this entire eternal process was started. 3-4

Bereft of pride and delusion,
Without the curse of attachment,
Devoted fully to spiritual pursuits,
Fully getting rid of the desires, getting freedom from joy and sorrow,
And fully getting rid of ignorance they attain that deathless goal. 5

That place where one goes, but never returns,
Is the place of my supreme state,
Neither sun nor moon nor fire can illuminate it. 6

That part of me, which is in the embodied soul,
Appears in this world, draws in to it the six senses,
And finds a place in this state of nature. 7

Once this soul leaves a body and takes another,
It draws these six senses from the body he leaves,
And take them along with it to the new body he assumes
Similar to a breeze carrying scents with itself. 8

He enjoys all sense objects using fully,
Using the ears, eyes, organs of touch, smell,
And the mind, all of which he makes as his,
And enjoys all the sense objects. 9

Whether he is the one who leaves,
Or the one who is in stable state
Or the one who enjoys these senses,
He is not seen by the ignorant ones,
But is seen by those with eyes of knowledge. 10

Those yogis who make lots of effort,
In trying to see him within them, see him,
But the ignorant ones in spite of effort, do not see him. 11

Please understand that light,
Which resides in the sun,
And lights the entire universe
And which illuminates the moon,
And which illuminates fire as that of mine. 12

By my power I enter within the earth,
And I support all its beings,
And I nourish all herbs,
By becoming the watery moon. 13

Becoming the digestive fire of all beings,
And uniting myself with the exhaled and inhaled breath,
I digest all the four types of food* which is consumed. 14

* Food that is eaten, swallowed, sucked or chewed.

I am the one, who is in the hearts of all beings,
I am the memory, knowledge and forgetfulness,
I am the one which is taught about by the Vedas,
And I am the one who knows Vedas and made philosophy. 15

There are two classes of beings in this world.
The perishable and imperishable beings,
Perishable beings are all the beings who exist,
And that supreme immutable being* alone is not perishable. 16

* The word used is that which is hidden.

Different from these two groups is,
He who enters in all the three worlds and sustains it after entering in to it,
He who is completely immutable and is commonly called Lord or supreme
self. 17

Because I am beyond the perishable,
And even greater than the imperishable,
I am called as the highest Supreme Being,
By all the world as well as Vedas. 18

Oh Arjuna, he who without any delusion,
Understands me as the Supreme Being,
Becomes knower of all and,
Would see everything as me and worship me. 19

Oh sinless one, I have taught you now,
This knowledge which is extremely secret,
And knowing this one, one becomes wise,
And becomes one, who does what should be done. 20

Thus ends The Fifteenth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Knowledge of Supreme Being.

Chapter-16

Division of Divine and Demonic Attributes

[All being are classified in to divine and demonic. The Lord tells Arjuna how to identify these two classes.]

Lord said:

Fearlessness, clean mind, steadfastness in yoga,
Charity, self-control, sacrifice, learning of Vedas,
Austerity, honesty, non-violence, truth,
Absence of anger, renunciation, peace,
Not telling slanders, pity towards all beings,
Be desire less for others property, gentle nature,
Modesty, firmness of mind, courage,
Forgiving nature, not getting impatient,
Purity, absence of deceit and humility,
Are the nature of those born with divine state, Oh Arjuna. 1-3

On the other hand Oh Arjuna, deceit, arrogance,
Self-praise, anger and also harsh words and ignorance,
Are the nature of those born with those Demonic state. 4

Divine state is deemed to lead to salvation,
And demonic state leads to attachment,
And Oh Arjuna, please do not be sad,
For you are born with the divine state. 5

Oh Arjuna, two types of beings exist in this world,
And they are divine beings and demonic beings,
And I had told you in detail about the divine ones,
And please hear from me now about the demonic. 6

The demonic beings do not understand about,
Actions that should be done and those that should be avoided,
And with them there is no cleanliness, truth and good behavior. 7

Their world is full of lies, unstable, without God,
Created by interaction between each other,
Which is based only on lust and passion. 8

These ruined souls holding to path of materialism,
Loose their souls, doing horrible deeds,
And are enemies of this world and are born,
With an aim to destroy this world. 9

Holding on to their desires which cannot be satiated,
Filled with hypocrisy, egoism and arrogance,
They hold on to bad thoughts, because of delusion,
And observe unclean resolves and jobs. 10

Held in the net of thoughts which are perennial,
And end with only their death, they would think,
That passion is the greatest of their aims,
And are convinced that it is the only ultimate thing,
And also tied tightly with hundreds of bonds and desires,
Becoming slaves to their passions and anger,
And they would search for the tainted wealth,
To fulfill their cravings of passion. 11-12

They being under the illusion of ignorance,
Would think thoughts like, This was attained by me,
I am going to get fulfilled of this desire,
I am having this; I am going to further get this,

That enemy was killed by me; I am going to kill others,
I am the God, I would be enjoy pleasures,
I would achieve results in my actions,
I am strong, I would run after pleasures,
I am rich, I belong to a noble family,
There is none who are equal to me,
I would do fire sacrifice, I would be charitable.
And many similar thoughts and would get befuddled,
Get deep in to lair of passion, become deeply attached,
To the pleasures which are brought about by the senses,
And would fall in the deep dirty hell. 13-16

They praise themselves,
Do not respect the holy ones,
Are filled with vanity,
Haughty due to possession of wealth,
And perform sacrifices for names sake
Not following the proper path. 17

They would be egoistic, strong,
Proud, passionate and angry,
And hate me who am in them and others,
And laugh at people who conduct sacrifices. 18

They are inimical, cruel, base humans,
And sinners and I make them to be born,
Every time in this world among,
Those with demonical properties. 19

Oh Arjuna, these fools take several,
Births among people with demonical properties,
Do not seek me and reach still baser levels every time. 20

The three gates for traveling to the hell,
Are lust, anger and greed and
These three are to be shunned always. 21

Oh Arjuna, that man who avoids these,
Three dark paths to hell and follows,
What would bring good to himself,
Goes towards the supreme goal and reaches it. 22

He who does not follow the ways of scriptures,
But does work under the impulse of desire,
Does not attain perfection, happiness or supreme goal. 23

So the only guide for you to decide,
What should or should not be done,
Are the laws formulated by the scriptures,
And you should now understand and follow them. 24

Thus ends the Sixteenth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Division of Divine and Demonic Attributes.

Chapter-17

Three Kinds of Faith

[The three quality states taught in Chapter-14 is further elucidated in this chapter.]

Arjuna said:

Oh Lord, please tell me about those,
Who set aside the laws of scriptures,
And perform sacrifices with faith,
Is it Sathvic, Rajasic or Thamasic? 1

Lord said:

That faith which naturally occurs in every being,
Is classified in to three classes,
Which are Sathwa, Rajhas and Thamas,
And please hear about them. 2

Oh Arjuna, each person's faith,
Would be according to his personality,
And one's self is personification of his faith,
And so everyone is classified according to his faith. 3

The person of Sathwa faith worships Gods,
The person of Rajhasa faith worship Yakshas and Rakshasas,
And the person of Thamasa faith worships devils and ghosts. 4

Those fools who perform severe austerities,
Not enjoined in the scriptures having,
Given themselves to egotism and pride,
With desire, attachment and tenacity,

And torture the senses of the body,
As well as me, who is within it,
Are to be understood as the ones,
Who are traveling in the demonic way. 5-6

Please understand that the people who follow each of these three divisions,
Have separate food habits, perform different type of sacrifices austerities and
charity,
So please hear it from me, about them. 7

The people of the Sathwa faith like the food,
That increases span of life, wisdom, strength,
Health, pleasure and taste and which are
Juicy, starchy, nourishing and agreeable. 8

The people of the Rajhasa faith prefer the food,
Which are bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent,
Dry and acidic and which would lead to
Sorrow, pain, grief and diseases. 9

The people of the thamasa faith prefer the food,
That is stale, tasteless, which has turned sour,
Which is old, remnant from what other people ate,
And that which is not suitable as offering to the God. 10

That sacrifice done by people not desiring anything,
Done as the performance of their enjoined duty,
And done according to scriptures with a stable mind,
Is the one which is performed in the Sathvic way. 11

That sacrifice done with an aim at something,
With ostentation and pride, Oh Arjuna,
Is the one which is performed in Rajhasic way. 12

That sacrifice done not according to rules,
Without free distribution of food,
Which is performed without holy chants,
And without suitable gifts to the priests,
Is the one which is performed in the Thamasic way. 13

Worship of Gods, the twice born, teacher,
And the wise and observing purity,
Honesty and also non-violence,
Is termed as the physical austerity. 14

Talking of words that does not hurt,
Talking that which is truth, that which is dear,
That which causes good and
Recitation of the Veda that one has learnt,
Is termed as the vocal austerity. 15

Clarity of the mind, kind thoughts,
Silence, humility and pure aims in life,
Is termed as the mental austerity. 16

These three types of austerities practiced with great devotion,
With no desire for the fruits of such action,
And with great stability of thought
Is termed as Sathwika by great ones. 17

That austerity done with pride,
And with the aim to gain,
Respect, honour and adoration,
Is unstable and not permanent,
And is termed as Rajasika type of actions. 18

That austerity performed with foolish desire,
And practiced with self-torture or
With the aim of causing harm to others,
Is termed as the Thamasic type of action. 19

That charity done with no expectation
Of return, done at the proper place,
At the proper time and given to the one,
Who has not done anything for us,
Is termed as the charity of the Sathvic type. 20

That charity given with pain in the heart,
Expecting something in return,
Or expecting some blessing in return,
Is termed as the charity of the Rajhasic type. 21

That charity given after insulting somebody,
Given at the wrong place in the wrong time,
To the unworthy persons without any regard for him,
Is termed as the charity of the Thamasic type. 22

The Brahman is denoted
By Om, Thath and Sath,
And by these were fashioned,
The Brahmins, Vedas and the fire sacrifices. 23

Because of that, the followers of Veda,
Always start the sacrifices, charities,
And austerities, which are carried out by them,
According to Vedas, with the chant of Om. 24

And the seekers of salvation,
Who do not bother about the results,
Start the sacrifices, charities,
And austerities with word Thath. 25

Oh Arjuna, the word sath denotes,
The fact of existence and goodness,
And is also used to denote,
Anything that is auspicious. 26

Being steady and stable in sacrifices, austerities and charity,
Is denoted by the word Sath and it would also denote,
All actions carried out for these. 27

Sacrifices, charities and austerities done without faith in them is,
Termed as the negative of Sath and would not be of any use,
In this world or in attaining salvation. 28

Thus ends the Seventeenth Chapter of Bhagawad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called Three Kinds of Faith.

Chapter-18

Way to Renunciation and Relinquishment

Arjuna asked:

Oh Krishna, oh great warrior, Oh killer of Kesi,
I would like to understand distinctly,
The true import of renunciation and relinquishment. 1

Lord said:

The great sages have termed giving up actions,
Those lead to fulfillment of desires as renunciation,
And the learned told that completely abandoning
The fruits of all actions as the act of relinquishment. 2

Some scholars have told that actions,
Should be given up as being evil,
And others are of the opinion,
That sacrifices, charity and austerity,
Should never be relinquished. 3

Oh great one of Bharatha clan,
Oh greatest among men,
Please hear my decision,
Regarding relinquishment,
Which is of three types. 4

Sacrifices, charity and austerity,
Should never be relinquished,
For they indeed should be performed,
Since they sanctify the wise. 5

I am of the firm opinion that,
These acts as well as others,
Which are similar to them,
Should be performed but giving up
Attachment and the fruits thereof. 6

It is not proper to renounce,
Obligatory daily duties, for,
Forsaking such work,
Has been classified as Thamasic. 7

If someone, leaves out his duties,
Considering them as a bother,
And leading to trouble,
He is doing a relinquishment,
Which is Rajasic and will not,
Obtain the fruits of renunciation. 8

Oh Arjuna, doing ones daily duties,
Without attachment and without
Any attachment to fruits from it
Is termed as Sathwic relinquishment. 9

That man who relinquishes, endued,
With wisdom and without doubt in his mind,
Does not hate disagreeable duties
And also does not prefer agreeable duties. 10

Any being with a body can at no time,
Relinquish all actions, but he can,
Relinquish attachment to its fruits,
And he is called as the one who relinquishes. 11

Those who do not relinquish the fruits of attachment,
After death undergo agreeable, disagreeable and mixed,
Results for action performed by them but such a result,
Never occurs to the one who relinquishes. 12

Oh mighty armed one, learn from me,
The five causes for carrying out the work,
Which has been declared in that wisdom,
Which is the end of all action. 13

They are the body, which is the seat of action,
The agent, who carries out the actions, the different organs of sense
gratification and wisdom.
The highly varied type of actions that are being carried out,
And fifthly, the God who is presiding over them. 14

When a man does any action by his body,
Or words or mind, justly or unjustly,
They are caused by these five only. 15

Such being the case, the one with bad understanding,
Who looks upon the soul as the agent of all action,
Is of perverted mind and does not realize the truth 16

But the one who does not feel that he does it,
And whose self is not attached to what he does,
Does not kill any beings even if he kills them. 17

He who tries to gain knowledge, the knowledge itself,
And what he understands are the three reasons for carrying out any actions,
And the action, the doer and the reason for the action,
Are the three bases for all such actions. 18

The knowledge, the action and the doer,
Have been mentioned as three separate forms,
In the science of the study of properties,
And be pleased to hear about them also. 19

That wisdom by which one sees,
The same undivided and perennial object,

In all the objects of varied forms and hues that he sees,
Is termed as the Sathwic wisdom. 20

That wisdom which makes one sees,
Different and distinct beings.
In the different bodies of different types,
Is termed as the Rajhasic wisdom. 21

That wisdom which is irrational,
And not based on truth which,
Leads one to believe any chosen single object,
Is the only thing and is the whole,
Is termed as Thamasic wisdom. 22

That action performed without
Attachment to the fruits thereof,
Which is ordained as the one that needs to be done,
And done without attachment or repulsion,
Is termed as the action which is Sathwic. 23

That action performed with,
A view to attain the fruits thereof,
Which is performed with conceit,
And done after much effort and trouble,
Is termed as the action which is Rajhasic. 24

That action performed without any thought,
About the good or results of such action,
The problems it is likely to cause to others,
Done without gauging ones capacity to do it,
And done in the state of delusion,
Is termed as the action which is Thamasic. 25

That doer who is unattached, not egoistic,
Endued with pep and vigour in doing action,
And who is unaffected by success or failure,
Is termed as the doer who is Sathwic. 26

That doer, who is attached, looks forward,
To the fruits of the actions performed and is violent, greedy and not clean,
And is elated or dejected by the results of the action,
Is termed as the doer who is Rajhasic. 27

That doer who does not have a stable mind,
Who is vulgar, arrogant and a cheat,

Who is lazy and only does bad actions,
Who is not confident about himself and who keeps on stalling for long,
Is termed as the doer who is Tamasic. 28

Oh Arjuna, now please hear from me,
Completely and individually
The three fold distinction between,
The intelligence and courage. 29

Oh Arjuna, that intellect which is aware,
Of what is renunciation, right and wrong action,
Fear and fearlessness and bondage and liberation,
Is termed as Sathwika intellect. 30

Oh Arjuna that intellect which knows and,
Which views in a distorted way.
Just action and wrong action,
Dharma and Adharma is termed as Rajhasic intellect. 31

Oh Partha, that intellect, which is darkness,
And regards Adharma as Dharma,
And also views everything in a perverted way,
Is termed as the Tamasic intellect. 32

Oh Arjuna, that courage which regulates
Functions of the mind, the senses and self,
In an unswerving fashion by Yoga,
Is termed as the Sathwic courage. 33

Oh Arjuna, that courage which regulates,
Dharma, desire and wealth to achieve,
The desire to the fruits of action, that one performs,
Is termed as the Rajhasic courage. 34

Oh Arjuna, that courage which does not,
Make a stupid man give up sleep, fear.
Grief, worry, and the feeling of conceit,
Is termed as Tamasic courage. 35

Oh courageous one, of the Bharatha clan,
Now hear from me about the three fold definition,
Of happiness, which one enjoys by getting used to it,
And by which one gets to the end of sorrow. 36

That happiness which is like poison at first,
And becomes like a nectar in due time,
Which is born out of the intellect, which in turn is born out of self-realization,
Is termed as Sathvika happiness. 37

That happiness which arises due to senses,
Which is like nectar at the beginning,
And slowly turns in to poison,
Is termed as the Rajhasika happiness. 38

That happiness arising from sleep, laziness,
Miscomprehension and results in delusion,
Is termed as the Thamasic happiness. 39

There are no beings in earth or heaven,
Who are devoid of these three types of qualities,
Which are born out of the nature. 40

Oh scorcher of enemies, these duties are distributed,
Among the Brahmins, kings, merchants and workers,
According to the qualities, which are natural to them. 41

The qualities which are natural to the Brahmins are,
Control of mind and the senses, austerity,
Purity, forgiving nature, uprightness, knowledge,
Quality of searching and belief in the life after death. 42

The qualities which are natural to the kingly class are,
Bravery, boldness, fortitude, cunning in the war,
Generosity and feeling that they can achieve. 43

Interest in cultivation, cattle rearing and trade.
Are the qualities natural to the merchant class,
And actions which are service to others,
Is the quality natural to the working class. 44

The man who is busy with his duty,
Attains the perfection which is the highest,
And please hear from me how while doing his duty.
He manages to attain that perfection. 45

He who pervades everywhere,
Helps in the evolution of all beings,
And the one who worships him.
By doing his duty, attains perfection. 46

It is better to perform one's dharma,
In a manner considered as imperfect,
Than performing another man's dharma,
In a manner that is considered perfect,
For one who does his duty, attracts no bad effects. 47

Oh son of Kunti, One should not,
Relinquish one's own Dharma
Even if it is imperfect, for all actions are imperfect in some way,
And are unclear like fire covered with smoke. 48

With unattached intellect, subdued heart,
And not having any desire at all,
And by renunciation, one attains,
Freedom from action and Supreme perfection. 49

Oh son of Kunti, learn from me now,
How by reaching such supreme perfection,
One attains the everlasting goal,
Which is the supreme consummation. 50

He is fit to attain the everlasting goal,
Who has pure intellect, has fortitude,
Has controlled his body and senses,
Subdued sound and other senses,
Has abandoned hatred and attraction,
Has retired to a very lonely spot,
Eats little, has controlled body, speech and mind,
Is engaged in meditation and Yoga,
Is dispassionate, has forsaken egoism,
Pride, power, lust, wealth and property,
Is peaceful and is free from me and mine. 51-53

Attaining the supreme goal,
He becomes peaceful,
Neither desires nor grieves,
And is same to everyone,
And has great devotion to me. 54

By devotion he really understands me,
As to who and what I am,
And having thus known me,
He enters and merges with me. 55

Even after doing all actions.
But by taking refuge in me,
By my grace, he will attain,
My feet which is eternal and stable. 56

Mentally surrender all actions to me,
Have me as your highest goal,
Resort to the path of intellect
And fix your mind on me always. 57

By fixing your mind on me,
You would get my grace,
And overcome all roadblocks,
But because of conceit,
If you would not follow what I say,
You would certainly perish. 58

If you depend only on your pride,
If you decide not to fight this war,
That decision is in vain,
For your nature would oppress you. 59

Oh son of Kunti, you are already bound,
By your own nature, and if by delusion,
You decide not to fight in this war,
You will be forced to do it, in spite of yourself. 60

Oh Arjuna, God lives in the mind of everyone,
And causes all of them to revolve like a robot. 61

Oh Arjuna, take refuge on that God with sincerity,
And you will attain the supreme peace of his eternal abode. 62

This great wisdom, which is the secret of the secrets,
Has been told by me to you and now do according to your desire. 63

Please hear again my advice,
Which is the greatest of all,
For you are dearly beloved to me,
And you know that I would speak,
Only that which is for your good,
Let your mind be full of me,
Let you be fully devoted to me,
Surrender and bow down to me,
And then I will reach you and I promise you this,
As you are very dear to me. 64-65

Give up all Dharma and take refuge in me alone,
And grieve not, for I would liberate you from all sins. 66

All these should not be told by you,
To one who lacks devotion and austerity,
Nor to one who does not serve me,
And nor to one who despises me. 67

He who will teach this to my devotees,
With devotion to me, would reach me at the end,
And no one will be doing dearer service than him to me,
And no one will be dearer than him to me. 68-69

And I believe steadfastly that the one,
Who reads this conversation between us,
Would have worshipped me,
By performing the wisdom sacrifice. 70

The one who just hears this with attention,
And free from malice, would be liberated,
And attain the holy world of the righteous. 71

Oh Arjuna, have you heard what I told you,
With an attentive mind and has your ignorance,
Which caused the great net of delusion, is destroyed? 72
Arjuna said:

My delusion is completely destroyed,
And by your grace, I have regained my wisdom,
And Oh Achyutha, since my doubts are gone,
I will be firm and do as you told me. 73

Sanjaya said:

Thus I have heard the wonderful conversation,
Between Lord Krishna and the great Arjuna,
Causing my hairs to stand at an end 74

By the blessing of Sage Vyasa, I have heard,
This most secret and supreme Yoga,
Which was being taught by Lord Krishna,
Who himself is the supreme lord of Yoga. 75

Oh King, remembering and recalling,
This wonderful conversation between,

Lord Kesava and Lord Arjuna,
I am rejoicing and rejoicing again. 76

Oh King, when I recall and recall,
That wonderful form of Lord Vishnu,
I rejoice again and again. 77

My firm conviction is that, wherever there is Krishna,
Who is the Lord of Yoga and wherever there is Arjuna,
The great wielder of the bow, there is prosperity and victory. 78

Thus ends the Eighteenth Chapter of Bhagwad Gita,
Which is the Essence of all Upanishads,
Which is the Science of the Eternal and Yoga,
And the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna,
Which is called The Way to Renunciation and Relinquishment.

Bhagvad Gita - Treatise of Self Help

Verses in Contemporary Idiom sans Interpolations
By BS Murthy

Introduction

If Ramayana's Sundara Kanda [read the author's sloka to sloka versification of [Sundara Kanda: Hanuman's Odyssey](#) in contemporary idiom] is sought for spiritual solace, Mahabharata's Bhagvad-Gita is taken as a philosophical guide.

The spiritual ethos and the philosophical outlook that the Bhagvad-Gita postulates paves the way for the liberation of man, who, as Rousseau said, 'being born free, is everywhere in chains'. But equally it is a mirror of human psychology, which enables man to discern his debilities for appropriate redressal. All the same, the boon of an oral tradition that kept it alive for over two millennia became its bane with the proliferation of interpolations therein. Besides muddying its pristine philosophy, these insertions affect the sequential conformity and structural economy of the grand discourse. What is worse, to the chagrin of the majority of the Hindus, some of these legitimize the inimical caste system while upholding the priestly perks and prejudices.

This rendition seeks to restore to the Gita, its original character by ridding it of hundred and ten interpolations, which tend to keep the skeptics away from it. And ironically these muddle the understanding of the ardent as well. In the theatre of man as nothing surpasses the drama of war, the stage for unveiling the Gita's unrivalled philosophy was set on the battleground of Kurukshetra at the threshold of the battle of Mahabharata.

Awe Unfounded

The Bhagvad Gita, popularly known as Gita, with its twin tracks of spiritual ethos and philosophical outlook, helps man commute to the destination of human excellence on the broad gauge of life. The unsurpassed art of living that the Gita expostulates, paves the way for the 'liberation of man' and that's what makes the Gita, which probably is around for over two millennia now, the treatise of self-help.

Nonetheless, all along, its spiritual track has come to acquire primacy what with its protagonists being the religiously inclined men and women for most part. Even Mahatma Gandhi, the most famous and ardent advocate of Gita of our times, was eloquent about the spiritual solace that it afforded him. Needless to say, the innumerable commentaries on the Gita that appear in

print or get voiced in discourses invariably come from people with religio-spiritual orientation. Insensibly, all these led to the public perception of the Gita as a spiritual tome, and that has brought about a situation where everyone swears by it but few venture to approach it. That is due to, either the general lack of spiritual inclination in man, or his palpable apprehension that, anyway, it might be beyond one's comprehension. And those who attempt to read any of the commentaries give up soon enough - bowled either by the spiritual spin in theological jargon or tired of those lengthy commentaries. Oh, don't these texts tend to exhibit the commentator's own scholarship in Vedanta! In the bargain, hardly any reach the end, which would have helped them understand themselves better. What an irony in that having been bogged down in the semantics, one fails to grasp Krishna's message that's tailor made for him! And it is all about realization made difficult.

The public or private discourses on the Gita relatively fare better for they enthrall the audience by the eloquence of the speaker besides the interest the interspersed anecdotes elicit. However, amidst all this verbiage, the profundity of Krishna's message would seldom register in the minds of those who try to seek it. Of course, the commentary-discourse route misses on the essential ingredient of understanding - contemplation. After all, Krishna himself recommends to Arjuna at the end of his talk, s63, ch.18, 'That thee heard of this wisdom / For task on hand now apply mind'.

If only Sanskrit, the deva bhaasha, the language of the gods for the Hindus, and for the 18th Century British intellectual Sir William Jones, 'is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either' were in currency now, it would have been a different proposition. Thus, the average person needing no interpretative crutches might have read the Gita in its pristine beauty, speculating about the profound wisdom lying in the sophisticated philosophy it postulates. That would have afforded one to view human nature, including his or her own, in that contemplative mirror enamelled by the Gita. But that might be if and when Sanskrit, by the will of the gods, becomes a language of the masses in times to come.

But for the present, English, which many proud British linguists humbly held as the second best language in the world, is the right medium for contemplating the Gita even in the native land of Sanskrit. Of course, in verse sans commentary, and this is an attempt with that objective, needless to say, with divine inspiration.

What is the Gita all about that made many western intellectuals, though alien to the Hindu philosophy sing its praises? It is owing to its emphasis on human emancipation as opposed to the religious conditioning of man. Thus, its universal appeal jells with the hearts and minds of people, irrespective of their

religious beliefs and cultural sensitivities. Simply put, the philosophy the Gita portrays is meant to help one imbibe the right attitude to lead life, but not to buttress his religious dogma of God. How this was achieved is the wonder that is Gita, cast in the Hindu mould but shaped into the secular form! After all, it might have been in the realms of human genius aided by some divine metallurgy.

The stage chosen for unfolding the grand philosophy is in itself reflective of the brilliance of the Gita. Nothing ever surpasses the drama of war in the realms of life and so is the case with the accompanying debate about its rights and wrongs. At the threshold of the epic battle of Mahabharata, on the sacred grounds of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, the Pandava Prince, suffers from qualms at the prospect of killing kith and kin in the Kaurava camp besides all those whom he adores therein. It has always been in the nature of man to worry about the prospect of his death besides that of his near and dear. Thus Lord Krishna, a friend of the Pandavas who happened to be Arjuna's charioteer, opens this classic discourse in s11, ch..2 by chiding his disciple and setting its trend as well, 'Averting as knowing / Worried over trivia! / Reckon never wise / Dead and alive both'.

What follows in the best part of the remaining 643 verses spread over 17 chapters can be summarized thus: The Supreme Spirit through Nature causes the birth of all beings. Thus, the indwelling spirit in the beings is a divisible part of the same Indivisible Supreme Spirit. The spirit lying within beings is subject in degrees to virtue, passion and delusion, the three attributes of Nature. It should remain the human endeavour to free the indwelling spirit from these nature-induced influences. This, however, is not possible for any in a single birth, and indeed, it would take the sustained effort of lot many births for that. Thus, in the end, the soul could be tended towards that state of purity, which matches with that of the Supreme Spirit. As and when this happens, the indwelling spirit merges with the Supreme Spirit which is nothing but moksha. Understandably, from that state of unison with the Supreme, man never returns to be born again. This is about the spiritual goal of man in this world. In short, it's in the nature of the Supreme Spirit to separate the wheat from the chaff by bringing beings for dalliance in the domain of the Nature. While a pass ensures merger with the Supreme Spirit, failure keeps man ever in limbo. It is thus left for man to reach the Supreme, and the Gita shows him the way.

In the Gita lie the tools that tend one's spirit to that pristine purity, and that makes it the kitbag of moksha. Were it to postulate reaching that state through devotion alone, it would have been no more than a Hindu religious scripture, though of immense quality. In this, it is to be appreciated; the one thing that is common with the Oriental as well as the Semitic religions is the stress upon good human conduct. Nevertheless, the commonality seems to

fork at some length, what with the Semitic religious precepts having their own caveat conditional. Well, Hinduism and its derivatives, Buddhism, Jainism etc., advocate virtue per se as the ideal human condition. But at the other end of the religious tunnel, Judaism, and its siblings, Christianity and Islam, obliging the faithful to uphold their dogmas, provide a religious code to human virtue.

It is thus, the Gita, without any religious dogma, deals with all aspects of human nature, and what is more, proposes corrective approaches for a peaceful, purposeful and realized life. And this makes it the Treatise of Self-help for one and all, irrespective of his or her religious orientation and social background. Figure it out for yourself as Arjuna could do.

Now back to where it all began - the misleading image of the Gita as something that cannot be comprehended, even by the spiritually oriented, leave alone the mundane minded, without the guidance from a guru, well versed in the nuances of theology. Nothing could be farther from truth considering what Arjuna averred after having heard Krishna, 'Glad O Lord / Gone are doubts, / Sense I gained / With Thy words.' (s73, ch.18).

And consider this. Arjuna was an educated prince and an exemplary warrior but with no specialized knowledge or training in theology. Yet he found no difficulty in grasping the centrality of Krishna's advice that helped dispel his doubts. After all, it could be expected that Krishna who knew his friend's limitations on that count would have fashioned his discourse suitably. And won't that bring the Gita into the orbit of average human understanding? More so, Krishna's discourse was intended to be a ready reckoner for Arjuna and not an assignment in spirituality to be attended to as homework, with reference books and all, leaving the battlefield for the day.

But then why all this spin of spiritual intricacy on such a straightforward man-to-man talk! We must appreciate that the philosophy of the Gita is the apogee of the Hindu thought process that evolved through the Vedas, the Brahmasutras and finally the Upanishads. In a way, the Gita is the Seal of the Hindu Wisdom, for it separates the ritualistic chaff from the spiritual grain in the granary of sanaatana dharma. For those well versed in these and other such works, it is a tempting proposition to delve into the conceptual origins of a given sloka of the Gita in those ancient classics. But to what avail all that, and what is sought to be proved after all! That the Gita was a plagiarized work of Vyasa?

Well, didn't Vyasa place the Gita in proper perspective with 'the end of the chapter averment that it is the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras'. Yet this futile exercise of backward integration of the Gita with the Upanishads and others continues, giving raise to myriad interpretations to

what is essentially a simple and straightforward message that Krishna intended for average human comprehension. In modern parlance, Bhagavad-Gita is like the Board Note, and it does not behove the board members to pore over the relevant files.

Though some well-meaning men and women have all along tried to straightjacket the Gita as a 'Book of Work', still it is the scriptural tag that sticks to it. Admittedly, this is not only detrimental to the Great Gita but also the misfortune of the common man who would have otherwise ventured to read it, and benefited as well. Thus, this work should be viewed as the outcome of an urge to place the Gita in its proper perspective for the utmost common good. On the degree of its success could depend how it would have served the cause of the Lord and that of man for whose benefit the Gita, the Treatise of Self-help, was fashioned, though not as scripture. It pays to recall the words of Krishna, 'That thee heard of this wisdom / For task on hand now apply mind'.

Now it is left for all to deliberate and decide whether the Gita per se was Krishna's unrivalled divine revelation, or Vyasa's philosophical discourse nonpareil. It is noteworthy that each of the eighteen chapters of the Gita has this post script - this chapter, with so and so designation, has the bearing of the Upanishads, possesses the knowledge of the Brahmasutras and deals with the science of its application. And the Upanishads, as we all know, were but the works of man, though of divine proportion.

Thus, if we were to concede that the Gita was a divine disclosure, then that would suggest that Krishna borrowed from the Upanishadic philosophy to fashion his discourse! Won't that mean Lord Vishnu in His avatar as Krishna, relied on the works of man to formulate moksha for him! That is an absurd proposition, at any rate that is, isn't it? Well, it's a matter for man to deliberate and decide.

Last but not the least is the sectarian twist some interpolations give to the Gita to the hurt of the majority of the Hindus. Understandably, the offended sections view this secular text with suspicion, and thus keep away from it altogether, missing so much as a consequence of the same. In 'All About Interpolations' that follows, this aberration is sought to be corrected, and it is hoped that for the general good of the Hindus this aspect of the Gita would be set right for all times to come.

All about Interpolations

It was long suspected there could be interpolations in the Gita as it was being received down the ages through oral tradition. One way to scent the nature of these, if not zero in on every one of them, is to subject the text to the twin

tests of sequential conformity and structural economy. Sequential conformity is all about uniformity of purpose sans digression and structural economy but represents the absence of repetitiveness. If the body Bhagvad Gita of 700 slokas were to be scanned for possible fault lines on the above lines, the result would be but positive.

It must be realized that Bhagvad-Gita is the quintessence of the Brahmasutras and the Upanishads, themselves the offshoots of the Vedic spiritual roots. Those esoteric portions that relate to spiritual knowledge apart, the Vedas contain ritualistic nuances of religious ceremonies. It is the latter that has been the source of the temporal power, which the priestly class of Brahmans came to exert on the Hindu religious mind. And these very people happened to be the principal protagonists of the Gita.

It is pertinent to note that while postulating nishkaama karma, the theory of disinterested action, Krishna is critical of the ritualistic aspects of and expectations from the Vedas (s42 - 45 and s53 of ch.2.). Indeed, the guiding philosophy of the Gita is all about action, pure and simple, to tend one on the path of duty without attachment. Were the message to be allowed to percolate down, wouldn't it have hurt the Brahmans, the gods' own angels on earth as the Narayana Upanishad proclaims, where it hurts most? Herein lies the provocation for them to dilute the philosophy, and the opportunity was theirs, being the repositories of the very message. Won't the priestly perks associated with the rituals of death do, to cite an example?

If upon its death, as Krishna avers, the soul were to transmigrate into another body, what for are the elaborate rituals for the dead! It is against this background that we might appreciate those interpolations that tend to advocate the ritualism on one hand, and the Brahman preeminence on the other. However, the non-application of mind on part of the Hindus who vouchsafe for these aspects of the Gita is indeed saddening.

Nevertheless, such interpolative slokas that are at variance with the avowed purpose of the Gita would show themselves up for ready pickings. In a seemingly about turn from s42- s45 and s53 of ch.2, s9-s16 of ch.3 formulate the procedural aspects of the rituals and the divine backing they enjoy. These, and such other aberrations highlighted in the prefaces of the chapters in this work were clearly the handiwork of the priestly interests to obfuscate the impact of the anti-ritualistic thrust of the Gita.

On one hand, these interpolations were meant to impart legitimacy to their creed by advocating the same through the revered text. And on the other, these were meant to stall the threat the Gita might pose to their calling in the long run. Likewise, the sprinkling of slokas that seek to confirm the prominence of the priestly class or affirm their prejudices cannot be anything

but interpolations. To cap it all, are the s23-s27 of ch. 8 which literally mean that if a person dies when the moon is on ascent he would attain moksha, other way round were it in descent, and such like. These slokas espousing superstition, simply put are out of tune. Nevertheless, when interpreted figuratively they jell with the overall message of the Gita as if to prove that the discourse of reason cannot be polluted even by superstitious insertions. Be that as it may, there is an uncanny element in these artful interpolations in that they were inserted in the narrative in such a manner that if read casually they effectively merge with the text. More so for the religiously conditioned Hindu whose upbringing conforms to the ritualistic regimen.

Next is the aspect of structural economy. One finds similitude of a given content in many a sloka in the same or in a different context throughout the text. Obviously, some of them are interpolations but which were the originals and which are the imitations, may be impossible to find out for they smugly fit into the overall structure. Be that as it may, save lengthening the discourse, they do not belittle the same and fortunately not even tire the reader, thanks to the exemplary charm of Sanskrit as a language. In this context, it is relevant to note that Krishna indicated in s19, ch.10 that he would reveal a few of His Glories, but what we have is a twenty-two sloka block of the same, s 20-42, in the same chapter and another twenty, s15-s31 in the next. One can be certain that many of the slokas in them contain interpolative padding. Nevertheless, these slokas make an exciting reading notwithstanding the faux pas in s36 ch.10 where fraud in gambling is described as the Glory of the Supreme. However, s12 -s15 of ch 15 in similar vein are interpolations being digressions.

If after deliberating, one decides that the Gita is more a work of Vyasa's genius than any divine revelation by Lord Krishna, then he or she might come to the conclusion that the concluding s78 of the last chapter meant to impart divinity to the discourse is an interpolation.

However, no exercise of this kind would be complete unless the four pairs of slokas that have the same first lines are scrutinized. With the common first line, sreyaan sva-dharmo vigunah, s35, ch.3 and s47, ch.18, seek to perpetuate caste oriented duties by discouraging any switch over, and thus are clear interpolations. S15 and s 28 of ch.6 both open with yunjann evam sadaatmaanam and the message too remains more or less the same though contextually different. Yet it appears that the former could be an interpolation. S34, ch.9 and s65, ch.18 not only start with man-manaa bhava mad-bhakto but also mean same thing. In the ninth chapter as discussed in the introduction therein, s32 and s33 are clear interpolations. It also need be noted that s31 has the chapter closing character about it. Now follows this repetitive chapter-concluding sloka after two interpolations, s32 and s33. Logically speaking s34 is but an interpolation to help a proper chapter closure

by slightly altering s65, ch.18. S7, ch.16 and s30, ch.18 both start with pravruttim cha nivruttim cha line but are contextually different and thus remain above suspicion.

Identified here in this third edition are 110 slokas of deviant nature in the entire text that could be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. Be that as it may, there naturally arises a hypothetical question - What if the priestly interests of yore had seen to it that the said philosophy defining slokas of the second chapter that are inimical to their creed were omitted altogether? In that case we would have been left with no option but to take the perplexing interpolations with a pinch of salt in the absence of any clue to negate them as such.

Chapter-1: Arjuna's Dilemma

In this opening chapter, the grand stage for the discourse nonpareil is set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Gathered with their armies are the estranged cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, all set to join the battle. After reviewing the relative strengths of the opposing formations, Duryodhana, the Kaurava prince, fancies his chances. On the other hand, Arjuna, alias Paartha, the spearhead of the Pandava forces, is beset with moral indignation. He begins to see the futility of a fratricidal war that would result in the death of kith and kin in numbers. To Lord Krishna, who dons the role of his charioteer, a distressed Arjuna enumerates the ills that visit society in the wake of wars. Exasperated in the end, he expresses his intent to rescind from the impending war regardless.

The contrasting attitudes of the principal combatants of the Battle of Mahabharata are illustrative of the dualities inherent in human nature, exemplified by man's proclivities. Duryodhana as well as Arjuna meticulously prepared for the battle ahead, and both were bent upon fighting to the finish. But when the chips are down, while Duryodhana dreamt of victory, Arjuna suffered from qualms. It is this inherent duality of human nature that so prominently figures in Lord Krishna's discourse in the coming chapters.

In popular parlance, this chapter, comprising 47 slokas (verses), is known as arjuna vishaada yoga, Arjuna's Grief. However, it is worth noting that though Arjuna's demeanour in the battlefield personifies grief, it's the dilemma of his persona that gives cause to it. Thus, there is merit in this chapter being rechristened as Arjuna's Dilemma. On the other hand, it is the supreme irony, or in the fitness of things, depending on how one views it, that this Treatise of Self-help should begin with Dhritarashtra's query, whose blind love towards his son Duryodhana brought things to this pass.

One might notice the inconsistency in Duryodhana's assessment of Pandava forces in that while in s3-s6 he considers them formidable, in s10 he dismisses them as pigment. Maybe it has something to do with his state of mind on the eve of war.

1

Thus spoke Dhritarashtra:
Appraise Sanjay as my sons
Gathered at the battleground
Face the sons of my sibling
Eager for the war on hand..

2

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Eyeing Pandavs there lined up
So to assess relative strengths
Reached Duryodhan, Dron in time.

3

Find acharya, said the Prince,
Pandav force thus there arrayed
None other than by Drushtadyumn
Whom thou taught all tricks of war.

4

Virat 'n Drupad, so Yuyudhaana
With Bhim 'n Arjun they stand out.

5

Dhrushtaket, the one to dread
King of Kashi and Purujit
Kuntibhoj 'n Saibya too
Chekitan, their force augment.

6

Uttamouj 'n Yudhamanyu
Abhimanyu so Vikranta
Draupadi's offspring not to speak
Five-star generals all no less.

7

For thy feel of our own strength
Roll-call heroes of ours O, revered.

8

Thou with Bhishm, Karn 'n Kripa
Make all four our Field Marshals,
Bhurisrav, Aswatham 'n Vikarn
Our Marshals, near Field Marshals.

9

With their lives on line for me
Adept at weaponry varied all

Abound valorous in our ranks
Past masters of group warfare.

10

Nurses Bhishma force our vast
Lot it's Bhima's tend their small.

11

Let's close ranks in well laid files
Cover we flanks for Bhishma's guard.

12

Words by these moved
Grandsire Bhishm,
Warrior verily unrivalled
War cry he gave with his conch.

13

Egged by Bhishma, geared Kauravs
War cries their rent, those high skies.

14

Krishn 'n Arjun, in their turn
From chariot of white stallions
Gave in kind they with kindred.

15

With Panchajanya, Lord Krishna
Broke sound barriers with Arjun
Who blew to hilt Devadatta
As blared Bhima, his Paundra.

16

Blew conch Yudhisthir full throated
Anantavijaya in tandem
With his siblings, Nakul 'n Sahadev,
Blew who Sughosh 'n Manipushpak.

17

King of Kashi, master archer
Sikhandi Marshal, their formidable
Saathyaki, Drushtadyumn 'n Virat
Warriors they all never vanquished,

18

Drupada as well Draupadi's progeny
With their hero Abhimanyu
Blew, O monarch, at one go
Conchs of theirs to deafening sound.

19

Tumult that ensued shook the ground
Bewildered Kauravs, as skies roared.

20

When came time to join lines

So it happened O my Lord
With his Gandiv in harness
Hanumaan's ensign in flutter
Arjun stared at Kauravs hard
And thus spoke to Lord Krishna.

21/22

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray posit chariot ours upfront
So that I can have a look
At those itching for this war.

23

Time I discern those backing
Duryodhan the evil minded.

24

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Upfront Krishna took Arjun
In their chariot drawn by four.

25

Beseached Krishna then Arjun
That he behold Bhishm 'n Dron
As well all those there gathered.

26

Espied Arjun his clansmen
Grandads, uncles, brothers and all
Teachers as well friends of note.

27

At the sight of
His kinsmen,
He in distress
Spoke worried.

28

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Disturb kinsfolk here gathered
Feel I parched, it nauseates too.

29

Horrify no end prospects war
Un-grips Gandiv, looks I'm sick.

30

Looks like it's an illusion
Lord I envision bad omens all.

31

Crave I not for power or pelf
What's it worth to kill Kauravs?

32

Know not avails what empire

What sort pleasures it entails!

33

Whom all we wish well in life
Here they face us risking same.

34

Us they oppose
Dads, grandads
Sons, grandsons, so uncles
Brothers-in-law 'n teachers too!

35

Were the stakes be sky high like
Ruling earth 'n heaven as well
Let those Kauravs itch for fight
I won't have this war on hand.

36

Go as they on sinful path
Why earn sin by killing them.

37

See I no gain by their end
Why then kill our kith 'n kin?

38

Blinded by greed, bent on deceit
Fail they foresee, war ruins the race.

39

Wiser for the woes of wars
Why not Lord we rescind now.

40

Die aged en masse dharma's votaries
Won't that let go youth ours haywire?

41

Sex ratio adverse that war ensues
Turns women soft on caste barriers.

42

Fallen women all go to hell
What is more their bastards rob
Posthumous rites of forebearers.

43

Liaisons low of women wanton
Set our race on ruinous course.

44

Is it not said, O My Lord
Fail who dharma are hell bound.

45

What urge killing kith and kin,
Why should we sin lusting crown?

46

Disarm I now on my own
Let them harm me if they deem.

47

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Thus O Raja
Despaired Arjun
Arms he threw
And sat distressed.

Ends thus

Arjuna's Dilemma,
The First Chapter
Of Bhagvad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-2: All about Life

This character defining chapter of the Gita comprising 72 slokas, known as saankhya yoga, Realization through Knowledge, is regarded by many, as the peerless part of the great epic.

Arjuna's dilemma, meanwhile, turns into grief, as the horrific prospect of slaying Bhishma, his revered granduncle, and Drona, his venerated guru, sinks into his consciousness. Boggled down by sentiment, Arjuna appeals to Lord Krishna for guidance. The Lord's response starting with the epoch making eleventh sloka, 'Averting as knowing/ Worried over trivia! /Reckon never wise / Dead and alive both.' is indeed the curtain raiser to the grand discourse.

It is apparent that the sentiment of causing death and destruction plagues Arjuna. Thus, Lord Krishna brings the very issue to the fore to dispel the unwarranted fear of death by stressing upon the transmigratory nature of the indwelling spirit of all beings. Then the Lord proceeds to enlighten Arjuna about his duty to fight as a warrior besides touching upon the infamy of surrender. To enable Arjuna overcome the predicament of attachment, Lord Krishna elaborates upon the precepts and practices of detached action, besides its spiritual and philosophical connotations. As a way of caution, the Lord finally explains to Arjuna how his sensual nature hinders man to act in true detachment. This chapter, indeed, is the spectrum supreme of the kaleidoscope of wisdom that Bhagvad Gita is.

1

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
In pity Krishna
Addressed Arjuna,
Bogged in sorrow
With tears profuse.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Oh, what affliction
At this juncture!
Wholly un-Aryan
Unholy as well!!

3

Mind-set impotent that unnerves
Strengthen thou for fight on hand.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Adore as I, how dare I
Make Bhishma 'n Dron target?

5

Better I go with begging bowl
Than earn disgrace slaying them,
Would the scepter ever glitter
In the bloodstained hands of mine?

6

Those us oppose
We hate hurting,
What use war
Who victors are?

7

About my duty I'm in doubt
Tell me kindly what is right.

8

Beset by doubts,
Saddled by grief
Would I be joyous
Were I the king?

9

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Bent to rescind
Arjun had no more to speak.

10

Make I privy O my Lord
Speaks as Krishna to Arjun
Stood who there in confusion.

11

Thus spoke the Lord:
Averring as knowing
Worried over trivia!
Reckon never wise
Dead and alive both.

12

You and Me
As well these,
Have had past
Future as well.

13

Wise all realize
Embodies selfsame spirit in one
From birth to death, in every birth.

14

Sensual feelings, grief 'n joy
Transient are like, heat and cold.

15

Weigh who pain 'n pleasure equal
Such are those on path freedom.

16

What's not real, it's never been
And that's true, it's ever there
That's how wise all came to see.

17

Spirit in lay us All-Pervading
Given that not to destruction,
What sense doth it make to think
That's immutable gets destroyed!

18

Perish all bodies, Spirit not therein
Know this truth, and take up arms.

19

With no slayer, nor one slain
Whoso feels that he might kill
It's in delusion that he harps.

20

Unbound being ever unborn
Ageless since it's endless too
Goes on Spirit, beyond life-span.

21

Spirit as entity hath no birth
How can thou kill what's not born!

22

Change as men fade if clothes
So doth Spirit as frames are worn.

23

Hurts no weapon the Spirit in thee
Nor scathe elements, wind, water 'n fire.

24

Unalterable 'n Eternal
Immovable but pervades all
Permanent 'n so Everlasting
Spirit thus none can ever destruct.

25

Can sans form Spirit get bound?
Get right answer thou won't burn.

26

Prima facie if thou feel
Subject Spirit is to rebirths
Why grieve over end of frame?

27

Dies as one
For like rebirth,
Why feel sad
Of what's cyclic.

28

Isn't thy lament over that
Un-manifested to start with
Gets manifested just as guest
And bids adieu in due course.

29

Seen in wonder, spoken in awe
Spirit none knows that lies in him.

30

Dies not Spirit as die beings
What for man then tends to grieve!

31

Being a warrior dharma thine
That thee fight with all thy might.

32

For martyrs of unsought wars
Ever open are heavenly gates.

33

If thee back out from duty
Imperil thou thy own dharma
And that earns thee infamy.

34

What for lead a dishonoured life
Why leave legend dubious behind!

35

Amiss be taken thine intent
Treat thee coward thy friends 'n foes.

36

Count on thou thy detractors
Besmirch they thy character,
Damned be thine obituary
By their campaign of slander.

37

If slain, heaven; alive, it's reign
Resolve to fight with right intent.

38

Shed thy sentiment, guilt unhinge
Eye not gain as wage thou war.

39

It's this knowledge that liberates
And helps thee act, with no restraint.

40

Goes not waste
Effort thine ever,
Zeal for action
Frees from fear.

41

In their resolve
Succeed firm,
Mind as wavers
Lose infirm.

42

Unwise use all enticing
Flowery language to further
Rituals Vedic in their scores
Not the knowledge of Vedas.

43

Eyeing heaven with mind mundane
Go for ceremonies such in hope
Of having best of both the worlds.

44

Pursue if thou wants with zeal
Instincts then would spin thy mind.

45

Aspects three of life, reveal Vedas four
Transcend thou dualities, in them as inherent.

46

Well-waters draw Veda-dependent
Banks on reservoir dwell all realized.

47

Hold as patent on thy work
Reckon thou not on royalty
With no way to ceasing work
Never mind outcome but go on.

48

It's but yoga
If thou strive
Wants without
Emotions bereft.

49

Work well greedy with motive
Work wise not with result in mind.

50

Wise not sentiment bring to work
That's hallmark of art of work.

51

Freed from bonds with mind even
Act wise regardless ever composed.

52

Clears if reason one's illusion
Bothers he not to what's over
Or for what might lie in store.

53

Stands as firm mind thy clear
Steer thou clear of path rituals.

54

Thus spoke Arjuna:
How to spot the yogi true
Were he there ever in the crowd?

55

Thus spoke the Lord:
Blessed are strong with blissful self
Helps them that slight all that tempts.

56

Oblivious of misfortune
Not the one to crave for fun
Sways not ever by his feelings
Stays thus yogi ever even.

57

Unfettered by attachment
Compliments to indifferent

Adversity by unshaken
Wisdom thus is personified.

58

Stimuli those of organs sensory
Tortoise likewise draw into shell.

59

Senses reined
Who so abstains,
Sans he longing
Turns he godly.

60

Senses as may tend them rash
Wise as well stray, from right path.

61

Rein in senses, hone thine effort
Rely on Supreme, that's true wisdom.

62

Leans man on
Lends what charm,
Brings that want
And that's fault.

63

Despair is what clouds reason
Brings that ruin through deeds mindless.

64

Yield to senses sans craving
Cap as thou thy wants dubious.

65

Calm that offsets woes of life
And that equable makes thy mind.

66

Lacks mind focus as it strays
Robs that peace 'n joy thereby.

67

As in seas sans boat rudder
So course sensual man loses.

68

With tight leash on their senses
Wise with ease lead poised lives.

69

Ignoring all ignorant crave
Wise take note what folks not note.

70

Subdues as sea, rivers it holds
Wise keep cool while wants taming.

71

Freed of ego 'n wants as well
Blessed are wise who lack longing.

72

State it's that of true being
With no tenseness of being,
Life ever in that mode being
Makes what one with All-being.

Ends thus:

All about Life,
The Second Chapter
Of Bhagvad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-3: Theory of Action

This chapter of 42 slokas, known as karma yoga, Theory of Action, covers the whole gamut of action. It is apparent that not all slokas here could be originals. It is pertinent to note that Lord Krishna was unequivocal, in s 42-s45, and s53 of the previous chapter, about the fallacy of the Vedic rituals, and the lack of wisdom in those that clamour for ceremonies, which promise rewards here and in hereafter.

Given that postulation and going by the contextual nature of this chapter that emphasizes action, the s9 -s16 that eulogize the benefits of ritualistic sacrifices should be viewed. In this context, it is pertinent to note that while describing the Omnipresence of Supreme Spirit in chapter 10, it is postulated that among the Vedas, the Supreme Spirit is Sama Veda, symbolizing music (s22), and not Rig Veda or Yajur Veda, both associated with ritualism. And again, in (s25) of the same chapter, it is averred that among the sacrifices, the Lord is tapo yajna, prayer muted, and not Asvamedha, the horse sacrifice. Thus, these eight slokas seem to be clear interpolations. However, in this interpretative verse, yajna (sacrifice) is taken as selfless effort, a synonym anyway. Besides, s17,s18 and s35 are not only out of context but also break the continuity of the discourse. S24 is but an analogy of s23 and thus is an interpolation. However, the readers may note that these slokas, if interpreted in the ritualistic sacrificial sense, would broadly convey that -

9. Man is not attached to his actions performed in ritualistic sacrifices but all other actions bind him.

10. The Creator wanted mankind to prosper through sacrifices, which shall be the milch cow of man's desires.

11. Foster the gods through sacrifices

12. Fostered by sacrifices, gods would bestow desired enjoyments, but they

are thieves who do not return anything to them (gods).

13. Those that partake the remnants of sacrificial food are sinless.

14. Food that sustains mankind comes from rains, which are but the outcome of sacrificial ceremonies.

15. Brahma is seated in sacrifice.

16. Who follow the above regimen would attain moksha.

To appreciate the background for these interpolations, one might refer to 'All about Interpolations' of this book. Such interpolative slokas in this and other chapters of the text bear asterisks for ready identification. In what could be a fascinating experience for the readers, these earmarked verses, wherever they crop up, would bring them face to face with the logical disconnect in the discourse. In the end, bypassing these would tend them on the path of sequential thinking outlined by the Lord for the enlightenment of man.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Capping wants, if betters action

How come Thou then push for war!

2

Find I hard to grasp all this

Thou be forthright, what is right.

3 .

Thus spoke the Lord:

Apply knowledge 'n be freed

Or thou make tango, with forgo

Precepts these yore, I fashioned.

4

Work-shy being, is no freedom

Dormant being, makes no living.

5

None like for man, non-action

Keeps him nature ever engaged.

6

Refrains if one, ever craving

Restraint it's but misleading.

7

Reins as carnal, tucked in mind

Strive who doth in deeds excel.

8

Lest thee should stake survival

Turn thy back not on thy work

19

Ever thee act at par duty

Let that be thy goal of life.

20
Lead mankind in Janaka's route
To moksha en route deeds selfless.

21
As and when thou prove thy worth
Emulates world then acts all thine.

22
Left with none to gain or prove
Keep I Myself ever engaged.

23
Were I to fail to self-exert
Man might follow suit as well.

25
Strive as wise to act freely
Get bound unwise ever restrained.

26
Waste not breath, ill-informed with
Wise show ways through their own deeds.

27
Gloat as egotists of their deeds
Sourced are acts in one's nature.

28
Those that see the senses lie
Behind the deeds are truly freed.

29
Let go wise, who swear by
Joys of life that nature tends.

30
Act not with fear or favour
Unto Me leave, right 'n wrong.

31
Whoso takes, this advice
Feels no burden ever engaged.

32
Who this lets go mindlessly
Gropes in darkness, ever in life.

33
Beings as by nature ruled
In spite of their self-restraint
Wise too tend to lose their way.

34
Pays it to see grips avarice
Senses those thine nature tends.

36
Thus spoke Arjuna:

Why should one with right intent
Stray ever on the wayward ways!

37

Thus spoke the Lord:

Well, it's passion, lust 'n wrath
Drag that man on path painful.

38

Flame 'n mirror as shrouded
Without let by smoke 'n dust
As well embryo in the womb
Wisdom is by wants clouded.

39

Wise all tend to cap all wants
Which like fire all burn to core.

40

Veiled off wisdom sees not man
Mind and body steeped in wants.

41

Rein in matter with thy mind
Thus thou nip thy wants in bud.

42

Score over senses sensuous feelings
Betters that mind, bettered by knowing
But above all Spirit that reigns supreme.

43

Let thy Spirit
Rule the roost,
Restrain thou
Thy mind mischievous.

Ends thus:

Theory of Action,
The Third Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-4: Practical Wisdom

This chapter of 42 slokas, known as gjnaana yoga, Spiritual Knowledge, is replete with practical wisdom as well.

So in this chapter as with the previous one, there are interpolations galore. Slokas from 24 to 32 that are of religious/ritualistic nature seem clearly out of context and character. Prior to this seemingly interpolated body of eleven

slokas, the nature of the Supreme Spirit and the conduct of those who realize it are dealt with. Thus, the discontinuity in the text brought about by the body of these interpolative slokas would be self-evident. Among these is s24, in which the nature of Brahman is described in terms of sacrificial fire, the oblation, its ladle, and the sacrifice et al, an antithesis of the Gita at any rate. And the other slokas of this group that describe states of yogic practices may be enlightening in their own way though out of context. But s34 that advises Arjuna to seek wise counsel is irrelevant in the context of the discourse fashioned to set his fears at rest in the battlefield of Kurukshetra itself.

That brings us to the first of the caste-oriented precepts in the Gita - chaatur varnyam mayaa srutam (s13). The plain reading of this sloka would have us believe that the Lord Himself created the four-caste system, of Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, to suit the inclinations of a given soul towards certain earmarked calling of social and spiritual life in this world. And then, as a rider that is vague at the very best; Lord Krishna says that though He is the author of it all, He should not be deemed as the doer. These so-called caste characteristics and duties as well figure in s 41-s48 of the concluding chapter, which are discussed therein.

It is imperative that we try to see whether these slokas belong to the original text, or are mere later day insertions, meant to sanctify the Aryan caste credo with the underpinning of 'exclusivity of duties' through the venerated Gita. It should not be lost on one that s11's return of favour by the Lord is juxtaposing to the stated detachment of His as espoused in s14. On the other hand, s12 that is akin to s20, ch.7, itself an interpolation, and s13 do not jell with the spirit of the philosophy.

Just the same, one school of thought tends to view chaatur varnyam as a way of general differentiation amongst men. However, this would not cut much ice since common sense suggests that Lord Krishna would have been aware that this turn of phrase is likely to be viewed in caste colours rather than in general terms. That being the case, the Lord would have been circumspect in his word choices to convey his scheme of things governing man's birth if they aren't as narrow as the Aryan caste system propounds.

Or is the chaatur varnyam His real will, whether one likes it or not? The answer could be found in the Lord's averments as one reads on. The four types of beings the Lord identifies by their nature and disposition are - the virtuous, the vile, the passionate and the deluded. Isn't the proposition that people of a given nature and disposition could be bracketed into one single caste so absurd? After all, even a given family provides many shades of human nature in its members, won't it? That being the case, could Krishna be so naive as not to know about it! Above all, hasn't He declared in s 29 ch.9, 'None I favour, slight I none / Devout Mine but gain Me true'. Slokas like

chaaturvarnyam that would be encountered intermittently in the Gita are but mischievous, if not malicious, interpolations meant to buttress the Aryan caste prejudices and thus should be dismissed as such. However the said slokas are versified in nonpartisan manner in this rendering.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Advice this to Sun I gave
Told he Manu
Ikshvaku thus got in turn.

2

Followed world My word for long
Lost which mankind in due course.

3

It's but love I nurse for thee
Made Me reveal this Secret
Wisdom Supreme I gave Sun.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Born of now, how come Thou
Did Sun advise there for long!

5

Thus spoke the Lord:
Born all here times umpteen
Aware am I but know not thou.

6

Beyond the pale of birth 'n death
On My volition I take birth.

7

Wanes if good 'n vile gain reign
Know it's then that I come forth.

8

It's thus I from time to time
Manifest here to uproot ill
And uphold well for public good.

9

Grasp who this true self of Me
Are bound to become one with Me.

10

So with who lead poised life
Reining in their base instincts.

14

Detached Am from what happens
It's this knowledge that frees man.

15
Men of yore all came to know
That's how one can free himself.

16
Aspects action, inaction too
Wont to puzzle the wise even.

17
Apart actions' rights 'n wrongs
Inaction no less confounds man.

18
Grasping action, in non-action
Inaction in action, discern wise.

19
Whoso privy to this truth
Gives up wants all senses seek.

20
He that content leans on none
Resigned he lives in thick of things.

21
Mind if keeps thy greed at bay
It's no sin thou meet thy needs.

22
One that truly well realized
Happy being with his share
Rids of envy from his mind
Easy he feels ever engaged
Treats he alike grief 'n joy
Wins 'n losses not to speak.

23
Acts of man to favour none
Grace they have of deeds selfless.

33
Better wise deeds than acts selfless
Wise thus strive to better themselves.

35
As 'n when thou this realize
In us both then world discern
And get rid of thy illusions.

36
Voyage by thy boat knowledge
Helps thee cross all seas sinful.

37
Fire as wood to ashes turns
So spark wisdom burns thy sloth.

38

None that betters this wisdom
Realize thou by striving hard.

39

Hone thy senses steeped in faith
And thou be wise 'n freed of all.

40

Besides those who this doubt
Here as above suffer uncouth.

41

Doubts at bay with analyzed thought
Detached deeds of applied knowledge
That's how regardless wise all work.

42

Thus O Arjun,
Sever doubts with thy sword wisdom
And fight thy foes with all thy strength.

Ends thus:

Practical Wisdom,
The Fourth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-5: Art of Renunciation

This chapter of 29 slokas, known as karma sanyaasa yoga, Renunciation of Action, is in response to Arjuna's plea at the beginning of the chapter, 'Pray be clear, as Thee aver / Act 'n give up in selfsame breath' Lord Krishna sets the tone for self-help in this chapter with the opening statement, 'Give up all 'n thou be freed / So's the case with selfless work/ But know latter scores much better'.

S18 avers the Omnipresence of the Supreme in Brahmans, cows, elephants, dogs and dog eaters. This tasteless description could be but an interpolation as it is so ill behoves the Lord's eloquence and sophistication of expression seen throughout. Incidentally, the succeeding s19 makes it clear that whoever recognizes Him in all beings attains the Supreme State in life itself. It may be noted that s29 and s30 of next chapter also run along the same lines. S27-s28 that deal with yogic practices and s29, which asserts the Supreme as the beneficiary of sacrificial rituals are but interpolation for reasons that bear no repetition.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray be clear, as Thee aver
Act 'n give up in selfsame breath.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Give up all 'n thou be freed
So is the case with selfless work
But know latter scores much better.

3

Wise neither want, nor they shun
That's how they give up ever engaged.

4

Way action 'n path learning
Know not ignorant not different.

5

Work highway 'n lane freedom
Know the learned are the same.

6

What thou forego if thee cease
Deeds selfless make acts forsake.

7

Such one realized
Self-willed, dutiful
Within self remains
Without ever engaged.

8

Privy to this will realize
On his body as it works
Say hath he none to name one.

9

Wise do realize needs physical
Urges are they driven by genes.

10

Spreads on lotus leaves as water
Sticks none sin of deeds duteous.

11

Wise in selfless work engage
Forego while they self-purify.

12

Wise ever stay cool never in want
Bog down but naive ever in want.

13

Covetous not 'n ever laid back
Wise in tune with Supreme lay.

14

It's his nature, not the Spirit
Makes man act by wants induced.

15

Takes not Supreme credit or fault
Grasp none have of this uncouth.

16

He that keeps his bias at bay
Sun-like he shines being wise.

17

In clear conscience 'n fairness
Gives man freedom faith in Him

19

Keeps who equity ever in thought
Faultless being attains he Brahman.

20

In state Brahman,
Gloats never man as smiles fortune
Nor loses heart when things go wrong.

21

Joys induced all tire one soon
Stay self-joyous all blissful souls.

22

End as in grief joys of flesh
Go not wise for pleasures such brief.

23

Subdue lust 'n rein in wrath
Leads that to thy state of joy.

24

Live in ease the true knowing
Enjoy they all within themselves.

25

With pure intent sans ill-will
Realized all reach State Supreme.

26

Unmoved by his mind subdued
Stays ever free the self-realized.

Ends thus:

Art of Renunciation,

The Fifth Chapter Of Bhagavad-Gita, Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-6: Practice of Restraint

This chapter of 47 slokas, known as aatma samyama yoga, Self-Restraint, deals with all aspects of self-control needed for renunciation in action. Here Arjuna's queries as to what would be the fate of man, were he to fail midway, in his efforts at self-control (s37). Even if it were the case, assures the Lord, still one wouldn't come to grief here or hereafter (s40). What is more, after being born many times over, eventually he attains moksha(s45). Further in s46, the Lord asserts that such a man is superior to the ritualistic character, and concludes in s47 that he remains His most blessed devotee.

Seen in this background, s 41 and s42 are clearly interpolations not only for affecting the continuity of the text but also for what they contain. S41 would have it that those who perform the asvamedha (ritualistic horse sacrifice) would reach heaven to be born again rich. Likewise s 42 would have us that, or such would be born in learned homes. It would seem that s46-s47 are digressions, but in effect they carry forward the Lord's discourse from s32, at which point Arjuna interrupted Him with his queries.

S10-s17 deal with aspects of ascetic practice and do seem to be interpolations, even going by what is stated in the very opening verse, besides breaking the continuity in the proposition.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Forego none if forsake chores

Eye not gain 'n thou be freed.

2

If thou let go its godly

Makes that hard thy self-interest.

3

Uphill though the way forsake

As 'n when thou make it there

Stay thus put with no more strain.

4

Reining senses sans motive

Wise on selfless deeds focus.

5

Noble or naughty it's thy make

Self thus thine but shapes thyself.

6

Mind if reined, it's thy friend

Foe it turns, let when loose.

7

Overcome if vicissitudes
Vibe thee well with Me Supreme.

8

Valuable or be otherwise
Treat all alike self-realized
Thus they remain ever even.

9

Wise is one, folks who treats
None the fear 'n sans favour.

18

With no longing freed of want
It's then thou reach yogic state.

19

Rooted in self yogi true
Lamp he likens in still air.

20

Restrain mind in self-focus
Beatitude of life that makes

21

Transcends senses if thy mind
It's then thou reach state of bliss.

22

Rooted so on peak of bliss
Wise not bother lows of life.

23

So to live in yogic state
Untie wise from life's bothers.

24

Wise keep tabs on self-impulse
Affects to without are they immune.

25

Wed wise focus with calm mind
Makes that life of theirs tranquil.

26

Pulled by wants as trips the mind
Gain ground wise by self-leverage.

27

Passions languid, mind tranquil
Keep man ever on blissful course.

28

Mind that's pure with self-control
Leads that man to State Brahman.

29

Espy wise in right outlook
Others in self 'n vice versa.

30

Discern Me in what they see
Ever they find Me nearby them.

31

Me who sees in all beings
He's the one that dwells in Me.

32

He's the yogi self-feels who
Joys of others 'n grief as well.

33

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Frail being man, fail I see
Yoga Thou espouse, lasting in practice.

34

Can one ever tame his mind
Like the wind that yields to none?

35 .

Thus spoke the Lord:
Calm 'n custom bring in ropes
Tough ask though to subdue mind.

36

Fail keep going unruly
Persevere self-willed all the way.

37 .

Thus spoke Arjuna:
What if one
Throws up all
Lacks who zeal
Hath though faith?

38

Resolve if dissolves in mid-course
Won't that be like scattered clouds?

39

Kindly dispel all my doubts
Think I none of else for that.

40

Thus spoke the Lord:
Strives if one to enrich self
Ends not in grief here or there.

43

Harnessed habit, of births past
Helps man strive to self-realize.

44

With the reason thus imbibed
Realized outwit scholars there.

45

Awareness of births of yore
Helps the striving gain moksha.

46

Ahead in protocol comes yogi
Learned, ascetics, as all sticklers for rituals.

47

He's the yogi of yogis
Self-inner who fills with Me.

Ends thus:

Practice of Restraint,
The Sixth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-7: Know the Spirit

This chapter of 30 slokas, known as gjnaana vigjnaana yoga, Spiritual knowledge and Secular intelligence, is about understanding the nature of the Supreme through knowing and meditation.

However, s20-s23 besides breaking the continuity in the character of the discourse, would advocate worship of gods for boon seeking that Krishna chastises in s42-s44, ch.2. And thus these slokas undoubtedly are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
How to retain Me in mind
He in yoga comes to know.

2

Make thee privy that knowledge
Leaves that no scope for some more.

3

Rarely beings seek their self
Of them but a few Me grasp.

4

Earth 'n ether, fire 'n air
Water, mind, sense 'n self
Elements are of My Nature.

5

It's this Nature holds all worlds
But above 'n apart is My Nature.

6

While My Higher Nature brings
Ends all that Low Nature Mine.

7

Better than Me none exists
On Me hinges whatever exists.

8

I'm that what is sapid in water
I'm the glow of sun and moon
I'm the thunder above in skies
Verily I'm the virility of males.

9

Odour of this earth is Me
Heat of fire 'n life in being
As well wisdom in forsake.

10

I'm the seed of all beings
Intellect as well man's valour.

11

It's Me strength of even life
As well ardour of sex in order.

12

Virtue, passion so too delusion
Send I forth though all of them
Come to dwell in none of them.

13

Spellbound by My these natures
Knows not man My true nature.

14

If thee forsake well and true
To Me then thou come 'n grasp
Natures these Mine illusions.

15

Who in Supreme hath no faith
Gripped are by these illusions
And thus go on path wayward.

16

Distressed, desirous 'n knowing
Such pious are those Me worship.

17

Of these but the steadfast man
With pure intent gets My nod.

18

Noble as all worship Me
The knower true is selfsame Me.

19

Once in a while
Births after many,
Born who knows
I pervade worlds.

24 .

Unmanifest Am State Supreme
But saddle Me with form uncouth.

25

Dull in delusion won't perceive
Me that's unborn veiled from them.

26

Am privy to what goes on
But man hath no grasp of Me.

27

Illusions dual, want and wrath
Ever in delusion keep they man.

28

Pure minded sans illusions
On Me such of virtue lean.

29

Seek all those who My refuge
See they Brahman ever in self.

30

Me Be-All 'n End -All grasps
Me he ponders on deathbed.

Ends thus:

Know the Spirit,

The Seventh Chapter Of Bhagavad-Gita Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-8: Cycle of Creation

This chapter of 28 slokas, known as akshara parabrahma yoga, The Indestructible Brahman, emphasizes the need of un-wavered devotion to the Supreme so as to attain Him. It also describes the science of meditation to reach the Supreme by understanding the nature of the Brahman. And s 22 is a seemingly concluding statement of the Lord that only through un-swerved devotion the Supreme could be reached from which there is no return (s 21).

Then appear s23 to s28 which if literally taken would imply that if one dies when the moon is on the ascent he would go to heaven and, to hell if it's other way round. Needless to say, these slokas spelling superstition in an otherwise thought-elevating treatise are but interpolations. It is worth noting that Sir Edwin Arnold dismissed these as the work of some vedanti and thought it fit, justifiably at that, not to include them in his 'Song Celestial'. In this connection it may be noted that the relationship between the state in which a person dies and his imminent rebirth is covered in s 14 and s15 of c14, which seem to be authentic.

It can be seen that s5, places the cart before the horse. Besides, s9-s14 too are interpolations going by their content that's out of context. It is worth noting that s1-s4,s6-s8 and s15-s22, if read together would bear an unmistakable continuity of argument that the interpolations deprive.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

O Lord appraise what's Brahman
Lies what within 'n backs action
Nature of deities besides the beings.

2

What is that guides bodily acts,
What makes yogis realize Thee?

3 .

Thus spoke the Lord:

Self Imperishable is Brahman
But dwells it yet there in beings
Brings that forth is Act Supreme.

4

Perish as beings all in time
Spirit that lasts of them is Me.

6

In the end the way one tends
Charts that future course he takes.

7

If thou act with this in mind
In the end thou gain Me true,
By My word now opt for war
With thy strength 'n skill I gave.

8

Me they reach whoso keep
On Me focus as they work.

15

Having come to stay with Me
Get they rid of births and deaths.

16

Journey to Brahman holds return ticket
Journeys back none abode from Mine.

17

Wise all realize days Brahman
Ages thousands make with nights.

18

By day as He brings beings
Un-manifests He all by night.

19

It's all rebirths through His day
But with nightfall cease they all
As He wakes up puts He back.

20

My State Supreme that never ends
Un-manifested it's above Brahman.

21

It's My Abode that Supreme
For man to reach not to leave.

22

It's through devotion that thee gain
State Supreme that pervades worlds.

Ends thus:

Cycle of Creation,
The Eighth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-9: The Sacred Secret

This chapter of 34 slokas, known as raja-vidyaa raja-guhya yoga, Supreme Knowledge and Supreme Secret, describes various ways of attaining the Supreme that lends itself readily for interpolations.

In s13, it is stated that the realized man constantly and single-mindedly remains devoted to the Supreme and in s14 it is averred that such ever remain united with Him in meditation. But it is only in s22 that the protection of the Supreme to those engaged in His service in true devotion is assured. While s23 states that those who worship other gods with faith, worship Him only, albeit defectively, s25 pictures varied outcome of worshipping other gods, a contradiction of s3,ch.12. And in s24, He is the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Sacrifice, an anathema to the philosophy of the Gita. Also s15 is but a digression to facilitate s16-s21 and s23-s25. What is more, there could be

some omissions from the original, given the seemingly incomplete exposition of the promised dharma in s2.

Further, in s 30 and s 31, it is said that even a reformed sinner is dear and valuable to Him. Then in s 32 it is stated that women, Vaisyas and Sudras could win His favour through devotion, sounding as if they are all in an inferior league. Leave aside the Lord's averment in many a context in this text that the Supreme Spirit lies in all beings, it is specifically stated in s34 of ch.10 that He symbolizes all that is glorious in woman. Given this, and the background of interpolations, s32 surely is a case of trespass. S33 of this chapter is but a jointing medium of the said obnoxious verse and in itself is patronizing in nature towards the virtuous Brahmans.

S7, that contravenes s15-s16 of ch.8 and echoes the interpolative s18-s19 of this, is an interpolation. S34 that falls into a separate category, that too seemingly an interpolation, for reasons explained in 'All about Interpolations'.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Unenvied as thou I would tell
The art of leading fruitful life.

2

Supreme secret that's sacred
Profound dharma for mankind
Fair and simple, practicable.

3

Fail who follow this dharma
Pay they price in recurring births.

4

Whatever is there I pervade
In My ambit lay beings
Though it's not the other way round.

5

Fail if thou to grasp it thus
Feel as though I'm confined in
What I bring forth 'n sustain.

6

Skies in rooted wind as spreads
Dwell in Me though disperse all.

8

It's I make the Nature bring
Beings hapless in their scores.

9

Since I function not in passion
Bound Am none by acts all these.

10
It's the Nature ruled by Me
Takes the world the way it goes.
11
Though Am Lord of all beings
Give Me human form the naive
And thus they do belittle Me.
12
Vile in delusion lead their lives
In vainness they waste their time.
13
With Me in mind well-meaning
See they beings sourced in Me.
14
With right intent 'n focus
Such Me worship with true faith.
22
Those as meditate 'n worship
Them I take My wings under
26
Hold I dear a leaf even
Offered when by pure minded.
27
Act thou throughout in good faith
Thus thou make Me feel honoured.
28
Rid be thou of all that binds
Freed be thus thou come to Me.
29
None I favour; slight I none
Devout Mine all gain Me true.
30
Start as wicked My worship
Take them all as well realized.
31
Tend I them then turn even
Devout Mine none go restive.

Ends thus:
The Secret Sacred,
The Ninth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-10: Discern the Divine

This intriguing chapter of 42 slokas, known as vibhooti yoga, Glories of the Supreme, characterizes the Omnipresence of the Supreme Spirit. Well, for general human understanding, Lord Krishna identifies the best in heaven and earth that represent all that is glorious about Him. One might note that His averment that sama veda and tapo yagjna, meditative prayer, symbolize the glory of the Supreme was cited in the introduction to the third chapter.

In the context of what Lord Krishna enumerates as symbolic of the 'Glory of the Supreme Spirit', it is interesting to note that He's the sovereign in humans in s27 but not Rama as one would have expected. However, Lord Rama enters the Hall of Fame as the first amongst the archers (s31). Going by the dispassionate outlook towards life that Lord Krishna expostulates, it is but natural that Lord Rama who personifies attachment to the values of his time is not reckoned as the Glory of the Supreme Spirit. It is another matter that in the Hindu religio-cultural ethos, Lord Rama is revered as purushottama, the noblest human.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Ear thy lend My words peerless
Bound they regale as thee gain.

2

Sourced though gods 'n seers in Me
Grasp they have none of My source.

3

Me as Lord of all who sees
Turns his back on wrongdoings.

4

Sourced in Me all faculties
State of mind of beings too.

5

Varied I made vicissitudes
As the case with attitudes.

6

Willed I birth of progenitors all
Seven seers great 'n elders four
Not to mention sovereign fourteen.

7

Grasps as one the power of Mine
Keeps he would his mind then firm.

8

Who this gets in My worship
Tends he then to turn to Me.

9

Whoso to Me thus taken
Delight he takes in praising Me.

10

Him I help to realize that
Which is needed to reach Me.

11

Doubts I dispel his for good
Grant I wisdom to his thought.

12

Thus spoke Arjuna:
O Lord Thou, Supreme Brahman
Abode Ultimate, Purifier Primordial
Indweller Permanent 'n God Primeval.

13

That's how sages down the ages
Narada foremost described Thee,
Affirmed Asita, Devala 'n Vyasa
All of that now Thou confirm.

14

None can ever be sure of Thee
Hold I true thus what Thou say.

15

God of gods
O Lord of all,
Thou but know
Self Thy true.

16

Pray Thee confide Thy nature
With which Thou all worlds transcend.

17

How to grasp all aspects Thine,
How to engage Thee in mind?

18

Make me privy, O, My Lord
Forms 'n attributes of Thyself.

19

Thus spoke the Lord:
Of all countless Glories Mine
Suffice thee knew a few of them.

20

I'm the Self of one and all
I'm the beginning as well end
Not to speak of in between.

21

Vishnu Am of all deities
Sun the luminous of luminous
Mareechi Am immortal
As well moon the star of stars.

22

I am the Sama of Vedas
It's Me Indra, god of gods
Of all organs, mind is Me
And so life in all beings.

23

Shankar Am the Lord of Lords
Kubera, richest of Yakshas
Of the Vasus know Am Fire
And Am Meru, peak foremost.

24

In those echelons ruled by gods
It's Me Bruhaspathi priest of priests,
Marshal that great Skand on earth
Besides the ocean among the seas.

25

Bhrugur I am the well-realized
So Am 'Om' that sound supreme,
Of rituals Am prayer muted
Himalayas high that kiss the skies.

26

I'm the fig, the tree foremost
And so heavenly sage Narad,
Maestro divine Chitraradh Am
Besides Kapila, the sage attained.

27

Uchhaisravas, Am horse foremost
Nectar that was churned in seas
Airavat white, Indra's elephant
Sovereign whoso crowns mankind.

28

Vajrayudh Am weapon mighty
Kamadhenu the cow holy
Cupid who aids to sustain life
Vasuki the fierce king serpent.

29

It's Me Ananth of Nagas
Varun I am of aquatics,
It's Me Aryama, mane of manes
Yama the ruler of beings.

30

Prahlad Am, the demon godly
Among the reckoners, I'm the Time
It's Me lion, of wildlife all
As well Garuda that rules the skies.

31

I'm the wind that purifies all
Among the archers Ram I'm
I'm the shark that mighty fish
And the Ganges, ever in flow.

32

Hinge I am that holds all worlds
Source is Me of spiritual thought
Of Vedanta, I'm pro-contra.

33

Alpha Am of alphabets all
Likeness I'm in like compounds
I'm the time of endlessness
It's Me Brahma of four heads.

34

I'm the death that devours all
As well brings forth that beings
Besides what makes woman's glory.

35

Am Sama the grand octane
Like none metre Gayathri,
Margasir pleasant month I am
As well splendid spring season.

36

I'm the splendour of splendrous
Besides fraud in dice as well
I'm the goodness in great souls
Effort that takes to succeed well.

37

It's Me Vasudev of Yadavs
Of the Pandavs thou art Me,
Know Am Vyasa of sages
Poet Laureate, Sukra great.

38

Justice I'm in every court
Policy Am of all conquest,
Secret I'm of every mute
Wisdom Am of what is wise.

39

I'm the seed of all beings
From Me apart none exists.

40

Endless are My attributes
This brief is for just thy grasp.

41

All that's glorious all therein
Is but spark of My splendour.

42

O dear friend need there none to delve in full
Suffice to say it's portion Mine that supports all.

Ends thus:

Discern the Divine,
The Tenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-11: Nature of Omnipresence

This fascinating chapter of 55 slokas, known as visvaroopā sandarsana yoga, Espial of the Universal Form, is about the character of the Supreme Spirit. Lord Krishna enables Arjuna to espy the All-encompassing Universal Form of the Supreme Spirit by granting him the required ESP. The descriptive nature of the State Supreme falls in the realms of Universal Vision.

Owing to the improbability of their being, s9-s14, make an amusing reading. S3 states that Krishna grants Arjuna the divine sight required to espy His Universal Form. Of course, the ESP that Vyasa granted Sanjaya (s75 ch.18) might have enabled him to monitor the goings on at Kurukshetra in order to appraise the blind king Dhritarashtra about the same. Thus, only from Arjuna's averments Sanjaya could have gathered that he was divining the Universal Form, which obviously was beyond his own comprehension. But s10-s14 have him describe the Universal Form as though he himself was witness to the same, even before Arjuna utters a word about it. At the same time, the Lord made it clear in s52, 'Ever craved gods 'n angels too / Just to behold what thee beheld'. Thus, the Universal Form that was seen by Arjuna surely was beyond the scope of Sanjaya's ESP. Hence, s9-s14 that picture beforehand what Arjuna would witness later on are clear interpolations. Contrast this with the parallel situation in s50-s51, when the Lord reassumes His human form, but handled differently by Sanjaya.

The s29 which seeks to emphasize what was already pictured in s28, albeit with not so appropriate a simile, could be but an interpolation.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Thy words compelling, Spirit about indwelling
Uttered in compassion, dispelled my delusion.

2

Besides I've heard, about Thy glories
Origins of beings, and how it all ends.

3

Thou art verily, what Thee aver
Wish I espied, form Thy Divine.

4

If Thou so feel, I'm worthy
Let me espy, Thy True Self.

5

Thus spoke the Lord:
Divine I let thee, divinity Mine
Of hues varied colours 'n kinds.

6

Find Adityas, twelve therein
Vasus eight, and Aswin twins
Rudras eleven 'n Maruts four-nine
Wonders umpteen none else seen.

7

May thou discern in My frame
Much more than thy thought would take.

8

Bestow thee that ESP
Helps which espy form Supreme
Beyond the pale of god's own sight.

15

Thus spoke Arjuna:

In Thou find I
Brahma on lotus,
Gods and sages
Beings 'n serpents!

16

With no beginning
End none sighted,
Boundless find I
In Thee universe!

17

Find I blinding
Light that blazing
From Thy diadem
Club and discus!

18

Thou art Supreme
Indweller Ancient,
Eternal Refuge
Dharma's Guardian.

19

Eyes sun like
And oven for mouth,
How Thou radiate
In arms thy manifold!

20

Fills Thy Frame
The space entire,
Makes Thy sight
The worlds tremble.

21

See in Thee the angelic world
Find them all Thou pray in awe
Spot I sages in their scores
Hear them extol, Thee in hymns.

22

Demigods all 'n celestial folk
Stand they stunned 'n look at Thee.

23

Makes it awful sight Thine terrible
Bear as Thou those weird organs.

24

Perplexed am I by Thy sight
Seems I've lost my sense of self.

25

Discern I nadir in Thy face
Pray assume now Form Normal.

26

See I Bhishma, Dron 'n Karn
Kauravs, ours, making way to mouth Thy wide.

27

Nauseates sight of teeth Thine terrible
Gnashing heads of theirs in smithereens.

28

Rivers as run, towards the seas
So these armies, towards Thy mouths.

30

Consume worlds as mouths Thy blazing
Find I blinding rays those scorching.

31

Who art Thou, this Terrible Thing!
For what avail, mission this Thine!!
Gripped now am with urge to know.

32

Thus spoke the Lord:
I'm the time that enfolds all
It's all over for most here
Doomed are they, never mind war.

33

Since I've handed them sentence
Thou art no more than hangman,
Finish them all 'n flourish in turn
Brings as reign thee power 'n pelf.

34

Take up arms 'n lap up crown
For Drona, Bhishma and Karna,
As well Jayadrath with the rest
Truly are they doomed by Me.

35

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Stunned as he by what transpired
Beseeched Paartha, Lord Krishna.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Sing Thy praises the rejoiced world
Hither 'n thither run wicked in awe
Bow to Thee those self-realized.

37

Can one fail to worship Thee
Creator's Creator, 'n Universal!

38

Thee the Primal, All-Dweller
Thou All-Knower, One to know.

39

God of gods, O, our Father
Thee I salute on and on.

40

One and All, who pervades all
Thou All-Powerful, praise be Thee.

41

Ignorant being of Thy Great Being
Owing to contempt familiarity bred
Sadly I have been badly behaving.

42

As I took Thee for granted
Kindly forgive, O, Great Soul.

43

Thou art Greater than greatest
None Thee in three worlds equal.

44

Treat me kindly 'n forgive
All I crave for, is Thy grace.

45

Form Thy Current holds dreadful
Pray show Divine Grace of Thine.

46

With mace, discus 'n diadem
Pray assume Thy Form four-armed.

47

Thus spoke the Lord:
As thou please Me, so I've shown
Form My Endless, none else seen.

48

Take to penance
Or pore over four Vedas
None that helps to see this Form.

49

Having beheld My bewildering Form
Now ease with My Form Normal.

50

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Having said thus Lord assumed
His form normal that calmed Arjun.

51

Thus spoke Arjuna:
O, Lord now I feel normal
With Thy gentle form human.

52

Thus spoke the Lord:
Ever crave gods 'n angels too
Just to behold that thee beheld.

53

Austerities well Vedic grasp
Charity, as well ritual regimen
Get none to what thou had seen

54

Yet in devotion, divines man
Attains besides, Form this Mine.

55

He that takes Me for Supreme
And treats his work as Mine own one,
Gets who rid of his restraints
And keeps his faith in Me always,
He who bears no ill-feeling
Ever on move, he comes to Me.

Ends thus:

Nature of Omnipresence,
The Eleventh Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-12: Doctrine of Faith

This chapter of 22 slokas, known as bhakti yoga, Doctrine of Faith, enumerates the human qualities that are endearing to the Supreme Spirit. In this also are discussed the ways in which one still could win the Lord's favour yet failing to set store on Him.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray tell who's better realized,
One that devoted as stated
Or relies who on God Obscure.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Me in devotion who worships
Him I reckon as well realized.

3

Having said that add I might
Looks as one to God Obscure -

4

Doth he fine with senses reined
If well disposed towards the world.

5

But it's tough ask nonetheless
For one to realize God Obscure.

6

Whosoever hath faith in Me
And leans on Me heart 'n soul -

7

Him I help to cross over
Ocean vast of births 'n deaths.

8

If thou develop faith in Me
Take for granted I take thee.

9

Were thee to fail develop faith
It's not thou reached blind alley,
Ever Me having in thy mind
Practice lets thee turn the bend.

10

If thou feel that's hard as well
Indulge then in deeds Me please.

11

If thou find that difficult too
Give thyself to Me Supreme
Act then with thy subdued mind
With no thought for what follows.

12

Scores thought over mere rotting
Betters meditation awareness too
What helps man to find moorings
Are acts his with no axe to grind.

13

Kind-hearted 'n considerate
Friendly natured, forgiving too
Lays no store on highs and lows
Suffers no pride 'n possessive not -

14

Who's patient 'n cheerful
Self-willed as well persevering,
Who's hearty ever at work
Makes he devout My beloved.

15

Troubles he none or perturbs
It's such poised I'm proud of.

16

Who's simple, never in want
Covets he not in vantage post
Shakes him none, he keeps his nerve
It's such who Me please the most.

17

He's My darling who craves not
Yet won't shun the pleasures of life
Takes but things all as they come.

18

Treats he equal friends 'n foes
Scorn or honour minds he not
Keeps he cool in grief and joy
Nurses for none soft centre -

19

Pats 'n slights all in the score
Treats as equal score My man
Takes he in his stride his lot
But won't put the blame on Me.

20

Who in dharma this engage
Them I hold in special esteem.

Ends thus:

Doctrine of Faith,
The Twelfth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-13: Field and Farmer

This chapter of 35 slokas, known as kshetra kshetragjnya vibhaaga yoga, Field and Farmer, deals with body and spirit in the first half, and for the rest about Prakruti (Nature) and Purusha (Supreme Spirit). It may be noted that customarily the first verse that is carried here is either omitted altogether or retained unnumbered for reasons none explained. Thereby to avoid confusion in comparison, the same is numbered 0 in this text. One might notice that s10, advocating asceticism to which Lord Krishna is opposed, doesn't jell with the rest, either contextually or philosophically, and thus should be seen as an interpolation.

S22, which states that the Supreme Soul, lay in beings as a sustainer, consentor, enjoyer and overseer, contravenes its very nature expostulated in s16-s18, ch.15. Besides, as can be seen, it affects the continuity between s21 and s23 of this chapter. S30, akin to s15 is an irrelevant interpolation too.

Thus spoke Arjuna:
What is nature 'n its role,
What is spirit 'n its nature,
What is frame 'n who lords it
What makes feeling 'n sixth sense?

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Sees who body his as field
Sees he all there is to see.

2

Knows who Spirit One dwells in all
Knows he all that's there to know.

3

Lend thy ear, as I reveal
Nature of thy frame, as well
Spirit that tenants as farmer
Besides Him and His prowess.

4

In chants validate what Vedas
Aspects that well Brahmanas delve
Reasoned wise in varied ways.

5

Subject to reason, ego as well
Steeped is frame in elements five,
Earth, water, fire, ether and air
Organs those ten, as well mind.

6

Desire, derision, pleasure 'n pain
Pitch their tents in frames human.

7

Knowing is being -
Amiable and humble, simple 'n honest
Patient 'n decent, clean and clear
Not to speak of fair and firm -

8

Void of desires, egotism devoid
Passion none for life and times -

9

With no craving for possessions
Fondness none for things of life
None the averse, all the same.

11

Naive though fail to follow suit
Tend all wise to probe nature
And strive to see the Spirit in Me

12

Let Me tell thee what's needed
To let thee grasp the State Brahman
Which if done would bring in bliss.

13

All-Reaching, He's All-Seeing
All Hearing, He pervades all.

14

Organs in His likeness made
Unlinked though to their senses,
He that sustains all three worlds
Unattached though to goings on.

15

In beings all 'n objects too
Within He lies, without as well,
If one comes to grasp this well
It's perception that's Supreme.

16

It's how Brahman dwells in all
Till He ends all what that keeps.

17

He's the Light that leaves no shade
He's the One for one to know
He's the Goal of all learning
He's the Tenant in every heart.

18

It's the knowable of the frame
Me who worship come to grasp.

19

Spirit 'n Nature, ageless both
Nature of beings, of Nature born.

20

It's Nature that tends beings
Binding Spirit to one's own acts.

21

Spirit that lay in beings all
Inclines to one's attitudes,
With the ethos it imbibes
Tends it one to like rebirth.

23

Gets one freed, as he grasps
Aspects Nature 'n Spirit as well.

24

Indulge who in meditation
Find they Supreme Spirit in them,
Some as divine through wisdom
Others do so by deeds selfless.

25

He who finds this all too hard
May he obtain wise counsel
And be rid of births and deaths.

26

Whatever exists in this world
Designs Spirit in Nature's womb.

27

Sees he well, who would see
What doth perish is just the frame
End there none to Spirit therein.

28

Realize if thou Spirit in thee
Same as one that dwells in all
Hurt thou never thine own self
Thereby attain Me Supreme.

29

Beings act per their nature
Thus the Spirit that lay in them
Hath no hand in deeds of theirs.

31

Having none its attributes
Apart being from nature
Spirit hath no qualms of its own.

32

As with ether, spread all over
None the sullied, exposed being
So is the case with Spirit in thee.

33

Sun as one lights all three worlds
It's one Spirit that glows all frames.

34

Aware if thee of Spirit 'n frame
Frees that thou from all bindings
Making way to reach Supreme.

Ends thus:

Field and Farmer,
The Thirteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-14: Proclivities to Know

This diagnostic chapter of 27 slokas, known as gunatraya vibhaaga yoga, Differentiation of Qualities Three, details the three human proclivities - virtue, passion and delusion. It concludes with the identification of the realized spirit. It may be noted that s3, s4 and s19 that deal with the Nature and the Spirit are digressions, and thus are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Pass I now thee that knowledge
With which sages free themselves.

2

Knows who so this reaches Me
Keeps thus births 'n deaths at bay.

5

To tie the Spirit 'n body tight
Uses Nature as its threads
Virtue, passion as well delusion.

6

Spirit as well gets well enticed
By the charms of life well-led
Steeped in wisdom and virtue.

7

Frames of passion as it weds
Spirit gets fond of joys of life.

8

It's in delusion Spirit with sloth
Doth go in tow on wrong path.

9

Gives man virtue life of ease
Grinds him passion in despair
Deprives delusion him of reason.

10

Of the trio often
Takes as lead role one of these
Others to sidelines are confined.

11

Wearing wisdom on his sleeve
Radiates virtuous throughout life.

12

Plain greedy or ever restive
It's the way all passionate live.

13

Dull in mind
And perverted
In work lethargic
He's but deluded.

14

Peaks as virtue dies as one
Ascends he the State Highest.

15

Dies if one with passion on hold
Comes he back to resume things,
Lives who deluded all his life
Gets he none better in rebirths.

16

Virtuous sully never their lives
Rue passionate as chase joys
Go down deluded drain of life.

17

Gives as virtue wisdom true
Renders passion unto grief
Leads as delusion into sloth.

18

Echelons virtuous reach higher
Remain 'as is where' passionate
Go down ladder ever the deluded.

20

Out of orbit if thou go
Of Nature that grips thy mind
Freed be thou of recurring births.

21

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Can man ever, rein in matter,
Is there regimen that reins it?

22

Thus spoke the Lord:
With no let or ever hindrance
Whatever it be he lets go,
Takes he things all as they come
With none fondness or distaste.

23

Seeing it all nature's work
From the fringes of conscience
Detached he watches goings on.

24

It's in fairness that he weighs
Affairs of life in fine balance.

25

Sans self, ego, self-realized
Works his way to state tranquil.

26

It's by capping his nature
Wavers he not from the path
That which truly leads to Me
And in end he turns Brahman.

27

It's Me Immortal self of Brahman
Dharma eternal that's All-Blissful.

Ends thus:

Proclivities to Know,
The Fourteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-15: Art of Liberation

This unique chapter of 20 slokas, known as purushottama praapti yoga, Realization of the Supreme. S9, s12, s13, s14 and s15 being digressions are clearly interpolations. Beginning with the parable of world as a fig tree, it later deals with the indwelling spirit and the Supreme Spirit, and the perishable man and the imperishable Purusha (Supreme Spirit).

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Wise see Nature as fig tree huge
Roots its planted in high skies
Branching down with Vedic leaves

Helps which man reach State Supreme.

2

So to feed on their organs
With its downward roots it ties
Beings all to mundane things,
With man being charged by wants
Supplies he the feed it needs
Through the knots of threefold ways.

3

Man as fails to lay his hands
Roots on those that entwine him
Helps dispassion sunder them.

4

Roots as sundered, one gets freed
To reach the Vedic branch in reach,
Grasps as he the truth there all
Goes he up from branch to branch
To end up on the root utmost
On which Abode Supreme lies.

5

Freed of pride, desire 'n delusion
Climbs as he, in self he dwells,
Feels he same of pleasure 'n pain
Detached he reaches thus Supreme.

6

Sun too doth pale nears it when
Seat of moksha, Abode of Mine.

7

Spirit as lies in beings all
Gets it rubbed with one's nature.

8

Wind as carries scent of flowers
While leaving them as is where,
In like fashion Spirit from frames
Moves its awareness to rebirths.

10

Know not fools in lifetime theirs
Nature of Spirit thus lies in them
But ever on move from frame to frame.

11

This by striving wise realize
Fail though naive in spite of it.

16

Perish all beings though in time
Perishes not the Spirit in them.

17

Self Mine Highest that sustains
Is but different from that One.

18

Since I transcend that perishes
Apart 'n above the eternal One
Vedas vouch Me Soul Supreme.

19

Who aver Me as Soul Supreme
In My worship bring they faith.

20

Grasps who nuances of this science
Turns he wise 'n accomplished thus.

Ends thus:

Art of Liberation,
The Fifteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-16: Frailty of Thought

This chapter of 24 slokas, known as daivaasura sampad vibhaaga yoga, The Characteristics of Virtuous and the Vile, deals with all aspects of virtue and evil including how they affect human life.

S19 which implies that the Supreme Spirit condemns to hell those who hate Him is an obvious interpolation that contravenes Lord's affirmative statement in s29 ch.9, 'None I favour; slight I none / But devout Mine all gain Me true' and other such averred in many a context in this text. Be that as it may, when He is the indweller in all beings as postulated by the Lord himself, won't the interpolative proposition of s19 amount to self-condemnation!

1

Thus spoke the Lord:
Pure in heart 'n courage to boot
Even mind with helping hand
Works who hard 'n tries to grasp
Austere, upright, and well-read -

2

Even tempered, loves he peace
Liberal minded with kind heart
Calm 'n truthful, well-mannered
Fickle he not or calumnious

Modest natured covets he not -

3

Free of bias he's fair-minded
Strong in will, he stalls envy
Humble, and he forgives too
He's virtuous thus earmarked.

4

Make all vile, rude guys all
Vainglorious 'n haughty too,
Besides being indignant
No less are they indulgent.

5

Gives as virtue man freedom
Keeps him vileness ever constrained.

6

World is as of good 'n bad
Serves thee to know latter too.

7

Conduct of theirs lacks virtue
Bear they demeanour that's impure.

8

Branding beings sexual products
Reckon not such in God 'n truth.

9

These small minds, of ruined souls
Wreck they world with acts of wrath.

10

Pride 'n lust, long wish list
Vile in conceit live impure.

11

Seeing life as one to gloat
Vile by impulse go to lengths.

12

Seek vile creatures ever shortcuts
On way to wants, they ill-get wealth.

13

Think all vile, in like terms -
This is mine so let me keep
Why not have I more of it.

14

Foe this mine I've truly floored
Won't I tackle the rest of them
Sure I'm Lord of mine own world.

15

Note all vile, gloat as such -
Besides wealthy, I'm well-born
Won't I give and enjoy too.

16

To their hurt in illusion vile
End up slaves of joys of flesh.

17 .

In vainglory live all vile
And for show-off spend they well.

18 .

Blinded by pride, lustful lot
Me they ill-treat lay in them.

20

Live all deluded far from Me
Depraved ladder they go down.

21

Detours, lust, wrath 'n greed
Self-destruct to go hellward.

22

Steer if clear, perils these men
See they then the path perfect.

23

In their impulse vile impinge
Upon the scriptures that hold good
And thus keep ever from Supreme.

24

Ordain scriptures rights 'n wrongs
It's now left to choose thy course.

Ends thus:

Frailty of Thought,

The Sixteenth Chapter Of Bhagavad-Gita, Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-17: Science of Devotion

This chapter of 28 slokas, known as sraddhaa traya vibhaaga yoga, Threefold Devotion, deals with the spiritual and temporal aptitudes of man. S11-s13 that deal with the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded in ritualistic sense and s 23 -28 concerning Om, Tat, Sat and Asat of the Vedic hymns are clear interpolations for reasons the reader is familiar with.

However, s7-s10 that deal with the food habits of the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded would pose a problem in determining whether or not they are

interpolations. Can eating habits be linked to the innate nature of man in an infallible manner? Perhaps, some future research and analysis might resolve the universality or otherwise of this averment, and till then, it is appropriate to reserve the judgment on these.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
None the regard for scriptures
Who tend to manage life their well
What Thou say of such of beings
Virtuous, passionate or merely deluded.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
It's one's nature that tends him
To be virtuous, passionate, or deluded.

3

Beings all have faith in some
It's one's nature that shapes it.

4

Virtuous seek gods in worship
Opt passionate to humour ghosts
Turn all deluded towards the Hades.

5

Hoping for there all to gain
Indulge vain in austerities
Though not endorsed by scriptures.

6

It's in delusion they all fast
Emaciating frames of theirs,
Thus in foolishness they all
Famish Mine own Self in them.

7

As with habits so with palates
Come to tend all in three ways.

8

Opt virtuous all recipes fine
Sustain health 'n enhance strength.

9

Hot 'n spicy, and pungent,
Prefer food passionate that ill-suits.

10

Food of deluded is all stale
Long in storage, and impure.

15

Rings with truth 'n laced with warmth
It's speech austere that's well-meaning.

16

Simple 'n stoic
Kind and candid
It's mind austere
With self-control.

17

Wanting none
Never in turn,
Done in concern
Deed it's austere.

18

It's in pretension passionate live
Eye they have on name 'n fame.

19

With troubled mind all deluded live
Hurt themselves 'n others as well.

20

Virtuous deed is that extends
Helping hand to one in need
Guided by the zeal to serve.

21

Deed passionate is quid pro quo
Ever done with some end in mind.

22

Aiding dubious with disdain
It's deed deluded that lacks goal.

Ends thus:

Science of Devotion,
The Seventeenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-18: Thy Looking-glass

This chapter of 78 slokas, known as moksha sanyaasa yoga, Realization through Abnegation, describes such aspects of human behaviour based on the three natures - virtue, passion and delusion - and the path of selfless action. And in the end, the relevance of, and the reverence to, the Gita is described.

One can note that s12 breaks the continuity between s11 and s13 with hyperbolic averments, and s56 combines what is stated in the preceding and the succeeding slokas, and thus both are seemingly interpolations.

S41- s48 that describe the allotted duties of man on the basis of his caste are clearly interpolations. In essence, the discourse till s 40 is about the human nature and how it affects man. As can be seen, the duties on caste lines detailed in the said interpolations have no continuity of argument. As in earlier chapters, the text acquires continuity if only these verses are bypassed.

S61 avers that the Supreme dwells in humans and deludes them all by his maya. This is contrary to what is stated in s14, c5, 'It's his nature, but not Spirit / Makes man act by wants induced'. Thus, s61 clearly is an interpolation as it contravenes the neutrality of the Supreme Spirit in the affairs of man affirmed throughout by Lord Krishna.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray Thee tell, for my grasp
All about sanyaas, path forsake
And self-denial that's tyaaga.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Lack inclination, it's sanyaas
Sans wants work what makes tyaaga.

3

Fault some sages effort per se
Others give nod to deeds noble.

4

Make thee privy of three ways
By which, men all give up well.

5

Effort, gift 'n austerity
Take men all on road forsake.

6

Forsake I this vouchsafe when
Acts man with no axe to grind.

7

Avoid obligation, it's no abnegation
Boils it down to, give up of delusion.

8

Forgo made easy passionate opt
Desist from duties that strain them.

9

Indulge virtuous in their work
With no thought of its outcome.

10

With no illusion but diligence
Carries renunciant his duties
Agreeable or otherwise too.

11

Needs one work to sustain life
Relinquents avoid, overloads all.

13

Factors five all deeds engulf
Know them well to free thyself.

14

Prone are acts to these aspects -
Body to sustain, ego that goads
Senses thy lure, life to guard
Faith in deities that tends thee.

15

Be well or so be ill
In word, thought 'n deed as well
Sourced are acts in these aspects.

16

Ignoramus in vain ascribe
Acts of theirs to Spirit in them.

17

It's for thee to realize now
That by killing these Kauravs
Slay thee none of them thyself.

18

Aspects knowable, known 'n knower
Lead to duty, deed 'n doer, in that order.

19

Knowable as well deeds 'n doers
Bracket those freed in three groups.

20

Lay indivisible in frames divisible
Realize virtuous Spirit not perishable.

21

Spirit in them 'n others that lies
Apart 'n unique feel passionate.

22

Failing to see beyond the self-
Deluded think like frog in well.

23

Illusions of life virtuous
See in light of limitations
Thus thou carry businesslike
Duties that their life ordains

24

In want passionate come to live
Bogged down by, what they eye.

25

Deluded work in reckless ways
Harm their cause 'n others' as well.

26

Taking well and ever at ease
Senses honed 'n ego evened
Detached virtuous ever engage.

27

Mind as covetous 'n thought impure
Crave passionate all things mundane
Which them excite as well pull down.

28

Verily deluded, vulgar 'n vacillate
Arrogant, dishonest, ignorant 'n malicious
Indolent being remain they gloomy.

29

By natures of these beings
Features intellect theirs vary.

30

Deal virtuous in measures equal
Weigh they fine all deeds their fair.

31

Perspective lack passionate right
In weird ways they tend their lives.

32

Given their state of perversion
Go all deluded in wrong path.

33

Virtuous ever in self-control
Steady they wavering mind of theirs.

34

Things that seem to bring joys
Passionate all with zeal pursue.

35

Proud 'n arrogant, doubting 'n grieving
Bog down deluded in despair.

36

Make a note of these three ways
Pains which banish 'n fetch bliss.

37

What fail sprint 'n serve long run
Virtuous know keep woes at bay.

38

It's the way with thy passion
To jump at all that what might tempt
Which would turn sour in due course.

39

Ever in day-dreams
End up deluded in dreamlands.

40

Beyond the pale of these natures
None ever exists in three worlds.

49

With no want
Allegiant to none,
Freed from action
Thou forsake.

50

Leads how forsake to Brahman
Know that Wisdom Supreme now.

51

With pure mind 'n will that's strong
Wants thou void and firm thy self -

52

Frugal of food, thoughts reined in
Dwell in self thou sans passion -

53

Lack thou pride, wish 'n wrath
Give up ego, crave not power
Be content and live in peace
It's then thou come near Brahman.

54

Treat all beings ever equal
And in devotion live tranquil.
It's thou attain State Brahman.

55

It's then one would know Me true
That tends him to be one with Me.

57

Let thy faith in Me be strong
Take Me thou for thy shelter

And ever thee act as My agent.

58 .

It's all smooth sail if heeded

At thy peril thou this ignore.

59

It's thine ego sues for peace

But prevails what is thy nature..

60

Sidetrack might thine illusions

But nature thine would shape thy deeds.

62

Fix thy mind on Me Supreme

Find thou peace in My refuge.

63

That thee heard of this wisdom

For task on hand now apply mind.

64

O, dear friend, let Me tell

Word My final that benefits.

65

If one remains to Me firm

It's My promise I take him.

66

Set all aside 'n have faith

Thus sans sin, reach Me thou

67

None of this for those who lack

Faith in Me and selfless work.

68

Whoso passes this secret

To devout Mine all reach Me true.

69

Know not I a dearer soul

None there ever a better service.

70

Who that studies this discourse

He Me prays in true wisdom.

71

Hears this whoso in good faith

Attains he the Worlds Higher.

72

Looks as if thou got it right

Let not delusions rule thy head.

73

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Glad O Lord
Gone are doubts,
Sense I gained
With Thy words.

74

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
It's what I've heard of that stirring
Dialogue between these great souls
Krishn and Arjun as they spoke.

75

It's with Vyasa's grace I've heard
This peerless art of yogic life
Which Lord Krishna taught Paartha.

76

Found I thrilling, dialogue stirring
Reminiscing I rejoice, again and again.

77

What a wondrous Form that was
Recalling I rejoice, again and again.

78

Wherever yogic Lord Krishna
Joins hands with great Paartha
Goddess Victory, spreads carpet
Heaven on earth to set there ever.

Ends thus:

Thy Looking-glass
The Eighteenth Chapter
Of Vyasa's classic
Bhagavad Gita.

Dedication Note:

"To grandparents,
Paternal,
Bulusu Thimmaiah -
Lakshmi Narasamma,
Maternal,
Challa Kameswara Rao -
Suramma
And parents,
Peraiah Sastry and Kamakshi,
In whose care my destiny
So favourably placed me."

Srimad Bhagavad Gita: Simple Rendering

By Swami Samarpanananda

Ramakrishna Mission: Vivekananda Education and Research Institute
Belur Math, Howrah, W. Bengal

This work is a brief rendering of each chapter of Gita, and is meant to serve as an introductory reading of Gita for interested readers who find it difficult to comprehend the work. No comments and explanations have been added wherever necessary to make it intelligible. Serious readers, however, are advised to go through the original text/translation, preferably with a commentary.

Introduction

Srimad Bhagavad Gita, or more popularly, Gita is the spiritual and philosophical heartbeat of India. The best that India has to give to the world in the fields of wisdom, religion, philosophy and spirituality is Gita. Whatever India has achieved in these areas is poetically preserved in Sanskrit in this short work of seven hundred verses in eighteen chapters.

The poetic beauty and the philosophical clarity of the work is unparalleled in the history of the world literature. Every Hindu lives and dreams in Gita, and when he dies, he is given a farewell of chants from Gita. Every practising Hindu makes it a point to recite from it daily, every philosophical Hindu tries to study and understand the work, and every mystic Hindu strives to mould his life according to Gita.

Gita belongs to the Bhishma Parva of the epic Mahabharata, and is in dialogue form between Sri Krishna and Arjuna just before the battle of Kurukshetra was to take place.

The Background

Arjuna and his four brothers were arrayed against their cousins in a deadly battle for kingdom. Warriors had opted for the war as the only option left to decide the right inheritor of the throne, and had joined one of the two sides depending on their preference.

Arjuna was the greatest warrior of his time who headed his army as one of the chiefs. His charioteer was Lord Krishna, who was also a great friend and mentor of Arjuna. Just before the war was to begin, Arjuna requested Krishna to take the chariot in the middle of the battlefield so that he could have a look at the chief warriors of the opposing armies.

What he saw appalled him. Standing against each other were close relatives, friends, teachers and such others to kill and ready to get killed. The total number of men involved was in millions. Arjuna became depressed at the sight, and he refused to take part in the war. Instead, he wanted to give up everything and become a mendicant.

This was unacceptable to Sri Krishna, since Arjuna had come prepared to take part in the war in accordance with his dharma. Lord Krishna then preached Arjuna about his duties, his real nature, the nature of the world, and the nature of the Supreme Reality, so that he could come out of his despondency. In the process, the Lord discussed aspects of human life: its aspirations, expectations, and state of perfection.

A few basics regarding Gita

The Upanishads are the gist of the Vedas, and the Gita is the gist of the Upanishads. Thus, the spiritual essence of the Vedas has been recorded in the seven hundred verses of eighteen chapters of Gita.

Each of the eighteen chapters of the book is named as a different yoga. This means that one can attain perfection by following any of these chapters. The first chapter is Arjuna Vishada Yoga, which implies that one can get united with God even through sorrow.

Although Gita was spoken to Arjuna in the battlefield by Sri Krishna, it slowly became the heartbeat of Hindus, Hinduism and Hindu philosophy. However, there are some misconceptions regarding this great work which need to be clarified.

Many scholars raise questions: a. whether Gita is an integral part of Mahabharata b. whether there really was a Kurukshetra war, and c. whether Krishna and Arjuna really existed. The fact is that the philosophy taught in Gita can be found throughout the Mahabharata. So, if Gita is not accepted as an integral part of the epic, then those portions of Mahabharata that contain similar teachings, too have to be discarded.

Also, in the Indian tradition, the content of any work is more important than its external form. So, for a true seeker, reality of Krishna, Arjuna and the war are meaningless, since the core spiritual teachings of Gita are priceless.

One popular allegation against Gita is that Sri Krishna incited Arjuna for the war through this work. But this is not true. When all peace process between Pandavas and Kauravas had failed, only then the decision for the war was taken. And when Arjuna came prepared to fight, he had no right to back out from his sacred duty as per the conventions of varna-ashrama dharma. In fact

Sri Krishna only placed before Arjuna's vacillating mind the philosophy of life which helped him take the final decision.

Many wonder how Sri Krishna went on talking for more than two hours (the time taken to recite the entire Gita) when the two great armies were raring to cut down each other. This misconception has been cleared by Acharya Shankara who wrote in his commentary that Vyasa composed the 700 verses of Gita to elucidate the Lord's words spoken to Arjuna just before the war. Thus Gita can be treated both as the words of the Lord, as is commonly believed; or can be treated as the view of Lord Krishna expressed faithfully by Vyasa. In either case it is Lord's words only.

The correctness of a system is measured by its applicability at the micro and macro level. Gita handles issues both at micro and macro level. For example, there is the talk of action at cosmic level, and also as individual duty in the form of Varnashrama dharma. Similarly, rebirth is preached at the individual level, and the cyclic existence of the universe is explained at the macro level.

It is usual to hear from people that Gita should be read in old age, or by monks. What they fail to realise is that the book is about strength, duty and achievement. It contains the philosophy of life and gives solution to all that one faces daily. The central teaching of Gita is the attainment of the final beatitude of life, which is perfection or eternal freedom. One way to attain this is to perform one's duties unselfishly.

Many young people think that the book is not relevant for the present age. What they forget is that: (a) Gita was preached to a dejected Arjuna. This means that even the most distressed person can make use of it to uplift himself (b) It delivers the message of strength. So, a regular reading of the book fills one with strength and hope, and (c) it was taught by a calm Sri Krishna amidst war, which means that it is beneficial even for the most active person. In fact today's turbulent society needs Gita much more than whatever ancestors needed.

Gita is not a sectarian work. Its teachings are broad, universal and sublime, and do not belong to any cult, sect, creed, age or country. It has a message of solace, freedom, salvation, perfection and peace for the entire humanity. It is also a samanyva shastra, the book of harmony and synthesis, which brings together various aspects of Indian way of life, religion, philosophy and spirituality.

Chapter I

Arjuna Vishada Yoga: Distress of Arjuna

The chapter describes the despondency of Arjuna that came over him just before the war was to begin. It begins with the question by Dhritarashtra to Sanjay, his minister-cum-charioteer-cum-war reporter, regarding the news of the battle that was raging between his sons and his nephews.

In reply Sanjay narrated the war situation as it had been. Duryodhana, the son of the King, was the usual confident self before the war, and he described the chief warriors, their strength, weapons, flags and trumpets, and also made a comparative description of both the armies to Drona, his war teacher and also one of his chief warriors.

It was then that Arjuna requested Sri Krishna to take his chariot to the middle of the battleground so that he could survey the chiefs of both the sides. What he saw then, was shocking even to the battle hardened heart of Arjuna. Facing each other were the great warriors ready to kill and get killed. What more, nearly everyone had his relatives facing him in the deadly battle. And what for? So that either Duryodhana or Yudhishthira could rule! Although it was a dharma yuddha, the righteous war, but the expected manslaughter was going to be phenomenal. Indeed, it was the greatest war in the history of the world caused by a family feud.

Arjuna's shock was immense. The future wailing of the widows, cries of the orphans, destruction of human resources, and the expected sight of the earth soaked with blood moved his heart to extreme depression and despondency. He was filled with the worst kind of pitiful emotions, accompanied by a dry mouth, trembling body, shaking limbs, profuse sweating, and a loss of physical steadiness.

He could also foresee the degeneration of the social order that would be the result of such a great holocaust. With so many people of the warrior caste dead, inter caste marriages would be inevitable, which would ultimately pollute the religious rites and ceremonies. Thus the very religious order of the universe was in the danger of getting disturbed.

Arjuna refused to fight.

Expressing what he had to express to Sri Krishna, he laid aside his famous bow, Gāndiva, and collapsed in the backside of the chariot. At that moment he was an embodiment of melancholy, and so he resolved that under no condition was he going to take part in the genocide.

The great sorrow and despondency of Arjuna was not, and is not, unique to him. Everyone has to face sorrow, delusion and pain at some point of his life, when he feels completely lost and sees only darkness around. It is in those moments that one needs a guru, without which he would fail to come out of the vicious law of periodicity. He would continue to revolve and revolve round his pain.

This was the reason why Lord Krishna, the incarnation of that age, spoke out his spiritual message in the next chapters. In the seventh chapter he says that despondency (Ārta) is one of the four conditions when one seeks God.

People of the world are always in some kind of despondency, and hence in need of a saving message. Lord Krishna gave that saving message to the world through Arjuna, who was not only despondent, but was immersed in the ocean of grief.

Chapter II

Samkhya Yoga: The way of Ultimate Reality

The Upanishads are the gist of the Vedas, the Gita is the essence of the Upanishads, and the second chapter is the gist of Gita. Thus, this chapter contains everything that the Vedas have to say.

Sri Krishna admonishes Arjuna (sl 1-3): Arjuna was overwhelmed with sorrow which made his eyes swell with tears. Sri Krishna was surprised at this sudden development. To remind Arjuna of his duty in this sacred war, the Lord then spoke encouraging words to him, 'Form where has come this lowness of spirit, which is dishonourable, unbecoming to an Aryan (a cultured person), and which is an obstacle to the attainment of the high heavens? Do not yield to impotence, O Arjuna. It does not become you. Shake off this cowardliness and arise!'

Arjuna's lamentations continue (sl 4-10): Arjuna continued with his lamentations and said that he would prefer to live on the charity of others (as monks live) than kill his teachers and elders to enjoy the vast empire. However, he admitted that he was confused and was unable to distinguish between the right and the wrong in this matter, and so he was seeking shelter with Sri Krishna to guide him out of the moral disaster that loomed overhead.

The introductory verses of Gita end here. From this point onward, Lord Krishna expounds the philosophy of life, society, religion, and spirituality to Arjuna. By the medium of Arjuna, a really fit and competent disciple, Lord Krishna showers his grace to the whole humanity, drowning in the ocean of grief and delusion, which is samsāra, the world.

The wise grieve for no one (sl 11-13): Lord Krishna ridicules Arjuna by telling him that he was behaving like an ignorant person by grieving unnecessarily, and yet was speaking like a wise person concerning religious duties (in the previous chapter). This implied that he had no consistency, and he was like a wild, confused person. The truly wise do not grieve for the living, nor for the dead, since they know that the true individuality of a person lies with the Self which neither dies, nor is born. Self being eternal, there never was a time when Arjuna, Lord Krishna, or others did not exist; nor would they ever cease to exist. As the Self residing in the body experiences childhood, youth, and old age, so does it experience death, which is only moving from one body to another.

These three verses are at the heart of the philosophy of Gita. The whole of Vedanta, and also the subsequent chapters of Gita are elaboration, explanation, and implications of these three verse.

Ignore dualities to reach the highest (sl 14-15): Dualities like heat and cold, pleasure and pain, good and bad, purity and impurity, virtue and vice, life and death etc. are born due to the contact of senses with their respective objects. The Self has nothing to do with these dualities. So, those who aspire for immortality (or a higher way of life), should not get moved by any of the dualities.

Duality is samsara, non duality is spirituality. The goal of true spirituality is to come out of the bondages caused by dualities. Even dharma (right way of life), and adharma (the evil) are dualities, and hence both are shunned at the highest level of spirituality. Being good is not the goal of Hinduism, but transcending both goodness and evil is its goal.

The nature of Reality (sl 16-18): Every philosophy's aim is to find the nature of Reality. According to Gita, Real is that which never ceases to be, and the unreal never comes into existence. The truly imperishable in this universe is the Self, that which pervades everything, and that is truly avyaya (immutable). It is nitya (eternal), anashi (imperishable), aprameya (incomprehensible), and is the indwelling spirit of the bodies. The body alone is perishable, but not the Atman.

The use of term aprameya (incomprehensible) for the Self implies that the Self is knowing- Consciousness, and hence cannot become an object of knowledge. The Self cannot be known through any of the sense, the mind, or by any other means. Even the scriptures can only point at it indirectly. The Self is svatah siddha, self evident, so It can be known only through one's own realisation.

The Soul is all pervading, eternal etc. (sl 19-25):

Sri Krishna explains that the true individuality of a man does not lie with his body-mind-ego complex, but with Atman -- the all pervading, indestructible self which is unborn, ever present, and everywhere present. So, it was perfectly alright to kill if duty demands so. However, let us not conclude that Sri Krishna was advocating the philosophy of killing and war. On the contrary, he himself had tried to persuade Duryodhana to avert the war, but the wise counsel did not prevail. It should be noted here that Hinduism sanctions war only when it is born of righteousness, and not when it is caused due to greed, ego, pride or self aggrandisement. Also, the philosophy that the soul gets neither killed, nor is the killer can be practised only by those who have realised the all pervading Supreme Self as the true Reality. As a result, those who are established in this knowledge, are not scared of death, nor do they get swayed by dualities like heat and cold, joy and grief, life and death etc. Thus the philosophy preached here is universal, but its application in the matter of killing is entirely personal. People who are swayed by self interest or dualities are not at all fit to practise this.

The Self can neither slay anyone (i.e. It never becomes a doer), nor can It be slain (i.e. It can never become an object). It is never born, nor does It ever die, and it is also not that having once been, It ceases to be. Unborn, eternal, ever present, primeval (ever since), It is not slain when the body is slain. (All material objects, including the body, undergo six kinds of modification: birth, existence, growth, transformation, decay, and death. The Self is beyond these modifications--Sad vikara).

He who knows the Self to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and immutable - how can he slay It? Using an example, the Lord says that as a person throws away his old garments, so does the Self cast off worn-out bodies to enter a new body.

The Lord knows that it is very difficult to comprehend the mystery of the Self. So He describes It again and again in various ways to Arjuna: Weapons cut It not; fire burns It not, water wets It not, the wind does not dry It up. Eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immovable, the Self is the same for ever. This Self is said to be unmanifest (because It cannot be experienced by the senses), incomprehensible, and unchangeable (the Self is infinite, and has no parts that can undergo a change).

Since the Self is of this nature, Arjuna should not grieve, is the conclusion of the Lord.

Two other views regarding the Self (sl 26-28):

Arjuna does not seem to be moved by what he heard from the Lord. This made the Lord discuss the remaining two views regarding the Self.

1. If one thinks the self to be being born and dying repeatedly (and staying in the heaven or the hell in between), even then there is nothing to grieve for, because in that case every born self will die and every dead self will be born again. So, birth and death being unavoidable, why grieve?
2. If one thinks the Self to be mere combinations of cause and effect, then also one need not grieve at death. Why? Because before coming into existence, the self was non-existent and after the body perishes, it will again become non-existent. So, why grieve for something which is so impermanent by nature?

In this way, the Lord presents the three views regarding Self and shows that whatever view Arjuna might be having regarding the Self, there was no reason for him to give up his duty.

Concluding the discourse on the Self (sl 29-30)

The Lord concludes his talk on the nature of the Self by saying that some look on the Self as a wonder; some speak of It as a wonder; some hear of It as wonder; still others, though hearing, do not understand It at all. The Self, which dwells in all bodies, can never be slain.

Varnashrama Dharma: Duty and its results (sl 31-38): Arjuna is not yet convinced. He is ready neither for the highest philosophy, nor for logical reasoning. So, the Lord tries to convince Arjuna by using arguments based on social behaviour: Considering even his duty as a warrior, Arjuna should not waver like this, because for a warrior there can be no better duty than joining a righteous war. Only fortunate warriors get an opportunity to take part in an unsought war, which acts like an open door to the heaven.

"If you refuse to fight this righteous war, then you will fail in your duty, lose your reputation, and incur sin. People will talk about your disgrace forever. And, to the honoured, dishonour is worse than death. The great warriors will think that you have retreated from the battle out of fear, and those who have greatly esteemed you till then, will lose their respect for you. Your enemies will speak many unmentionable words and will ridicule your ability. Could there be anything more bitter than that? You will go to heaven if you get killed in this battle, or you will enjoy the kingdom on this earth if you become victorious. Therefore, arise, and join the battle."

The Lord further advised Arjuna that he should regard dualities like pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat alike, and engage himself in the battle (his duty). This way, he won't incur any sin.

These eight verses mark the social philosophy of the Hindus based on Vedanta. Those who have acquired the highest knowledge of the Self, do not get disturbed by any duality. But, those who have not yet reached that stage, but aspire for that, they must perform their varnashrama dharma (duties based on caste and age) without getting attached to any kind of duality. That is the way to purify oneself to become fit for the highest knowledge of the Self.

Karma Yoga and Self Knowledge (sl 39- 41): Till now the wisdom of sāmkhya-- the true nature of the Absolute Reality-- was imparted to Arjuna. Now the science of Yoga (Karma Yoga) is expounded. A person who gets established in this Yoga (by performing duty, without getting attached to the results of action), succeeds in breaking through the bonds of karma (action) and attains the Supreme Knowledge (merit and demerit, virtue and sin, pain and pleasure, and such dualities constitute the bondage of all action when performed with a motive).

No effort is ever lost, and there is no adverse effect in Karma Yoga. Even a little practice of this Yoga saves one from the great fear of repeated birth and death. In this path, there is only one resolute determination (i.e. God realisation) for its practitioner, but the desires of those who work to enjoy the fruits of work are endless.

Thus it can be seen that the Lord takes up various types of arguments to remove the darkness that surrounds Arjuna's mind. In the verses 39-41, the concept of Karma Yoga is introduced, since Arjuna is not yet fit to take up Samkhya Yoga, which can be practised only by all renouncing monks. Karma Yoga is the special contribution of Gita to the philosophy of life. Although sporadic hints of Karma Yoga can be found in the Upanishads, its full philosophy develops in Gita only.

Many wrongly believe that Acharya Shankara, the greatest commentator of the Upanishads and Gita, was against Karma Yoga. Acharya was against Karma (action) with motive. Keeping in tune with the over all philosophy of Gita, Acharya also prescribes Karma Yoga for all those who are not yet ready for non-dual mode of spiritual practices.

The futility of the Vedic rituals in Self realisation (sl 42-46): Those who are attached to pleasure and power, do not have any firm resolve. They get carried away by the flowery words spoken by the ritualists, and consider the attainment of heaven through ritualistic sacrifices as the highest goal of life.

They do not realise that the practice of Vedic rites does not result in liberation, but in rebirth.

The Vedas deal with three gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas. See chapter XIV). These gunas are the cause of this material universe, and also the cause of the bondage of everything in this universe. He who wants perfection, has to go beyond the three gunas. So, one must go beyond the ritualistic teachings of the Vedas. A spiritually enlightened person transcends the need of the Vedas, although for an unenlightened person the need of the Vedas continues.

Here it is very important to note that although the Vedas are the most sacred scripture of the Hindus, even these are considered subservient to the ultimate knowledge of the Supreme Brahman.

Theory and practice of Karma Yoga (sl 47-53): If a person is desirous of attaining the highest wisdom, then he should take up Karma Yoga, according to which: One is entitled to work, but is not supposed to crave for its fruits. Nor should such a person be ever inactive, nor his actions should result in becoming the further cause for action (i.e. rebirth). Being established in yoga, he should perform all his actions, casting off attachment and remaining even-minded in success and failure. This evenness is called Yoga. In this state one regards himself as a mere instrument in the hands of the Lord, and hence attachment to the results do not touch him. The secret of Karma yoga lies in the complete effacement of one's ego, and identifying oneself fully with God.

Work done with selfish motives is far inferior to actions performed with an evenness of the mind. So, one should take recourse to this evenness. Those who work with an eye on the fruits of their action become wretched, because they always keep calculating about their gains and losses, over which they have no control.

Once a person is established in the evenness of mind, he gets rid of all his good and bad actions. "Therefore, strive for yoga; Yoga is skill (maintaining evenness of mind) in action." The even-minded persons renounce the fruits of action, and thus get freed from the cause of rebirth, which is mukti (liberation).

When a person's intellect becomes free from delusion born of duality, then only does he attain indifference to the words of the scriptures, and goes beyond ritualistic actions that are prescribed in the Vedas. The ordinary mind normally stays perplexed by the various conflicting words of the sacred books regarding duty and non-duty. But when that mind becomes firm and steady in the Self, then it attains Yoga.

Marks of the realised (sl 54- 59): It was then that Arjuna calmed down a bit and expressed his eagerness to know more about what Sri Krishna had just spoken. He wanted to know the nature, character, and the behaviour of a jnani, one who is established in the knowledge of the Self. Lord Krishna then narrated the marks of a Realised person.

A realised person is completely free from all desires, and his Self finds satisfaction only in Itself (i.e. such a person does not depend on the world for his happiness). He is so absorbed in the Supreme Reality that his mind is not perturbed by adversity, nor does he long for happiness, and is free from attachment, fear, and anger. He is not attached to anything, does not get elated at getting the desirable, and does not get disturbed on getting the bad. As a tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell for protection, so does a man of wisdom withdraws the senses from the sense objects.

The desire for sensual pleasures fades away if one abstains from sense enjoyment, as can be seen in the case of diseased persons who are medically advised to abstain from certain things. But in all such cases the craving for enjoyment continues to be there in a very subtle form. However, in the case of these realised persons, the subtle cravings also disappear completely.

A word of caution for all (sl 60- 63): A perfect yogi restrains all his senses and fixes his mind on the Supreme Lord, who is the innermost Self of all. But a common man is a slave to his senses that hijack them in the long run. So, a person desirous of spirituality should be careful about giving license to his senses. Even a practising yogi must not relax his hold on his senses, since turbulent senses forcibly carry away the mind of even a wise person.

One develops attachment to sense objects by thinking about them again and again, which results in a desire to acquire them. When there is an obstruction in fulfilling that desire, anger is born. An angry person becomes deluded and loses his self control. This results in the loss of smriti (lit. memory. It means the lessons and values learnt from the scriptures and elders). When smriti is lost, one loses his buddhi (the discriminative faculty of the mind that judges the right and the wrong). And a person who has lost his determinative faculty, he is as good as a destroyed person!

As one can see, the destruction of a life is rooted in the simple act of innocent longing. So, a wise person should be careful about not letting his mind go after desires.

Supreme Knowledge and Peace (sl 64-72): The man of self-control moves around the world, enjoying sense objects with his senses under complete control. He himself is free from the dualities of attachment and aversion born

of these interactions, and thus attains serenity of mind. All sorrows are destroyed upon attainment of serenity. The intellect of such a tranquil person soon becomes steady and stays centred on the Self.

The man whose mind is not under his control, has no Self-knowledge, and no contemplation on the Supreme Self either. Without contemplation there can be no peace, and without peace there can be no happiness. This is so because the mind, when not centred in the Self, gets controlled by the wild senses running after their objects. These senses carry away the loose intellect as a storm snatches away a boat from its course. Therefore, only he whose senses are completely withdrawn from the sense objects, can be called a wise person.

The life style of yogis and the ordinary ignorant man is just the opposite. What is night to one, is day to another. A yogi stays conscious of Supreme Reality, but is indifferent to the sense world; whereas a common man delights in the sense world, but is oblivious of the Supreme Reality. As rivers enter the full ocean without creating any disturbance in it, in the same way desires enter a person's mind without causing any disturbance in him. That is when one can be said to have attained peace. A man who still has desires in his heart, is far off from attaining peace. He who gives up all desires, gives up every longing, and is devoid of the sense of 'I' and 'mine', attains peace.

Concluding the chapter, the Lord says that the above description is of the Brahmic state -- the state of superconsciousness. Once a person attains that state, he never again gets deluded. If one can attain this state even at the hour of death, he attains final liberation, and becomes one with Brahman.

The chapter thus discusses the Supreme Reality, Supreme Knowledge, the ways to attain It, its result, and the characteristics of those who have attained it. The next chapters elaborate these.

Chapter III

Karma Yoga

This and the next chapter is an elaboration of the verse *YogasthaH kuru karmani* (II.48).

In the second chapter Lord Krishna talks of Yoga Buddhi (characterised by action, II.47 etc.), and also of Samkhya Buddhi (characterised by Knowledge, II.54-72) as two paths to spirituality. However, the emphasis there is on Samkhya Buddhi, since the Lord says that it can lead to liberation from the worldly cycle of birth and death (mukti), but does not make any such comment regarding Yoga Buddhi. This creates confusion in the mind of

Arjuna who asks, 'Since Knowledge is superior to action, then why do you engage me in this terrible war?'

In response, Sri Krishna expounds the rationale, philosophy, psychology, utility, and the obstacles of Karma Yoga in this chapter. These are being given here in brief.

Why one should work? (Shloka 4-6): The Knowledge of the Self dawns upon those who have Atmajnana nistha (the mental state characterised by a total commitment towards self realisation). This comes only after a person has attained an absolute purity of mind; and this purity comes only to them who have attained the state of non-action (when one is not bound to do anything, nor has he any desire to do anything). This state of total detachment can come only after one has performed sacrifices (yajna) and virtuous actions (punya karma) to get rid of his sinful tendencies.

Normally Jnana Yoga (characterised by detachment and non-action) leads to Atmajnananistha. Since non-action is an important characteristics of the jnanis, people think that by merely giving up work, they can become jnani. But this is not so. The jnani does not stop working; he only puts a stop to his mind's running after the sense organs during any work. Thus an ordinary person escaping work loses his chance of growth, since escape from work is not the prelude to self realisation, but is the living example of hypocrisy.

How one should work? (Sl 7-9): Under normal conditions, one's organs (ten of them) tend to run after the respective objects in a wild way. When one begins his journey on the path of Karma Yoga, he keeps working intensely, but starts controlling his organs. This is how his organs get detached from the objects, which ultimately leads to a complete detachment from everything. This is best done when one performs only those actions that are dedicated to gods (as if performing a yajna). Sri Krishna says, 'Perform actions for yajna alone; actions other than yajna bind the world' (III.9).

Relation between Vedic gods and present day work (Sl 10-16): The Vedas advise that one must perform sacrificial actions to make the wheel of the universe go, and also advise to offer the return gift to the gods for all that one receives from them in the form of prosperity and well being.

This concept is beautifully harmonised for the people of the non-Vedic period in these verses. The Vedic sacrifices were replaced by Pancha Yajna: Deva Yajna (Rituals, worship, sacrifices etc.), Brahma Yajna (teaching and reciting the scriptures), Pitr Yajna (offerings to the ancestors), Nr Yajna (feeding the hungry etc.), Bhuta Yajna (feeding the animals), and it was advised that people must not stop performing these sacrifices.

Who are those who need not work? (Sl 17-19): Brihadaranayak Upanishad (3.5.1) says that those noble persons who have realised their Self, are free from worldly desires like having a wife etc., and from whom the false perception of the world born due to the play of avidya has ceased, has no duty to perform. He is as free as one can be.

These three shlokas echo the same idea. One who is devoted to Self, is satisfied with the Self, and is content in the Self has no duties to perform, has nothing to gain by doing some work, and has nothing to lose by not doing something.

But even the realised persons keep doing work (Sl 20-26): Although Self realised persons are not obliged to do any work, yet they continue doing work. This is because ordinary people tend to copy what the greats do, so the greats have to be careful not to become inactive. Even God Himself keeps working unceasingly, otherwise the world will come to disorder. Hence it is prescribed that the wise people should work in a detached way exactly in the same way that an unwise person works with attachment. The mind of the unwise should not be unsettled by preaching the philosophy of non-action. This is injurious for the common man, for the society, and also for the world order.

The wise and the unwise worker (sl 27-29): The unwise person is one who identifies himself with the complex of the body-senses-mind-ego. Such a person considers this union as his soul, and hence when he performs any action, he thinks himself as the doer, and thus gets identified with the work and its results.

On the contrary, a wise person is able to distinguish his true 'I'ness from the false I of mind-ego-sense complex, and hence when he works, he knows that it is not he who is working, but it is his senses acting on the respective sense objects.

Converting work into worship (sl 30-32): When a person works with the attitude that 'I work as a servant of God'; and thus gives up the sense of attachment and expectation from the work, he becomes fit to attain the Supreme Knowledge. But those who do not accept this attitude of surrender as correct, they are doomed, since they would take a long time to attain spiritual wisdom.

Obstacles in the path of Karma Yoga (sl 33-40): Lord Krishna explains that people helplessly follow their nature, which is born of the past samskaras (tendencies). These samskaras work out through attachment (rāga), and aversion (dvesa) towards the objects that come one's way during a work. So, if a person makes an effort to control these tendencies of the mind by

following the code of conduct as prescribed by the Varnashrama dharma, then one can slowly stop straying from the path of the good. Affirming this, Sri Krishna says, 'Sva dharme nidhanam shreyaH, paradharmo bhayaavaH' -- it is better to die performing one's prescribed duties than to take up the duties meant for others.

The Lord then elaborates the concept of sin by telling that desires (kāma), which resides in the senses, mind and the intellect, are the root cause of all sinful activities. It is desires that give birth to emotions like anger, which in turn makes people commit sin.

Way to blessedness (sl 41-43): A person desirous of knowledge should realise that the senses are more powerful and superior to the gross body, and the soul is superior to everything. Realising this, one should free one's mind from impurities, and then establish it in the pure knowledge of the Self.

Thus, instead of indulging in wild activities, or staying away from work, a normal aspirant after self realisation should engage oneself in actions that purify one's mind, and from there he should move over to the contemplation of the Self to attain the state of Blessedness.

This is Karma Yoga.

Chapter IV

Jnana Karma Sannyasa Yoga

(The way of renunciation of action in Knowledge, or simply, The Way of Knowledge)

Antiquity of Jnana Yoga (sl 1-3): In the previous two chapters Lord Krishna discusses Jnana Yoga based on renunciation which is attained through Karma Yoga. Thus Jnana Yoga contains both the life of activity (Pravritti) and the life of renunciation (Nivritti) as has been taught in the Vedas. The essence of Vedic teachings is Jnana Yoga, and hence Sri Krishna extols it by talking of its antiquity and also the unbroken tradition in the first three verses.

On Incarnation of God (sl 4-8): The unenlightened Arjuna wonders how Sri Krishna could be the original teacher of Jnana Yoga to the greats of the past when he was born only the other day. In reply Sri Krishna talks of his divine nature and says that He is untouched by dharma and adharma; therefore His birth does not resemble those of ordinary persons. He is born through His own maya, but is untouched by it. He is born to protect the good and to destroy the wicked; and is born in every age whenever there is a decline of dharma -- yada yada hi dharmasya glaniH bhavati Bharata (IV.7).

People perceive God differently and the result of such perception (sl 9-14): People perceive God differently; and in turn, God rewards them the way they perceive Him. He who sees the Lord beyond birth and death, beyond dharma and adharma, attains God. This divine union is possible only for those who are freed from passion, fear and anger, are absorbed in God, and take refuge in Him alone. But one must not conclude from this that God is partial towards some in favouring His grace. On the contrary, the Lord is beyond such bondages. He simply sets the motion of varnashrama dharma at the beginning of the Creation, and then people follow that dharma (law) according to their mental make up and tendencies. The difference in one's mental make up makes people wish for different results, which are provided by God impartially according to one's acts. Thus, what one gets is not what God gives of His own, but what one deserves from Him.

Characteristics of a true Yogi (sl 15-23): The seekers of Truth always work. In the early stages it is meant to purify oneself, and when he becomes a perfected being, he works for lokasamgraha (to set a model). So, a spiritual person must continue to work because of one of these reasons. Action based on any other consideration is injurious to one's spiritual life.

However, the philosophy of action is highly confusing even for the learned. Even the wise cannot differentiate between karma (action prescribed by scriptures), vikarma (forbidden action), and akarma (renunciation of action). Making a clear distinction between these the Lord says that the real Self of man never gets into action, and that action belongs to the body, mind and the senses. Anyone who realises this fact, sees action (of the mind) in inaction (of the body) of those who out of ignorance refuse to work; and sees inaction (of the Self) in action (of the body and senses) of a realised person. Thus, the decision of Arjuna not to fight is actually action, since he identifies himself with his body and senses, and even though he refused to fight, he would continue to be active mentally. On the other hand, Sri Krishna identifies himself with his soul, so his taking part in the battle is inaction, because the soul never gets into action. Similarly the intense activities of Swami Vivekananda would appear as inaction to a jnani, whereas the idleness of an imperfect monk would appear to be full of action (because this imperfect monk identifies himself with his mind which is active) by a realised person.

This true state of inaction by a sage is reached only when he works without any desire and self will, and whose mind is fixed in the Knowledge of the Self. Such a free sage is satisfied with what he gets of its own, is not swayed by the pairs of the opposites like heat and cold, and is steady in success and failure.

Various kinds of sacrifices (sl 24-32): For a perfected being everything around him is Brahman alone. So, when he performs any action, he sees the instrument of action, the doer, the result, and the action itself as Brahman. This kind of sacrifice does not produce any binding result, and is known as Jnana Yajna (Knowledge sacrifice).

Then there are yogis who make offerings to the gods in various ways, and there are also yogis who offer their self (self conditioned by various identifications, upadhi sahita) in the fire of the Supreme Self (upadhi rahita Brahman). This kind of sacrifice is called daiva yajna.

The Vedas talk of many kinds of yajna, but Gita mentions twelve kind of yajna only, and it is emphasised that anyone who does not perform even one of these sacrifices, he becomes a misfit in this world, and fails to achieve a higher world after death.

In praise of Knowledge (sl 33-42): The Knowledge sacrifice (IV.24) is superior to all other material sacrifices, since all works culminate in Knowledge. To learn about this supreme Knowledge one has to seek for a teacher and then learn from him this exalted Knowledge with due humility, service and faith. It is only then that the delusion of multiplicity of existence vanishes from one's mind, and one sees the presence of all beings in one's Self and also in the Lord (sl 35). Thus is experienced the oneness of the Self and God.

The Lord further says that once a person gets established in the Knowledge of Self, all his sins, samskaras, and actions get destroyed forever. There is no purifier on earth that can equal Knowledge. But, this Knowledge can come only to them who have faith and zeal; people with no faith towards this Knowledge of Self ultimately go to ruin.

Sri Krishna sums up his teachings by saying that action does not bind the person who gives up his actions through Karma Yoga, and hence Arjuna should cut asunder his doubts about the Self with the sword of Knowledge, should dedicate himself to Karma Yoga, and should now get up to take part in the battle.

As one might note, this chapter links up Karma Yoga with Jnana Yoga through letting go of one's identification with the non-Self. To attain anything substantial in this world one has to perform some kind of yajna. Depending on the type of yajna, one's achievements would be great or ordinary. The Lord emphasises that the awareness that 'Brahman alone is all this' is the greatest sacrifice which leads to greatest achievements. To do so, one has to learn to differentiate between the Self and the non-Self by overcoming passions, and then acting in a completely detached way.

Chapter V

Karma Sannyasa Yoga: The Way of Renunciation

This and the next chapter is an elaboration of the verse VihAya kAmAn yaH sarvAn (II.71). Both these chapters discuss the state of non-action and also the nature of true yogis.

In the previous chapters Sri Krishna talked of KarmaYoga and Jnana, and also harmonised them by saying that detached action leads to Jnana. Of these, Yoga is characterised by action, whereas Jnana is characterised by just the opposite, inaction. So, Arjuna wants to know which one of the two: action and inaction, is really superior. In reply, Lord Krishna shows the relationship between action and non-action. It may be noted that this conflict of whether or not a person striving after spirituality should work, has been raging on in India from the Vedic times, and continues till date.

Relation between Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga (sl 2-5): Lord Krishna says that there is no difference between the path of action, and the path of Knowledge; and that a Karma Yogi who seeks nothing, nor avoids anything is like a perfect sannyasi who by his very nature, renounces everything. However, between an imperfect Karma Yogi (i.e. he who does not work in a detached way), and an imperfect sannyasi (whose renunciation is superficial), the imperfect Karma Yogi is superior, since through intense action a Karma Yogi will one day learn to be detached; but an imperfect sannyasi will never get an opportunity to go through the corrective process. Sincere work is the greatest teacher of a spiritual aspirant.

When renunciation (sannyasa) is aided by Knowledge (of the nature of Self), it is called sAmkhya, and when action (Karma Yoga) is aided with the equanimity of mind (samatva: II.48), it is called Yoga. Since equanimity leads to Knowledge, it is wrong to think that Yoga and sAmkhya are mutually exclusive. For a sincere seeker, both paths are equally good, and lead to the same goal. But for a beginner on the spiritual path, whose senses are not yet under control, the path of action is superior to that of inaction characterised by sannyasa. Anyone who is conscious of the multiplicity around him must go on working.

Arjuna is still under the delusion of multiplicity, so the Lord asks him to get down to work, but also advises him to attain the state of equanimity while at work. The easiest way to reach this state is to offer the results of every action of his to the Lord, or to stay detached from the results of his own action.

How a Karma Yogi becomes a sAmkhya Yogi (sannyasi) (sl 6-7): It is easy to give up the world, but it is difficult to become a sAmkhya yogi (true sannyasi), since it is not easy to acquire the Supreme Knowledge. But if a person

continues to work and offer the fruits of his actions to God, then he become a Jnani and a sAmkhya yogi soon. Such a sannyasi is in constant union with God, has his senses under control, and sees the presence of his own Self in everything.

How a Yogi functions (sl 8-9): A perfect Karma Yogi is as good as a true sannyasi. So when he works, he is conscious that it is not he who is working, but it is his senses (whom he now sees as different from his true Self) that are acting upon the respective objects.

How should a struggling yogi function (sl 10-12): Those yogis who are still struggling to attain perfection should also practise to work the way a perfect yogi works. He should live in the world untouched by its effects, like a lotus leaf stays in water. He should work without any desire for results, so much so that he should not even have the desire for liberation. His only aim of every work should be to attain the purity of his own mind. This purity, which is free of attachment and aversion, leads to Knowledge, which in turn leads to cessation of all activities (sannyasa).

The outlook of a Yogi (sl 13-15): A realised person becomes calm after getting detached from his body and senses, and uses his body as a person uses his house-- living in it, but without any physical identification. Such a person realises that the soul (Lord residing in his heart) does not create the sense of 'I'ness in him, is not the cause of the result of any action, nor does it create any connection between him and the world, and does not accept any virtue or sin of his. In brief, his soul is indifferent to everything that his body and the senses do. It is only the spiritually ignorant who think that the embodied soul does all these.

Knowledge: Its nature and its effects (sl 16-22): The Knowledge of the Supreme Self destroys all ignorance about one's nature and removes every kind of identification of a person. A sannyasi who attains that Knowledge becomes Tadbuddhi (one whose knowledge has reached the Supreme), TadAtmA (one who has realised the Supreme Self as his own Self), TannisTha (one who is not bound by work, and hence permanently established in the Knowledge of the Self), and TatparAyaNa (one whose only shelter is the Supreme Self).

Such a sannyasi becomes completely free from every kind of blemish, and also reaches the stage from where he sees sameness everywhere -- in a learned brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, or an outcaste. These greats overcome the cycle of birth and death even while living (Jivanmukti). Now he does not feel happy when he experiences the good, nor gets distressed on getting the bad, Being a knower of Brahman, he goes beyond delusion, and is now of a steady mind. Freed from the attachments of the external objects, he finds joy only in the Self and is never devoid of it.

Sri Krishna also explains that the enjoyments born of senses are the real source of pain, since they have a beginning and an end. This is the reason why the wise never indulge in sense pleasure.

How to be a Yogi (sl 23-26): He who can withstand the attack of lust and anger alone becomes a perfect yogi and attains the Supreme State even before his death. Such an aspirant has to learn to be happy and satisfied within himself, has to rejoice within, and has to be illumined within. It is then that he attains Brahman and becomes one with It. It is then that all his sins get destroyed, his doubts get dispelled, his senses come under control, and he dedicates himself to the welfare of all.

Introducing Meditation as a means to Liberation (sl 27-29): When a person shuts out all external objects, fixes his mind between his eyebrows, practises pranayama, controls his mind and the senses, and rids himself of all desires that he becomes liberated. He then comes to know God, the Dispenser of fruits of all actions, the Great Lord of all worlds, and the Friend of all beings. And knowing this, he attains Peace.

Thus it may be seen that Lord Krishna takes up various issues, shows the inherent harmony in all of them, and then shows how each of them is a path to perfection. The goal, according to the Lord is Self Knowledge, which may be attained by any of these means.

Chapter VI

Dhyana Yoga: The Way of Meditation

In V.27, the Lord introduced the concept of meditation. This chapter is an elaboration of its techniques and philosophy. In the previous chapters the focus was on the theoretical concepts of spirituality, but in this chapter the discussion is on the concrete methods for spiritual growth.

To attain the Supreme Knowledge one has to be established in meditation. But this is not an easy thing to do. So all those aspirants who are not able to meditate must do work as described in the earlier chapters. It is only by doing this that one becomes fit to take up meditation, which ultimately makes one fit to attain the Supreme Knowledge.

Defining a true sannyasi and a true yogi (sl 1-4): In the earlier chapters, Gita described the two paths for the realisation of the Supreme Knowledge. The first one is sAmkhya in which one sees the Self as all pervasive, pure, eternal etc. Persons who practise this path become Sannyasins, and give up every kind of ritual and sacrifices (hence they are also called niragni, lit. one who does not touch fire).

The second path is that of action/work. The followers of this path are called Yogis, who control their senses completely, and withdraw their mind from the external world. These people ultimately give up work altogether, and are seen as being actionless.

Ordinary aspirants also want to imitate the advanced souls, and so when they take up one of these two spiritual paths, they stop performing rituals and give up their obligatory duties. But this is wrong and disastrous. Sri Krishna makes it very clear that such an attitude is wrong. By merely acquiring the characteristics of the great, one does not become great. To emphasise this point, Sri Krishna says that by merely giving up the rituals one does not become a sannyasi; nor by merely giving up actions, one becomes a yogi. Only he who works in a detached way is both a sannyasi and a yogi.

The Lord sums up these issues by telling that 'He who wants to attain yoga, for him action is the means; but he who has attained yoga, for him serenity (detachment from the senses and works) is the means.'

Self-control and self-mastery (sl. 5-9): A person desirous of spiritual life has to raise himself from the worldliness all around him. This can be done by the control of his lower self (body and senses) by applying self restraint. It is then that one's self (body and senses) becomes a friend of oneself (the soul); otherwise it becomes his own worst enemy and drowns him into more and more worldliness.

A person who has complete control over himself is always filled with satisfaction, is constantly absorbed in the Supreme Self, goes beyond dualities like heat and cold, considers gold and dirt as equally worthless, and has the same kind of regard and respect for everyone.

Way to Dhyana Yoga (sl 10-19): These verses describe the way to samadhi through meditation. To do so, a yogi should stay in solitude and should practise concentration of the mind. For this, he should take a firm seat and practise prAnAyAma. During meditation his body should be erect, the gaze should be fixed at the tip of his nose, should practise brahmacharya, and should think of God constantly. His food, sleep, recreation and exertion at work should be modest. When such a well controlled mind rests in the Self, it is said to have attained Yoga. At that time the mind of a yogi is as steady as the flame of a candle in a windless place. Such a yogi attains Peace that culminates in Nirvana (mukti, freedom).

Uniqueness of Yoga (sl 20-23): Yoga is described here as severance from the contact of pain. In this state the mind becomes quiet, one enjoys the internal joy, his mind never deviates from The Reality, his joy is boundless and is beyond the reach of the senses. Gaining this state, all other gains

seem trivial; and no sorrow seems important. So, this yoga should be practised by all.

Controlling the mind (sl 24-26): One should renounce all desires born of the will (plans, ambitions, expectations), should draw back the senses from every direction, and should struggle to withdraw the mind from the external world and fix it on the Supreme Self. This should be done bit by bit and over a period of time. He should also practise to withdraw the mind from those objects that make it wander away from steadiness.

Results of meditation (27-32): A yogi whose mind has become quiet and whose passions have calmed down, attains Supreme Bliss and becomes a jivanmukta. Such a yogi is freed from sins and enjoys the touch of Brahman and also unbounded bliss with ease. He also now views all things with equal regard, perceives himself in all beings, and sees all beings in himself. This kind of a yogi, who sees God everywhere and sees everything in God, for him God becomes ever present, and he also becomes ever present for God. Furthermore such a yogi lives in God Himself. According to the Lord, one who treats pleasure and pain alike is the best of the yogis.

How to control the unruly mind (33-36): The mind by nature is restless, turbulent, and uncontrollable like the flow of the wind. How to control such a mind, is Arjuna's question.

To this the Lord said that by a constant practise to bring it under control, and through practising detachment, one can slowly learn to control it. This is quite important, since Yoga cannot be attained by an uncontrolled mind, whereas it can be attained by those who strive after it by applying the proper means.

What if one fails in the path of Yoga (37-45): What happens to those aspirants who do not succeed in the path of yoga? Don't they lose this world and also the higher goal of life? To these questions of Arjuna, Sri Krishna replies that he who gets distracted from the path of yoga, is reborn in a good family, and in time comes in touch with the knowledge acquired in his former body. From that point of time he starts his spiritual journey once again. But under no condition does that failed yogi come to a destruction and a total loss. Such a yogabhrasta (fallen from the path of yoga) is led on to the path of spirituality even if he is not aware of his spiritual tendencies, or is even averse to leading a spiritual life due to the interference of the past bad karmas. Thus struggling through many births, one reaches the Supreme Goal.

Superiority of Yoga (46-47): A yogi is superior to those who practise austerities (tapasya), is greater than those who are learned in the scriptures, and is superior to even those who perform actions like rituals and sacrifices. And of all the yogis, the one who worships God with faith, his heart and mind

fixed in God -- he is the best of the yogis. So, the Lord advises Arjuna to be a yogi.

Thus in this chapter the Lord explains that one who has not yet reached the state of practising the Supreme Knowledge, should first get down to work, then practise selfless work to control his mind, and then should get down to meditation. It is meditation that links up the early stages of sadhana with the higher reaches of spirituality.

Chapter VII

Jnana Vijnana Yoga: The Way of Knowledge with Reason

This chapter may also be called 'The Way of Realisation'. It discusses the philosophical nature of God and his relationship with the Creation and the Created.

It is rare for a person to know God (sl 1-3): Sri Krishna says that of thousands of men, rare a few strive for perfection, and of these perfect ones (those who are striving for liberation are also considered to be siddha, a perfect one) perchance someone realises God. Hence the Lord wants to teach Arjuna both jnana (knowledge about God) and vijnana (experience of God realisation), knowing which one becomes a sarvajna (for whom nothing else remains to be known).

Jnana means the awareness that God exists and that He is the inmost spirit of all. This can be acquired through scriptural studies and reasoning based on them. Vijnana means the realisation of God in oneself and in all beings, and to act accordingly. Sri Ramakrishna says:

"He who has merely heard of milk is 'ignorant'. He who has seen milk has 'knowledge'. But he who has drunk milk and been strengthened by it has attained vijnana.

"The awareness and conviction that fire exists in wood is jnana, knowledge. But to cook rice on that fire, eat the rice, and get nourishment from it is vijnana. To know by one's inner experience that God exists is jnana. But to talk to Him, to enjoy Him as Child, as Friend, as Master, as Beloved, is vijnana. The realization that God alone has become the universe and all living beings is vijnana."

Nature of God (sl 4-5): God has two forms/nature: the lower and the higher. The lower form consists of eight things: Avyakta/Prakriti (mentioned as ahamkara in Gita); mahat (mentioned as buddhi here), ahamkara (mentioned here as manas), and the five elements (which in turn give birth to 5 gross elements, and the 11 organs). This corresponds to the elements of Samkhya philosophy.

In addition to His lower form, God has a higher form also which is the Indwelling Spirit by which the universe is sustained. This is also known as parā prakriti (lit. superior Nature), and being the Spirit form of God, it is superior to His matter form.

Relation between God and his Creation (sl 6-12): The two forms of God discussed earlier are the source of all beings, and He Himself is the origin of the entire Creation and also of its dissolution. Actually, Prakriti has no power to create things or dissolve the created things of its own. Only when God initiates the process that Creation proceeds. Thus God is higher than everything else in the universe, and is like a necklace on which everything of the universe is strung like gems. He is all that is noble, good, virtuous, powerful etc. in the universe. And, whatever is there in the universe, is born of the three gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas), is from the Lord Himself, and is in the Lord itself. But, the Lord is beyond these, and is the controller of all these.

This last statement implies that the universe is only an appearance superimposed by maya on the Lord, as a mirage is superimposed on a desert. The existence of a mirage depends entirely on the desert, but the desert is not dependent on the mirage for anything. And, as the water of mirage cannot soak the desert, similarly none of the properties of the universe can touch God.

Nature of Ignorance (sl 13-15): God is nitya-suddha-buddha-mukta (eternal, pure, conscious/intelligent, free); is the Self of all beings, and is the saviour of all from the cycle of birth and death. It is unfortunate that people cannot recognise Him the way He is because they are deluded by the three gunas that constitute Prakriti/Maya (The Nature). These three gunas produce attachment, aversion, delusion etc. in the minds of all, and do not allow people to know God and His true nature which is beyond the gunas. Although it is difficult for people to overcome Maya, which is of God, and hence divine; but, those seekers who take refuge in the Lord, succeed in going across the ocean of maya. On the other hand, those who are evil doers -- deluded and meanest of people, their understanding gets robbed by maya. These people are endowed with traits like cruelty, violence, telling lies etc. which belong to people with Asuri nature (to be discussed in chapter XVI), and fail to take shelter in the Lord.

The Fortunate ones (sl 16-19): Four types of virtuous men worship the Lord: the distressed, the seeker after divine knowledge, those who want enjoyment, and the illumined souls. Of these four categories of devotees, the Jnanis (illumined ones) are the best. God is supremely dear to the jnanis, and the jnanis are the dear ones of God. This is because they are the Self of each other.

People who seek God for whatever reason are indeed noble (even in distress not everyone goes to God), but the jnanis are the very Self of the Lord. It is rare to come across a jnani who sees God in everything, for, this Knowledge comes to a seeker after many births of spiritual struggle.

Worshipping other gods (sl 20-23): Not everyone understands the nature and form of God, so common men go on worshipping minor deities, including trees and stones to have their wishes fulfilled. This happens because they lose their discrimination due to their desires and ignorance. The Lord says that even such forms of worship, if performed with faith, get deepened by His grace, and the devotee finally obtains the result of his worship. But, even in such cases the Lord alone bestows the fruit of worship, since He alone is the dispenser of the fruit of every action. However, such devotees of limited mind who worship minor deities attain those deities only, whereas the worshippers of the Supreme God attain Him.

Ignorance about God's nature (sl 24-27): People disregard God because they think that He also is impelled by His past karma and is born like an ordinary person. Thus not knowing the supreme nature of God/ Sri Krishna as immutable and transcendent, people go to worship minor deities. This ignorance comes in the mind of a common man due to the Lord's maya which is born of the gunas, and it is thus that the world fails to know God as eternal and unborn. The Lord, being the controller of maya, knows every being of past, present and future, but they cannot know Him due to their ignorance. All beings are deluded due to the pairs of opposites which in turn arise from their desires and dislikes.

The Blessed seekers (sl 28-30): Those devotees who are free of sin, are of noble deeds, are free from delusion, worship the Lord, and take refuge in Him -- they realise Brahman. They come to know about the individual soul (the Divinity that is the reality underlying the individual soul), and they also come to know all about the subtle ways of action. Those who know the Lord to be the One that underlies all the elements, and know Him to be the One that underlies all the gods, and know Him to be the One that sustains all the sacrifices, their consciousness of the Lord remains undiminished even at the time of death. They are the blessed souls.

The Process of Creation according to Vedanta

The process of creation has been described variously by the different philosophical systems of the Hindus. However, the most commonly accepted view is that Prakriti (nature) creates this universe in the presence of the Purusha, who is the Conscious principle behind every creation. Purusha is

identified variously with God, Narayana, Vishnu, Saguna Brahman, Brahma and others, but never with Brahman, the Absolute.

Purusha does not get into the act of creation directly, but gets it done through Prakriti, which is insentient (jada). Vedanta calls it Maya, while many others call it Shakti (the inseparable divine power of God).

Prakriti is composed of three gunas (which mean strands/ qualities, but they may be very very fine particles): Sattva (lightness etc.), Rajas (activity etc.), Tamas (inertness etc.). They always stay together and try to overpower each other. When creation begins, their balance is disturbed. This results in evolution as mentioned below:

Prakriti/ Pradhana/ Avyakta / Avyākṛita (also Ajnana, Maya, Shakti) is composed of the three gunas => Mahat (Cosmic Intelligence) => Ahamkara (Cosmic Ego) => 5 sukshma bhuta / tanmatra => 5 Sthulabhuta / 5 Mahabhuta (gross elements) => 10 indriya (bodily organs) + 1 mind. These are the 24 tattva (elements).

Properties of Tanmatras

The 5 sukshamabhuta (subtle elements) are born one after the other successively: Ahamkara => Akasa (ether) --> Vayu (air) --> Agni (Fire) --> Apah --> Bhumi (earth). Each of these elements has its special characteristic which gets manifested when it is born: Ether -- shabda (sound), Air -- sparsa (touch), Fire -- rupa (form), Water -- rasa (taste), Earth -- gandha (smell).

These 5 elements are also known as Apanchikṛita (uncompounded elements), since these are in their pure form and have sattva, rajas, tamas present in them in varying proportion. Of these, Akasa has predominance of sattva, whereas the next elements (born successively) have a gradual increase of rajas and tamas, and finally bhumi has predominance of tamas. However, since these elements are not yet compounded, they are not capable of creating the universe as we see it.

The mind is born of the sattva particles of all the five elements taken together (Vedantasara: II.70), while jnanendriya (the 5 organs of Perception) are born of the sattva particles of individual elements, karmendriya (the organs of action) are born of the rajas particles of the subtle elements, and the five prana (vital forces) are born of the rajas particles of all the five subtle elements taken together.

When pure consciousness at the individual level gets covered by ignorance, consisting of the three gunas, it is called Karana sharira. The sukshma shariara / Linga Sharira (the subtle body of all beings) is made of 5

tanmatras, and have seventeen component parts: the ten organs of perception and action + manas (mind) + buddhi (intellect) + 5 prana (the 5 vital forces of the body).

Properties of Mahabhuta/Sthulabhuta

The 5 tanmatras combine with each other to produce the compounded elements, known as sthulabhuta (gross elements). Each gross element contains 1/2 of the main subtle element, and 1/8th each of the other subtle elements. Thus gross Akasa = 1/2 of subtle akasa + 1/8 subtle vayu + 1/8 subtle agni + 1/8 subtle aapah + 1/8 subtle bhumi. Other gross elements are produced in the like manner.

Because each gross element has 1/2 of a particular subtle element, it is known by the same name: sky, air, fire, water, and earth. These elements should not be confused with the ordinary fire, water, air etc. that we see around us; rather what we see around us are born of these gross elements.

The sthulabhuta contain the characteristic of the elements from which they got evolved. Thus ether manifests only sound; fire manifests sound, touch, and form; and earth manifests sound, touch, form, taste, and smell.

The heavens, hells, the earth, the bodies (including human) etc. are born of these 5 gross elements. Everything that we see, feel, experience around us are also born of them only.

The table given below details some aspects of creation.

Subtle Elements =>	Akasa	Vayu	Agni	Aapah	Bhumi
Properties	Shabda (sound)	Sparsha (touch)	Roopa (form/colour)	Rasa (taste)	Gandha (smell)
Organs of Perception	Ear	Skin	eyes	tongue	nose
Deities	Dik (Quarters)	Vayu	Surya (Sun)	Varuna	Two Aśvins
Organs of Action	Speech	Acceptance	Walking	Excretion	Procreation
Deities	Agni	Indra	Visnu	Yama	Prajapati
Prana (vital forces)	Prāna	Apāna	Vyāna	Udāna	Samāna

The Mind

Aspects of Mind	Manas	Buddhi	Chitta	Ahamkara
Functions	Cogitative	determinative	data collection	identification
Deities	Chandrama	Brahma	Vishnu	Shiva

The 5 Kosas (the coverings on the soul)

According to Vedanta, Atman alone exists, but due to the divine Ignorance, it apparently gets covered by 5 kosa (sheaths): Annmaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya, Ananadamaya.

Anandamaya Kosa is the Pure Consciousness associated with avidya (ignorance))

Vijanamaya Kosa is the buddhi (intellect) + 5 organs of perception

Manomaya Kosa is the manas (mind) + 5 organs of perception

Pranamaya Kosa is the 5 pranas (vital forces) + 5 organs of action

Annamaya Kosa is the gross body (Sthula sharira)of an individual.

Vijanamaya Kosa, Manomaya Kosa, and Pranamaya Kosa constitute the sukshma sharira (the subtle body) which accompanies the jiva (soul) during transmigration after death. Anandamaya Kosa is the Karana sharira.

Jiva and its various conditions

Names of Bodies	Karana Sharira (Causal Body)	Sukshma Sharira (Subtle body)	Sthula Sharira (Gross body)
Identified with:	Dreamless sleep	Dream state	Waking state
Name of the embodied soul	Prājna	Taijas	Viśva
Name of the aggregate of souls	Ísvara (God)	Hiranyagarbha / Sutrātmā / Prāna	Vaiśvānara

Chapter VIII

Tarak Brahma Yoga: The Way of the Imperishable Brahman

The chapter begins with an explanation of certain terms used in the last two verses of the previous chapter. In the process, the Lord also discusses the philosophy and the dynamics of liberation through stages by the process of meditation. It also shows the way to the Imperishable (akshara) Brahman -- the Real amidst all unreality.

The seven terms explained (sl 1-5): It is important for a sadhaka to understand these terms so that he can differentiate the Imperishable (akshara) from the perishable (kshara) to move ahead in his spiritual journey without getting stuck up.

1. Brahman -- It is the Imperishable Supreme Reality that rules over everything forever.
2. Adhyātma/ Svabhāva -- The Reality (tattva) that exists in everyone as the inmost Self. In truth, the Adhyātma is Brahman itself.
3. Karma -- The process of making the offering during a sacrifice is Karma. It requires giving up (in the form of pouring the offerings), and is responsible for the general welfare of the world. The rains, plants, food, animals, men etc. are produced due to this Karma. It should not be confused with ordinary work, or the law of karma.
4. Adhibhūta -- Every form of matter has an origin and dissolution, is different from the non-perishable Atman, and yet dependent on It for its existence, and is known as adhibhuta. The whole range of products of Prakriti is perishable (kshara), and hence is adhibhuta.
5. Adhidivata -- (lit. the entity existing in the divine plane.) This is Hiranyagarbha, who resides in the Solar Orb and sustains the organs of all creatures.
According to Vedanta, every sense organ has a presiding deity that makes it function. The deity of a particular sense organ is also present at the cosmic level in the external world. Thus the sun-god is in the solar orb and is also the presiding deity of vision in beings. All such deities are the manifestation of Purusha (the Universal Self) in His subtle aspect (Hiranyagarbha).
6. Adhiyajna -- God sustains all the Vedic sacrifices and is called adhiyajna. Also, all the bodily functions are like sacrifices (explained in chapter IV), so, as the Inner controller of the body, God is the adhiyajna who directs all the physical functions of the body.
7. How is God attained at the time of death -- He who remembers God at the time of death, he attains God.

Ascent of a yogi after death (sl 6-10): What a person thinks at the last moments of his life determines his next birth. This means that one should always be absorbed in the thoughts of God, otherwise he won't be able to remember God at the time of his death. This kind of absorption is possible only through a constant practise.

When a person dies thinking of Purusha, he reaches the solar orb. This Purusha is also called Saguna Brahman, who is the Ruler, the Dispenser of all, subtler than an atom, beyond comprehension and beyond any kind of delusion. The abode of this Purusha is the highest manifestation of Brahman in the relative plane and is attained by the yogis who meditate on Him -- the Omniscient and the Primal Being.

Meditation on the Supreme Brahman through Aum (sl 11-15): Now is described the state of the Supreme Brahman who is Imperishable. This state is attained by the chosen few who have self control, are free from dualities, have conquered their passions, and who constantly meditate on the Lord. At the time of death, these yogis withdraw their senses from everything else, focus their mind only on God who resides within the heart, and give up their bodies while uttering Aum. These high souled men reach the Lord and become freed from the cycle of birth and death, since they have attained the highest perfection.

Rebirth for the imperfect (sl 16-19): Excepting for the chosen few (described in sl 11-15), everyone else gets reborn after death. Even those who by the virtue of their meritorious deeds reach Brahmaloaka (the highest heavens ruled by Brahma) have to be reborn after a time. It is believed that during a day of Brahma (9,58,81,60,000 human years) the inhabitants of that heaven enjoy it, but during Brahma's night (same span of time) they all vanish, to reappear again during His next day. Thus the cycle continues with the same beings getting merged at night and then reappearing at daytime as per their karma. No one who has not attained the Lord keeps on evolving and involving in this cyclic process.

Beyond Rebirth (sl 20-22): The night of Brahma is the seed state of all beings from where they spring to life at the daytime. Beyond the cyclic life of the beings of Brahmaloaka is the Eternal Being who does not perish even when everything else perishes. That state of the Eternal Being is Imperishable and is the Ultimate Goal (Parama gati) for everyone. Those who reach that state, never again come back. That is the Abode of the Lord which can be attained only by those noble souls who are completely devoted to that Supreme Purusha, the Lord.

Two paths of ascent after death (sl 23-26): The noble souls who have attained Self Knowledge become free instantly, so there is no more coming or going for them. But the remaining yogis ascend to higher heavens through one of the two paths: 1. Those who meditate on Saguna Brahman (God with form) take the solar path to reach Brahmaloaka. At the end of the cycle of Brahma (His hundred years, 30,91,73,76,00,00,000 human years), they get liberated. 2. Those who perform various meritorious work like ritualistic actions, sacrifices, charity and other noble activities, take the lunar path, enjoy in various heavenly spheres and then are reborn on this earth to continue with their spiritual journey.

These two paths are eternal, and are taken by the yogis only. The ordinary beings who do not practise spirituality can never take these noble paths.

The glory of Yoga (sl 27-28): No yogi who understands the terms explained in the beginning of the chapter, and also knows about these two paths, can ever get deluded. Such a yogi transcends everything (studying the Vedas, performing sacrifices, austerities etc.) that produces any kind of result, and thus reaches the Supreme Abode -- the Primal cause of everything.

Swami Vivekananda in one of his his letters to E.T. Sturdy has discussed the two paths mentioned here, and has harmonised them with Advaita. Interested readers may go through that also.

Chapter IX

Raja Vidya Raja Guhya: The way of Royal Knowledge and Royal mystery

In praise of Raja Vidya (sl 1-3): The previous chapter talked of fixing the mind (dharana) in a particular way to attain liberation (VIII. 11-15). But that kind of difficult sadhana is not possible for people who are not great yogis. So in this chapter the Lord talks of a direct and easier way of attaining Knowledge (Brahma Jnana) which releases one from the bondage of the world. This path should be practised by anyone who has faith in this dharma (the conviction in the existence of God, soul and immortality) to attain peace and happiness. But, men without faith in this dharma keep suffering.

The unparalleled wisdom (sl 4-6): All things of this universe are pervaded by the Supreme Lord in His unmanifested form (as Atman/Consciousness), they all exist in Him, but He does not exist in them (see VII. 4-5). It is like the mirage existing in the desert, but the desert not existing in the mirage. And yet the divine mystery is that the beings of the universe do not dwell in Him (note the contradiction. Will be explained later).

The Lord's Spirit is the support and the source of all beings and things, but It does not dwell in them because there is no real contact between Him and the objects of the world. The Lord is neither the container nor the contained, since there is no duality of any kind in Him. The concept of the container and the contained, or the cause and the effect belongs to the realm of maya, but the Lord is beyond maya, and hence appears to be the cause and support of everything. In reality He is always one and without a second. This is the divine and eternal mystery. The relationship between God and His Creation is like that of the mighty wind blowing everywhere, but staying in Akasa (ethereal space) without affecting it in any way. Just in that way objects stay in God without contaminating Him in anyway, because from His standpoint the whole creation is illusory.

Creation and God (sl 7-10): The whole process of creation, preservation and dissolution is due to the Lord's maya. Maya (Apara prakriti, see ch. VII) projects out of itself all the names and forms at the time of creation, whereas Consciousness (Para prakriti) endows them with life. At the end of the cycle the names and forms of the manifested universe go back into the seed state and remain merged in Prakriti. The Prakriti itself remains in a state of equilibrium of the three gunas. At the beginning of the new cycle, the balance of Prakriti is lost and the creation begins afresh.

The process of cyclic creation is maintained by the Lord through the control of His own Prakriti, and all beings who had not got liberation in the previous cycle, get manifested helplessly once again under the sway of maya. This creation happens due to the mere presence of the Lord. It should be understood that the Lord never creates the beings the way we create things. Creation must serve some purpose, whereas the Lord has no purpose of his own that needs to be served. The universe is perceived as being in time and space, but from the standpoint of Reality, nothing other than the Lord Himself exists. Creation belongs to Prakriti who starts evolving by the mere nearness of the Lord.

Since the creation belongs to maya, God never gets bound by the inequality of the created beings. The Lord is totally free from any desire, purpose, motive or agency in creation, hence He remains unaffected by everything of the universe. In the same way, anyone working without any motive becomes free, the way the Lord is free.

In these verses there is an apparent contradiction, but the fact is that these verses lead from the gross to the subtle understanding. The Lord begins by stating that He projects at the beginning of the cycle, and that Prakriti is only an instrument in His hand; He next says that He is unaffected because He is neutral in the matters of creation; and lastly He says that He does nothing and that Prakriti, animated by His nearness, produces the universe. This system of leading a person from the gross to the subtle is called Arundhati Nyaya.

Only the noble souls can know God (sl 11-15): From time to time the Lord assumes the human form so that men may attain a godly nature. But the ignorant people disregard Him when He is in the human form. This happens because people are not aware of His higher nature as the Supreme Lord of all beings. Such people are vile and ungodly, and cherish vain hopes, perform vain actions, pursue vain knowledge, and are devoid of proper judgement, since they deny the Lord and instead perform this and that action.

On the other hand, the noble souls, endowed with the divine nature, worship only the Lord. They know Him to be Imperishable and the origin of all beings, and worship Him with love, steadfastness and by glorifying Him. Many of them perform Jnana Yajna (see chapter IV), others worship Him as the One, or worship Him as one of the various divinities.

God is everything (sl 16-19): The Lord is the inmost self of everything. He is the sacrifice, the worship, its hymn, its accessories etc. He is the Father of universe (the efficient cause), the Mother (the material cause), the Grandfather (since He is the cause of the manifest world and also is the cause of its cause), and the Sustainer (He sustains the universe through the Law of Karma). He is Aum the purifier, the knowable, and the essence of the Vedas. He is the Goal and the Support, the Lord and the Witness (He is all knowing and ever present, so nothing is hidden from Him), the ultimate Abode and Refuge. He gives heat, He gives rains and also holds them back, He is immortality and also death in this world, He is being (manifested) and also non-being (the unmanifested). It is thus that the devotees of the Lord regard Him in various ways and follow different methods of worship.

The wheel of birth and death (sl 20-25): The followers of rituals and sacrifices as described in the Vedas, go to the heavens, enjoy there, and then are reborn. Thus they are subject to the vicious cycle of birth and death. But those who worship the Lord, meditate upon Him, and are ever devoted to Him, for them the Lord Himself carries what they lack, and preserve what they already have.

The Lord is the ultimate enjoyer of all sacrifices, so when people worship other deities and gods, those worship also reach Him only. But since such misguided people wish to have various desires fulfilled and have different goals to reach, they fail to get liberation even though they labour hard. Thus, those who worship gods go to gods, those who worship ancestors go to ancestors and likewise. Naturally they all get reborn. Only those who worship the Lord go to Him and are not born again.

The Gracious Lord (sl 26-34): These verses describe the grace of God towards those who worship Him with love. Their simplest offerings to the Lord, like water, leaves, flowers etc. is accepted by Him with kindness. So one should offer everything that he does, eats, performs and gifts. It is thus that one becomes free from the bondage of action, and reaches Him. This method of offering the fruits of one's action is called Sannyasa yoga, which combines the path of action (performing duties, hence Karma Yoga), and giving up (offering the results, hence Samkhya yoga). So this is a great and noble method.

The Lord is same towards all beings, but those who worship Him with devotion, they are the chosen ones since they are in Him, and He is in them. This is not out of any partiality, but it is because their Self is one. The Lord is so gracious that even the most wretched and the sinful person soon becomes righteous if he has devotion towards Him, and ultimately attains eternal peace. The devotees of the Lord never perish even if they be sinful, or be of sinful birth -- they all attain the Supreme Goal. Since it is so, then what to say of the noble souls and the sages who are devoted to God! So, everyone who has got a human body in this transitory universe should worship the Lord by regarding Him as the Supreme Goal. Further, one should fix his mind in Him, be devoted to Him and dedicate himself to Him. It is thus that a person reaches Him.

Chapter X

Vibhuti Yoga: The Yoga of Divine Manifestation

Why this chapter (sl 1-3): The seventh and the ninth chapter discuss in brief the essential nature and the glories of God. This chapter describes them in detail. God is the source of gods (like Indra, Varuna etc.) and also of sages, so it is not possible even for them to know Him unless He Himself reveals His nature to them. When a person realises God to be Unborn, without a beginning, and as the Supreme Lord, he becomes freed from all sins.

God -- The Supreme Lord (sl 4-8): Every creature and human being has various qualities and attributes which distinguish one from the other. These attributes like intelligence, knowledge, wisdom, pleasure, pain, birth, death, fame, charity etc. have God as their cause and basis. Also, in the beginning of the Creation the Lord Himself created the seven sages (Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratubh and Vasistha are the seven sages who were created mentally by Prajapati, the first father.) and the four Manus (SāvarNi, Dharma SāvarNi, Daksha SāvarNi, SāvarNa) were created by the Lord Himself mentally. Anyone who realises this divine glory of God, he gets established in Yoga which is characterised by an unshakeable devotion towards God. Such a wise person knows that God is the origin of all, and that all things evolve from Him.

It should be noted here that according to Hinduism the first created beings have their origin in the mind of God. The creation by God is a mental act which is followed by the so-called physical acts of the created beings.

The Blessed Devotees (sl 9-11): The devotees who realise God as Supreme, their thoughts, action and life get centred around Him only. They find delight and satisfaction only in glorifying Him and singing His name. To such devotees God bestows the Yoga of understanding (Buddhi Yoga) out of sheer

compassion, and He also destroys the darkness of ignorance of their hearts by igniting the lamp of Knowledge. This ignorance is both the beginningless avidya, and its effect in the form of illusory perception.

Since phenomenal/worldly knowledge belongs to avidya itself, it is only the Light of the Lord that can destroy the vicious ignorance. The Divine Light shines through the intellect (buddhi), hence this form of sadhana is called Buddhi Yoga, which alone is capable of destroying Ignorance. Thus it is only through the grace of the Lord that one can transcend maya.

Arjuna wants to know about the glories of the Lord (sl 12-18): Arjuna now prays to Sri Krishna, accepting Him as the Lord -- the Supreme Brahman, Supreme Abode and Supreme Holiness. He now wants to hear from the Lord of His divine powers, divine glories, and the way to attain His grace.

The Divine manifestations of the Lord (sl 19-38): These 20 shlokas list some of the prominent things of this world and say that the Lord Himself has become all of them. The fact is that the Lord Himself has become everything, but a common man adores the good and the great, hence this listing has been narrated by the Lord to teach that whatever is exceptionally good in this world, is the Lord Himself.

The Lord, seated in the hearts of all creatures, is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all beings. He is the best of everything: Vishnu among the Adityas, sun among the lights, Sama Veda among the Vedas, mind among the senses, intelligence in the living beings, Aum among the words, Japa among the sacrifices, Himalaya among the immovables, Vajra among the weapons, lion among the beasts, Gayatri among the metres, Agrahayana among the months, spring among the seasons, Vyasa among the sages, Arjuna among the Pandava brothers etc. He is also the all seizing Death, prosperity, glory, fortune, speech, memory, etc.

The Lord's manifestations are infinite (sl 39-42): The Lord sums up His elaboration by telling that there is no being, whether moving or unmoving, that can exist without Him (anything without Him would be void, shunya). So, what has been narrated earlier is only a partial description of the Lord's glories, for, whatever glorious, or beautiful, or mighty being exists anywhere -- that has sprung from a tiny spark of the Lord's splendour. Not only that, this whole universe stands supported by a small fragment (ekamsena) of the Lord.

Meditation on Lord can be done in one of the three ways -- rupa chintana (meditating on the form), lila chintana (meditating on the episodes of His life), and guna chintana (meditating on His Divine qualities). This chapter belongs to guna chintana, and anyone who practises this form of yoga, also reaches the same state where a Jnani reaches. Hence the importance of the chapter.

Chapter XI

Viswarupa Darshana: The Yoga of the Vision of the Lord's Cosmic Form

The previous chapter focusses on guna chintana (contemplation on the Lord's qualities). This chapter describes the Cosmic Form of the Lord, and belongs to roopa chintana (contemplation on the form of God). Both these chapters are great aids to meditation. In addition, this chapter excels in its poetic beauty.

Arjuna wishes to see Sri Krishna's Cosmic Form (sl 1-4): The Lord in His Cosmic Form (as opposed to His Formless aspect) always possesses the six divine qualities: Jnana (Knowledge), Aishwarya (Sovereignty), Shakti (Power), Bala (Strength), Virya (Energy), and Teja (Vigour). This form of God is also known as Iswara form on which the devotees love to meditate. Arjuna wishes to see this form of the Lord which is more concrete to him than the form in which the Lord Creates the universe, controls all, is the Dispenser of the results of action etc., and yet continues to be unchanging, impartial, undisturbed and detached (as described in earlier chapters).

Arjuna gets the divine eyes to see the Cosmic Form of the Lord (sl 5-8): Sri Krishna is about to reveal His Cosmic Form which comprises the whole universe of the moving, unmoving, the past, present and future, the Time itself, gods, sages, divine beings -- all concentrated in His body. It would be the vision of the One in the many, and the many in One. It would explain and justify the apparent contradictions of the relative world and reconcile the famous opposites of the spiritual world -- justice and mercy, fate and free will, suffering and divine love.

The vision of God in all, and all in God removes all doubts and perplexities that cloud a person before the divine revelation. After that he is able to see the relation and unity in the apparent diversity of the universe, and spontaneously surrenders to the will of God. He is then also able to see the most hateful and the terrible things of the world as the divine manifestation of the Lord. It is only then that the blessed person accepts the world with joy and performs every task as the Lord's work.

However, this kind of vision is not possible with the ordinary human eyes which are meant to perceive the multiplicity of this world. So, the Lord gives divine eyes to Arjuna so that he can see the One behind the multiple.

A glimpse of the Cosmic Form (sl 9-14): The Iswara form of the Lord was now revealed before Arjuna and Sanjay (who had been narrating the events of the war to the blind king, Dhritarashtra). The splendour of the Lord was like the radiance of a thousand suns bursting forth at once in the sky. His many faces and many eyes were on every side; His ornaments, weapons, garlands,

perfumes etc. were all divine, awe inspiring, resplendent and limitless. In that person of God, Arjuna saw the whole universe with its manifoldness (gods, men, ancestors etc.) gathered into One.

The sight overwhelmed Arjuna who then bowed his head and folded his palms in reverence to the Lord and addressed Him with hairs standing on end.

The Terrifying Cosmic Form (sl 15-31): What Arjuna saw and described aloud was both benign and terrifying. He saw Brahma (the creator God), the divine sages, all the gods, the divine serpents and a host of other divine beings in Him. The Lord had innumerable arms, faces, eyes and bellies. His form extended on every side, covering every space and looked infinite in every sense. He was a mass of radiance with a divine crown, mace and disc. Arjuna then prayed, 'You are the Imperishable (akshara), the Supreme Being to be realised, the Supreme Support of the universe, the eternal Guardian of the Eternal Dharma, and also the Eternal Being (XI.18).'

The Lord had the sun and the moon for his eyes, His face was like a blazing fire, His form filled all space, everyone trembled with fear at His terrible form and, the hosts of gods and celestial beings were entering into Him with folded hands out of fear. All the divine beings stood trembling before His great form which had many mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, feet bellies and tusks.

Arjuna was terrified at this sight. He saw His opponents including Bhishma, Drona, Karna and others, and also the warrior chiefs of his own side entering the Lord's terrible mouths in which many were caught between His teeth. Like many rivers rushing towards the ocean, or like moths rushing into a blazing fire, the creatures were entering the terrifying mouths of the Lord towards their destruction. This terrified and troubled Arjuna who cried out in pain to the Lord to have mercy. He wanted to know who Sri Krishna was (Sri Krishna had been Arjuna's friend, at the same time he stood before Arjuna in His terrible form).

The implications of the vision (sl 32-34): Hinduism accepts God in totality; He is the Creator, Preserver and also the Destroyer. This is the reason why Hinduism has no need for a Devil who would undo all the good that God creates. Since every new creation requires the destruction of the old, so Hinduism accepts Destruction as an essential feature of God, and hence sees Time as a manifestation of God. For the same reason Hinduism has equal reverence for Brahma (the creator God) and Kali (the Destroyer).

The Lord says that He is the world destroying Time, and is currently engaged in slaying the warriors. Even without Arjuna all those warriors were going to die. So the best thing for Arjuna was to stand up in the battlefield and win glory by becoming an instrument in the hands of the Lord (Nimitta mātram bhava savyasāchin), since the warriors have already been destroyed by the Lord (XI.33).

This verse explains that none can stop the divine will. Sri Krishna reminds Arjuna that he has been appointed by the Lord as His human instrument on account of his past good karma. The reward for his present actions have also been determined by the divine will in the form of glory for him. Now he only has to make his own will one with the divine will by performing his set duties. Elaborating this further in the XVIIIth chapter, the Lord would say 'your nature would make you fight'. Thus the best thing for a person is to perform his duties according to varnashrama dharma, and surrender oneself to the divine will. This is how the destiny is fulfilled.

It is through this glimpse into the nature of reality that the Lord encourages Arjuna to give up weakness of every kind and fight to kill, since they are already dead.

Arjuna's prayer to the Lord (sl 35-46): Arjuna then broke into a prayer in praise of the Lord and said that He was the Primal Cause even of Brahma (since He creates Brahma), the Infinite, Abode of the universe, the Imperishable, the Supreme, Being and non being (Relatively speaking, Existence and non existence are the two conditions of God's manifestation), the Knower and also that which is to be known, and the Ultimate Goal. He was the Wind, Death, Fire, Moon, Varuna (the famous Vedic gods), the Prajapati (the sire of all living beings) and the Great grandfather (the father of Brahma).

Arjuna was so emotionally charged that he started making namaskara (salutations) on all sides of the Lord, and begged to be apologised for his casual behaviour with Sri Krishna in the past, and finally prayed to the Lord to assume his former manifestation which was tender, benign and loving. It is this meditating aspect (the humanised form of the Lord) that reassures and soothes the devotees, and hence Arjuna wanted to see that old form only.

The Lord assumes his normal Form (47-55): The Lord says that Arjuna is lucky in having seen the Cosmic Form of the Lord, since no human endeavour (the study of scriptures, performance of sacrifices etc.) can help one to have this vision. And then the Lord assumed his human form which had a graceful shape, and comforted the terrified Arjuna by saying that he was indeed the blessed one, since even the gods cannot see this Universal Form of the Lord. It is only the devotee who does His work (dedicates all

works to the Lord without seeking any fruit for himself), looks on Him as the Supreme Goal, is devoted to Him, is without any attachment or aversion -- that he succeeds in having His vision. It is then that He reaches God and enjoys Him uninterruptedly till He lives, and becomes one with Him after his death.

This chapter is extremely important for the devotees of the Lord. It provides a lot of material to meditate upon, and contemplate upon.

Chapter XII

Bhakti Yoga: The Way of Divine Love

In Gita, two modes of worship have been discussed: the worship of the Cosmic Form and the worship of the Absolute Brahman. The former is meant for the beginners who presuppose a distinction between the Lord and the individual soul. The Lord is the saviour of these individual souls.

The other method of worship is meant for jnanis who do not see any distinction between the Lord and the individual soul, so they do not depend on any external being for their liberation, since all that is, is the Self alone. These two paths of worship are different, though ultimately they bring the same result of liberation to their followers.

The followers of the Impersonal aspect of God are called Jnanis, and the devotees of God with form are called bhaktas. Jnanis see that he alone exists in the universe as Atman; whereas a bhakta sees that He alone exists in the universe as God. However, in both these cases the personal ego and the petty self is crushed to make room for the Universal Spirit.

This chapter synthesises the two paths taken by these two class of spiritual aspirants: Jnani and Bhakta.

Harmony of Jnana and Bhakti (sl 1-4): Arjuna was advised in the last verse of the previous chapter to worship the Personal God, whereas chapter II to X talked of the Impersonal aspect of Godhead. Since the two paths, and their followers are different, Arjuna wanted to know who were better yogis: the Jnani, or the Bhakta.

Sri Krishna replies that the devotees who have supreme faith in Him and whose minds are fixed in Him are the perfect yogis. The Lord then adds that the worshippers of the Imperishable Brahman (the Jnanis) who have completely controlled their senses, and are even-minded under all conditions, attain the Lord Himself, since He has told earlier "The aspirant endowed with Jnana is My very Self" (VII.18).

It is thus that the two paths of spiritual sadhana are harmonised, and also the two classes of aspirants are placed at the same level.

Why Bhakti is superior to Jnana (sl 5): Although the paths of Bhakti and Jnana lead to the same end, the path of Bhakti is better because it is easier. Those who are followers of the path of Imperishable Brahman, find the path difficult and tortuous if they have even the slightest identification with their body or senses. To a Jnani, the body and the world is a bother; but to a devotee his body is an instrument of God to perform His duties in the world. This is why a Jnani practises discrimination (Neti Neti), whereas a Bhakta accepts everything of this world.

The Path of Perfection through Bhakti (sl 6-8): Those who offer all their actions to the Lord, whose mind are absorbed constantly in Him, and regard Him as the Supreme Goal -- for them the Lord Himself becomes the Saviour from the ocean of life and death, i.e., the committed devotees get liberated by His grace. So, the Lord advises Arjuna to fix his mind on Him, and put his thoughts on Him. In this way Arjuna would undoubtedly be able to live in Him alone, i.e., Arjuna will get mukti, which is the ultimate goal set by the Hindu scriptures.

In Hinduism, four kinds of liberation have been described. In sāyujya mukti, the individual soul becomes one with the Godhead. This liberation is sought only by the jnanis, and not by the bhaktas who want one of the other three liberation: sālōkya (living eternally with the Lord in His abode), sāmīpya (staying in nearness of the Lord), sārūpya (getting the same form as the Lord).

Different methods of attaining Bhakti (sl 9-11): Fixing the unwavering mind on God is the best way to attain bhakti, but if a person does not succeed in that, then one may try abhyāsa yoga, the yoga of constant practise of fixing the mind on God. If one cannot practise abhyāsa yoga, then one may devote oneself to the service of the Lord; and if one is unable to do that also, then one must learn to surrender the fruits of all action to Him, and take refuge in Him. This way one gets rid of one's selfishness.

Karma-Phala-tyāga, offering the fruits of action to the Lord (sl 12): The Lord goes on to extol the spiritual path of karma phala tyāga by telling that it is better than meditation based on knowledge of the spiritual truth, which in turn is better than knowledge without meditation, which again is better than mere practice.

This is a tricky shloka, and does not fit in the general pattern of Gita. However Acharya Shankara explains: the perfect sannyasi gives up all action, and thus attains peace. Similarly, when an ignorant person gives up his desire for the

result of action, he too attains peace, since he is out of hankering. In both these cases, 'giving up' is common, and hence the Lord extols it as superior to every other mode of sadhana.

Virtues of the Jnani (sl 13-19): The next seven verses describe the virtues that are natural with an all renouncing sannyasin. However, every spiritual aspirant should struggle to practise these to become perfect.

He who never hates even those who cause him pain, who is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of "I" and "mine", is even minded in pleasure and pain, is ever content, is self controlled, has firm conviction regarding the essential nature of the Self, and who has devoted his mind and intellect to the Lord is dear to Him.

Being detached from his self-centredness, a devotee is free from joy and anger, and hence never causes any trouble for anyone, nor gets troubled by anyone in the world; he who is not dependent upon anything (even his own body), is internally and externally pure, prompt in action, impartial to all, untroubled by anything in the world, and does not get down to doing anything out of his ego or selfishness (a devotee lets the divine will flow through his body and mind unhindered by his ego). Such a person is dear to the Lord.

He who does not rejoice (on attaining the favourable), nor hates (on attaining the unpleasant), grieves not (on losing something), and desires not (the unattained); and has renounced both good and the evil, is dear to the Lord. It may be noted that unlike the Semitic religions, Hinduism does not talk of giving up the evil, but stresses on giving up both the good and the evil, for, both of them create bondage for the soul.

He who treats friends and foes alike, stays unmoved in honour and calumny, treats the dualities like pleasure and pain, heat and cold alike; who is free from attachment, unchanged by praise and blame, stays silent, ever content, is homeless (a sannyasi), firm of mind, and full of devotion -- such a person is dear to the Lord.

The extremely dear ones of the Lord (sl 20): After enumerating so many virtues in the seven verses, the Lord says that to Him the exceedingly dear are those devotees who regard Him as the Supreme Goal, are endowed with faith and devotion to Him, and who follow the Immortal Dharma as described in the previous seven verses. Practise of this Dharma makes one immortal and hence everyone who wants liberation, and also those who seek Supreme Blessedness should practise these virtues.

Chapter XIII

Kshetra-Kshetrajna Yoga: The way of Discrimination between matter and spirit

Matter and Spirit (sl 1-4): In the seventh chapter the Lord talked of aparā prakriti (lower nature, or, matter) and parā prakriti (the higher nature, or, spirit). Arjuna now wants to know about them, and also about the nature of knowledge (this question by Arjuna is omitted in some versions, so shloka numbers may vary by 1). In this chapter, aparā prakriti has been termed as kshetra (lit. Field), and parā prakriti has been termed kshetrajna (lit. knower of the Field).

The Lord explains that the individual body is the field (since it is through the body that one reaps the fruits of one's karma); and jiva (the individualised soul) is the knower of the field. He then goes on to say that the Lord Himself is the knower in all Fields (which means that jiva is one with God), and the knowledge of the Field and its Knower alone is the true Knowledge, which everyone should try to attain. He also mentions that the Vedas (Shruti), the past Sages (anubhuti, realisation), and the books of reasoning (yukti) have talked of these things in the like manner.

Here it may be mentioned that according to the Hindus, no spiritual truth may contradict the three tests of shruti (Vedas), yukti (ratioanlity), and, anubhuti (personal experience). Even when the Lord Himself is the speaker of spiritual truths, he stresses that He is not contradicting the past masters.

Matter, the Field (5-6): The Field consists of mahabhuta (ether, air, fire, water, earth), ahamkāra (I-consciousness), buddhi (intellect), avyakta (Prakriti, the unmanifested -- cause of all matter), the ten senses, the mind, and the five sense objects (sight, taste, smell, hearing, touch). These have been described in the seventh chapter. In addition to these, the Field also consists of: Desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, aggregate (the body and the senses), intelligence, and fortitude. Not only these, but every modifications of the mind which becomes the object of knowledge, belongs to the realm of the Field.

The essential virtues required to attain Knowledge (7-11): Having told in brief what is Field, and what is Field-knower, the Lord goes on to describe the true Knowledge; but before that He describes the virtues that one must acquire before he becomes fit to attain Knowledge. These virtues are: humility, modesty, non-violence, forgiveness, honesty, service to the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control; and dispassion towards sense objects, absence of ego, constant reflection on pain and suffering inherent in birth, old age, disease, and death; detachment, non-identification with son, wife, home and the rest (since their happiness or misery make one happy or miserable); perfect evenness of mind in the midst of the desirable and the undesirable;

unswerving devotion to the Lord through single-minded contemplation, resorting to solitude, distaste for company (of the worldly minded); steadfastness in acquiring the knowledge of Self, and seeing the omnipresent Supreme Being everywhere. These virtues are also called knowledge because they are the means to the attainment of Knowledge. And, that which is contrary to this is ignorance.

Knowledge of Supreme Brahman (12-18): Describing true knowledge, the Lord says that the only thing that ought to be known is that which leads to Immortality. What is that? It is the Supreme Brahman, which is without beginning, and is said to be neither being, nor non-being. This verse explains that unlike any object of the world, Brahman cannot be proved to exist (sat) through experience or words, hence it cannot be called sat (being). Similarly, the consciousness associated with the the idea of the non existence of an object is called asat (non-being) (eg. flowers in the sky); but Brahman is not asat, since It can be known through shāstra pramāna (evidence of the scriptures), which again is based on the aparoksha anubhuti (direct and intuitive experience) of the sages.

To prevent the misunderstanding that Brahman is non-being (as is believed by Buddhists and others), the Lord uses the language of the parables and narrates Its upādhis (adjuncts) figuratively that can be understood by a common man. It must be made clear that the description that follows, is only apparent, and not at all real. The Lord says that It (Brahman) has Its hands, feet, eyes, head, mouth, and ears everywhere, and It pervades all beings as existence and consciousness (since sense organs require consciousness to function). It shines through the functions of all the senses, and yet It has no physical sense organ; It is unattached, and yet is the sustainer of all; It is devoid of the gunas (three qualities of Nature), and yet enjoys them. He is both outside (as the external body) and inside (as inmost Self) of all beings; It appears as moving and also as unmoving bodies. He is incomprehensible because of His subtlety; and He is very near (residing in one's heart and realised so by the enlightened), and yet far away (To the ignorant who think It to be far away in the space, and unknowable even in billions of years).

Like the indivisible akāsa (ether) that appears divided by the material objects, the Brahman is undivided, and yet appears to exist as if divided in beings. That knowable Brahman (as mentioned in verse 12) appears as the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of all beings. The Supreme Being is the Light of all lights, is said to be beyond darkness (of ignorance). As knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the goal of knowledge, It is planted pre-eminently in the hearts of every living being. Brahman is within everyone, and not merely in the heaven.

The Lord concludes the topic by telling that the devotees who thus understand the Field, the knowledge and the object of knowledge as described above, become worthy of His state (liberation).

Prakriti and Purusha (19-22): Coming back to the issues of aparā prakriti (Prakriti) and parā prakriti (Purusha) that was raised in the seventh chapter, the Lord says that both Prakriti and Purusha are beginningless (these are the two natures of God, and God Himself is beginningless). Also, all forms (mind, body, senses, matter) and gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas, which manifest in the form of pleasure, pain, delusion etc.) are born of Prakriti. The same Prakriti is also said to be the cause of generation of physical body and the sense organs, whereas the Purusha is said to be the cause of experiencing pleasure and pain. Here Purusha means the intelligent principle synonymous with jiva (the individualised soul), Kshetrajna, and bhokta (enjoyer), but does not mean the Paramatman, the Supreme Self.

Purusha and Prakriti of Gita should not be confused with the male and female principle of common understanding, and also of some other philosophy. Here Purusha means pure consciousness, and Prakriti means non-conscious matter.

Embodied in Prakriti, Purusha experiences the gunas (manifested as various qualities like happiness, misery, wisdom, foolishness etc.) and feels identified with them, which results in His being born in good and evil wombs. Thus, Purusha and Prakriti are the actual cause of the phenomenal existence, the samsāra. Prakriti creates the samsāra by transforming itself into body, senses, feelings etc., whereas Purusha behaves like a samsārin, the phenomenal being, by identifying Himself with the body and also experiencing the pleasure, pain etc., associated with the body. Despite this apparent identification, which is born of sheer ignorance, Purusha always remains unchanging, and yet appears like a transmigratory being.

The Supreme Spirit in the body is the Witness (He does not actually take part in the actions of the body as the senses do), the Approver (of actions by the body, senses etc.), the Supporter (the intelligence of the Supreme Self reflected by the body, senses etc. serves the purpose of the jiva), the Enjoyer (since Supreme Spirit alone has the eternal Intelligence), is the sovereign Lord (since It is one with the universe), and the Highest Self (since It is superior to the body, senses, mind etc.).

Self Knowledge (23-26): He who knows Purusha, Prakriti, and the gunas is never born again regardless of his way of life. Some people realise the Self within themselves through the mind purified by meditation, some by devotion to knowledge, and some by devotion to work. Many others hear about the Self from others and start worshipping It with full faith. These people too attain liberation.

Whatever is born, animate or inanimate, is born through union of the Field and the Knower of the Field. But this union is not like the union of two similar material objects, since matter and spirit are opposed to each other in every sense. When they come near each other, they superimpose the qualities of each other on themselves, as a rope in darkness acquires the qualities of a snake. When a person realises the identity of the individual soul and the Lord of the universe, then the identification drops automatically, and the jiva gets liberated. Hence it is the knowledge of one's true spiritual nature, as one with the Lord, that is really important in life.

Beyond Illusions (27- 30): He who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike within all beings, and not perishing when the beings perish, he alone is wise. When one sees the Lord present alike everywhere, he does not injure Self (the spirit) by self (the false self born of identification with the body, senses etc.), and thus reaches the supreme state. It is the identification of a person with the non-self that is the cause of all bondage and rebirth. Once this identification is cut asunder, liberation comes spontaneously. When one sees that all actions are done by Prakriti and that the Self is beyond any action then alone he is called wise.

When one sees that the manifoldness and diversity is centred in the One, and that all evolution is from that One, he becomes one with Brahman.

The Supreme Self and the manifoldness (31-33): Being beginningless and without any gunas, the Supreme Self neither acts, nor gets stained by the action of the body in which It dwells. Just as the all-pervading space is not stained by the objects it pervades, similarly, the Spirit abiding in all bodies does not get stained by the acts of the body. Giving another example the Lord says that just as the sun illumines the entire world; similarly, the Spirit illumines the whole body without getting tainted.

Those who fully understand the distinction between the Field, the Knower of the Field, and the means of deliverance from Prakriti (the means are meditation, renunciation, and other spiritual disciplines), they alone attain the Supreme.

Chapter XIV

Guana traya Vibhaga: The yoga of Discrimination of the three gunas

Introduction (sl 1-2): It was stated earlier that the Lord creates, sustains and destroys the universe through His two aspects -- matter and Spirit. Although the soul residing in the body is one with God, it wrongly identifies itself with the three gunas (lit. quality) of Prakriti due to ignorance, and then gets born in various bodies, suffering the good and the bad produced by the actions of the body.

This chapter discusses the three gunas. The wise ones who understand the characteristics of the three gunas, are never born again: it is thus that they get mukti, liberation.

Creation explained (sl 3-4): Matter and Spirit are the Lord's two aspects. When the time of creation comes, the Lord in His Spirit form impregnates the Great Nature (which is also His own form) from which Hiranyagarbha (the Cosmic egg) is born. The full creation proceeds from this Hiranyagarbha. In this way, the Lord is both the Father and Mother of the universe.

Not only that. Whatever is born anywhere in the universe, including in the heaven, the Lord Himself is its seed giving father, and the Great Nature, the womb. Thus, the Lord is directly the father of microbes, plants, animals, men, gods and other beings. No birth is possible without Him.

The three gunas (sl 5-9): The insentient Prakriti, the mother of all matter and material things, consists of the three gunas: sattva, rajas, and tamas. Naturally everything born of Prakriti (i.e., excepting the Spirit) in this universe is compounded of these three elements. The soul, on the other hand, is of the nature of pure consciousness, and when it comes in contact with Prakriti (which is fully non-conscious entity), It (the soul) comes under bondage through the three gunas of Prakriti. Although this bondage is not real, the soul, out of its sheer delusion caused by Prakriti, imagines itself to be under real bondage, and goes on to enjoy and suffer for things which are not at all his. This is maya.

Sattva is by nature serene, luminous, healthful and stainless. It creates the attachment to happiness, knowledge and such noble qualities in the soul. It must be remembered that even noble qualities like knowledge, are attributes of mind, and hence belong to the realm of Prakriti. A person who wants mukti, must come out of the snares of noble qualities also, and be free of every duality. This is the fundamental difference between Vedanta and other religions that preach to be good. Virtues like goodness and nobility must be cultivated, since these are the stepping stones to the Highest, but they are not themselves the Highest. Sri Ramakrishna's story of the three robbers beautifully highlights this fact. In the story even sattva is a robber just like his two brothers rajas and tamas. Sattva is a noble robber, but indeed a robber. Even he cannot dare go anywhere near freedom.

Rajas is of the nature of passion, and is the cause of desire and attachment. It binds the soul by creating an attachment in it towards action. People who are very active are rajasik in nature, and hence quite far from realisation.

Tamas has its roots in deep ignorance, so it binds the soul to delusion. Due to tamas, creatures get attached to sleep, sloth, and confusion. Under its influence one becomes lazy, inattentive, and unproductive. In matters of inactivity, both sattva and tamas are alike, so quite often tamas passes off as sattva.

An overview of the gunas (sl 10-18): The three gunas are always together, but each one tries to assert itself over the other two. When sattva becomes powerful in a being, he becomes full of knowledge and noble qualities, when rajas overpowers the other two, the soul becomes greedy, hyper active, enterprising, lustful etc; and when tamas prevails over sattva and rajas, the result is a clouded mind, indolence, delusion etc.

Life after death is also determined by the preponderance of a particular guna at the time of death. Sattva leads one to higher heavens, rajas takes the departed soul to the wombs of active species, and tamas takes one to the wombs of creatures who are devoid of reason.

Repeating what has been told earlier, the Lord says that actions that are based on sattva, produce good and clean results; the results of actions based on rajas are painful in nature; and tamas produces results that are deluding in nature. Sattva gives birth to knowledge, rajas produces greed, and tamas gives rise to confusion, ignorance, and sloth. Those who are established in sattva go upward to heaven; those established in rajas are born among men, and those steeped in tamas go downward to the level of beasts.

Mukti (sl 19-20): Enjoying and suffering through myriads of experiences, the Spirit stays entangled in the snares of maya through the gunas. When the right knowledge dawns upon the Spirit, It struggles to come out of the sway of the gunas to attain liberation. When a man of insight realises that it is the gunas that transform themselves into bodies, senses and sense objects; and that the agent of action, the instrument of action, and the result of action -- all belong to Prakriti, and he also comes to know the Lord who is beyond the gunas, he attains the Lord, which is liberation. When the embodied soul (jiva) transcends the three gunas, it is then that it comes out of the cycle of birth, death, old age, pain etc. and becomes immortal.

Beyond gunas (sl 21-25): How to recognise the person who has transcended the three gunas, is the question of Arjuna. To this the Lord enumerates the qualities of a trigunatita (transcended person):

He neither hates the presence of the noble (sattva), activity (rajas), or delusion (tamas); nor does he desire them when they are absent; he remains like a witness amidst all the happenings around him without being affected, and stays firm and unwavering, knowing that all the activities are of the

gunas, and not of himself, or of anything else. He always keeps his mind fixed on the Self and is indifferent to pain and pleasure; to him a clod, a stone, and gold are alike; to him the dear and the unfriendly are alike; he is of firm mind, and is calm in praise or blame. He is indifferent to honour and disgrace, is impartial to friend and foe, and gives up all undertakings (since all action belong to the gunas).

These in brief are the qualities of the person who has transcended the gunas. However, these qualities do not surface in a person after realisation, but these need to be acquired as virtues by special effort prior to the attainment of Self knowledge. After realisation, these qualities become natural to a jivanmukta person.

How to transcend the gunas (sl 26-28): The Lord is the Abode of the Immortal and the unchangeable Brahman, is the Abode of Eternal Dharma, and is also the Abode of Absolute Bliss. So, those who worship the Lord with the yoga of unswerving love, rise above the gunas and become fit to be one with Brahman.

Chapter XV

Purushottama Yoga: The way to the Supreme Self

God and Mammon cannot be served at the same time; nor can two swords be kept in the same scabbard -- these words of Jesus Christ are true for every seeker of spirituality. He who wants to attain liberation, or wants to love God with unswerving devotion, has to be detached from the world, the samsāra. This chapter describes the world through the analogy of an asvattha tree, so that an aspirant understands its nature and then develops an intense dispassion towards it. This leads a devotee towards love and knowledge of God.

Samsāra as the asvattha tree (sl 1-4): This samsāra, or the cosmic existence is like a huge asvattha tree (the holy fig tree, Ficus Religiosa), which is rooted above in Saguna Brahman (Brahman with maya), and whose branches are the evolutes of Prakriti (mahat etc. see ch. VII). The leaves of this tree are the Vedas, since these protect the samsara tree by spelling out dharma and adharma. Its branches spread above (up to Brahma loka, the highest heavens) and below (to the subhuman planes), is nourished by the gunas (see ch. XIV), the sense objects are the buds, and its clustering roots spread downwards in the world of men, giving rise to action. These roots are the samsakāra (latent impressions) that are the cause and also the effects of good and bad actions.

It is difficult for a non spiritual person to comprehend the samsara's true form, including its origin, end, and its existence; because it continues to go on for him, and also keeps on changing its form. The only way out is to cut down this firm rooted samsara tree with the strong axe of detachment, and then to pray, 'I take refuge in God, from whom has come forth all this'. An aspirant should then strive to reach that state from where one does not have to come back to this samsara.

The Goal and the way (sl 5-6): The characteristics of a perfect spiritual aspirant have been described by the Lord as: he is free from pride and delusion, has risen above worldly attachments, is liberated from the pairs of the opposites like pleasure and pain, his desires are fully stilled, and he is ever devoted to the Supreme Self. When a person acquires these qualities, he reaches the Supreme Goal -- the Supreme Abode of the Lord. That Abode of the Lord is self illumined, and is beyond the illumination of the sun, moon, or fire. One who reaches that Abode, he does not have to be born again.

Creation and Rebirth (sl 7-11): Creation in Vedanta is explained with the analogy of the sun in the sky, and its reflection in a bowl of water. The actual sun and the reflected sun are apparently two, but when the water dries up in the bowl, the reflected sun goes back to the actual sun only. In this analogy, the sun is the Supreme Lord, the bowl is the Prakriti, and the water in the bowl is the mind. When the water (i.e. mind) is emptied, the bowl (Prakriti) continues to be there, and can be filled up by some other water (rebirth). But when the bowl itself is destroyed (i.e. Prakriti itself is dissolved through right knowledge), that reflected sun can never again come into existence.

In these verses, this concept of creation and rebirth are explained. At the time of creation, an eternal portion of the Lord (a portion of the Infinite is also infinite) becomes a living soul (jiva) in the world, and draws to itself the five senses and the mind from the Prakriti. At the time of death, and later at the time of acquiring a new body (i.e. rebirth), the lord of the body and senses (i.e., jiva) is accompanied by the subtle body (which includes senses and the mind. Also see notes in ch. VII). This carrying by the jiva, of the senses etc. is like the wind carrying away the scents from where it passes. Thus, even when the physical body is destroyed after death, jiva continues its journey with the essential components of the previous body and the mind, to work out its karma through a new body.

The physical organs like the eyes, are only the external agents of the senses, which are actually subtle, and belong to the subtle body. Jiva lords over the senses and the mind to experience the sense objects of the world. The jiva, however, cannot be perceived by a common man when it leaves the body at the time of death, or when it dwells in the body, or when it is united with the gunas, or while it experiences the objects. Only the eyes of wisdom, acquired

by the study of scriptures and contemplation on them, can perceive the jiva in all its modes. When the aspirants who are armed with yoga of concentration and self control, make effort to see the jiva, they behold him dwelling within themselves; but the undisciplined minds (who lack austerity and self control) do not succeed in perceiving him, even if they make efforts to do so.

The glories of the Lord (sl 12-15): These verses describe Lord's presence in this world:

The light that is in the sun and illumines the whole universe, the light that is in the moon, and also in the fire, is due to the Lord. Entering the earth, the Lord sustain all beings by His energy, and becoming the sapid moon, He nourishes all herbs (or, plants). It has been the belief of the Indians that the moon (lit. Soma) is the repository of all sap. When the sap enters a plant, it gets nourished and enriched. The verse says that Lord Himself is that Soma.

The Lord enters the bodies of all living creatures in the form of the Vaishvānara fire (the fire that lives in the stomach), and mingling with the prāna (upward vital air) and apāna (downward vital air), He alone digests the four kinds of food (masticated, sucked, swallowed, and licked) taken by the living beings.

Above all, He is seated in the hearts of all as the onlooker and witness of all that is good and bad going around; from Him comes memory and knowledge, and also their loss. He alone is the Author of Vedānta, the Knower of the Vedas, and He alone is to be known through all the Vedas.

The true nature of the Lord (sl 16-20): There are two beings in the world: the Perishable and the Imperishable. The Perishable comprises all creatures and changing forms, and the Imperishable is said to be the Unchanging maya shakti, the power of the Lord. This maya shakti is the seed of all all perishable beings of this samsara. From the relative standpoint of the world, this samsara (the banyan tree) is endless, hence its seed, the maya shakti is also Imperishable.

Beyond the perishable and the Imperishable lies Purushottama (God, the Supreme Self), who is the Highest, unchanging, all pervasive, and sustainer of the universe. The Lord is superior to the Perishable (the tree), and also superior to the Imperishable (maya shakti, the seed of the tree), and hence He is extolled in the world and in the Vedas as the Supreme Self.

The truly undeluded person -- who knows the Lord to be the Supreme Self -- he knows all that is to be known (that the individualised soul and the Supreme Self are one), and he worships the Lord with all his heart. A man becomes truly wise only after knowing this profound truth, and after that he is no more bound by any duties or responsibilities.

While concluding, the Lord terms this chapter as shastra, scripture. This term has not been used in Gita for any other chapter. According to Acharya Shankara, this chapter contains the essence of the entire Vedas, hence this honour.

Chapter XVI

Daivasur Sampad Vibhaga Yoga: The Division of Divine and Demoniatic treasures

In the XIVth chapter, the Lord discussed the three qualities: sattva, rajas and tamas of Prakriti that are responsible for the existence of this universe. Every object and every person is composed of these three qualities in varying proportion. With the performance of spiritual sadhana, the personality of an aspirant undergoes major transformation. Instead of being dictated by rajas and tamas, he now gets established in sattva. This results in manifestation of divine qualities (Daivi Sampad) born of shraddha (faith and respect) rooted in sattvaguna. On the other hand, people whose shraddha is rooted in rajas and tamas, get a preponderance of demonic traits (Asuri sampad).

Lord describes the traits of these two types of personalities.

The Divine qualities (sl 1-3): Fearlessness, purity of heart, perseverance in the yoga of Self-knowledge, charity, self-control, sacrifice, study of the scriptures, austerity, honesty; non-violence, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, equanimity, abstaining from slanderous talk, compassion for all creatures, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, courage, forgiveness, fortitude (the power to sustain one's body and mind even when tired or dejected), cleanliness (external and internal), absence of malice, and absence of pride -- these are some of the qualities of those who are born with divine virtues.

The Demoniatic traits (sl 4): Those born with demonic qualities have traits like: Hypocrisy, arrogance, conceit (self pride), anger, rudeness, and ignorance. More of these will be discussed a little later.

The effects of the natures (sl 5-6): There are only two types of human beings in this world: the divine; and the demoniatic. Divine qualities lead to salvation, whereas the demonic traits create bondage. The Lord added that Arjuna need not worry, since he was born with divine qualities.

More traits of demoniatic persons (sl 7- 18): Persons of demonic nature do not know correctly what to do and what not to do to attain the goal of life. They neither have purity, nor good conduct, nor truthfulness to attain the highest. People with such propensity say: The world is devoid of truth (i.e. truth has absolutely no value in this world, and that the scriptures etc. are all untrue),

without a moral basis (which sustains the world), and without a God. The union of male and female, and lust alone is the cause of this world, and nothing else.

Holding such a view (materialists and atheists), these degraded souls of little understanding and cruel acts are born as enemies of humanity for the destruction of the world. Filled with insatiable desires, hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance; they hold false views due to delusion and impure motives. Obsessed with endless anxiety lasting until death, they consider gratification of desire as their highest aim, and are convinced that sense pleasure is everything. Bound by hundreds of ties of hope and enslaved by lust and anger; they find nothing wrong in amassing wealth by unlawful means for the satisfaction of their passions.

They think on these lines: "This I have gained today, and the remaining, I shall gain soon. I have this much wealth, and I will acquire more in future. I have destroyed most of my enemies, and I shall destroy the remaining too. I am the Lord of all, I enjoy. I am successful, powerful, and happy. I am rich and born in a noble family. Who is equal to me in this world? I shall perform grand sacrifices (to gain fame), shall make donations (to be acclaimed), and I shall rejoice in my achievements."

Bewildered by many such fancies; entangled in the net of delusion; addicted to the enjoyment of lust; these people of demoniac tendencies fall into foul hells after they die. Self-conceited, haughty, filled with pride and intoxication of wealth; these demoniac persons perform sacrifices only in name, and not according to the scriptural injunctions.

The Destiny of the demoniac natured people (sl 18- 20): These people possess egoism, power, arrogance, lust, and anger; and being envious by nature, they hate the Lord who dwells in their own bodies and those of others (by hurting others and themselves). In turn, the Lord hurls these cruel, haters, cruel, sinful, and mean people into the cycles of rebirth in the womb of demons again and again, where these deluded ones sink to the lowest hell without ever attaining the Lord.

One should not try to see too much in the graphic description of people with evil tendencies and their fate that has been stated in verses 7-20. These verses are meant to serve as a warning to people who want to lead a spiritual, or at least a dignified life. Hinduism does not accept the idea of eternal damnation, and hence the verses here mean that people with evil tendencies keep getting born again and again for a very long time.

The gates to hell (sl 21- 22): Lust, anger, and greed are the three gates of hell that lead the soul to ruin (or bondage). Therefore, one must learn to give up these three. One who has escaped these three gates of hell, practises only what is good for him, and thus attains the Supreme Goal.

Activities must be guided by the scriptures (sl 23-24):

He who disregards the injunctions of the scriptures and acts upon one's impulse of desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the Supreme Goal. So, the scriptures alone must be your authority in determining the right and the wrong. One should perform one's duties of the world only after learning the injunctions of the scriptures.

These two verses proclaim the superiority of the Vedas over other Hindu scriptures, and also over reasoning/public opinion in matters of morality, ethics and social code. Any social practice that is based on reasoning or opinion, personal or social, is sure to break down in the moments of stress and crisis, throwing a total confusion all around. But the practices born of scriptures (these are actually records of spiritual realisations of the sages), always survive the storm caused by personal and social crisis.

Chapter XVII

Shraddha Traya Vibhaga Yoga: The Three Fold Division of Faith

At the end of the previous chapter, Sri Krishna expressed that actions by a person must be performed in accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures. But, what about those persons who perform their duties with shraddha (faith and respect), but know nothing about the scriptures. Are they also doomed like those who know the scriptural injunctions but do not follow them?

A word on shraddha: Hindu scriptures lay a lot of stress on cultivating shraddha, and preach that the personality, orientation, and attitude of a person is governed by the shraddha that he has. The word "shraddha" cannot be translated perfectly in English, although it is a normal practice to use the word 'faith' for it. Shraddha actually means the disposition of a person born of an affirmative faith, conviction and reverential attitude towards Spiritual Reality. A man is made of his shraddha, he is that shraddha, and that shraddha is he. A person with sattvic shraddha moves towards knowledge and happiness; with rajasik shraddha one pursues the path of action that leads him to pain and suffering; and tamasik shraddha takes its adherents to ignorance and delusion.

A word on scriptural injunctions: Scriptures of any race contain the collective wisdom in the fields of spirituality and culture of that race. This wisdom, coloured by aspirations, values and experiences that accumulate in the racial memory, get transcribed in scriptures through its prophets. So, no member is allowed to transgress the parameters set by the followers of a scripture. Opposed to the rules laid down by the scriptures, there is the natural impulse of personal desire present in everyone that tends to rule his mentality and reaction to a particular situation. This natural impulse is not permitted to rule supreme in any religion.

Three types of shradha: Sattvic, Rajasik, Tamasik (sl 1- 6): Arjuna wanted to know: What is the nature of devotion of those who perform spiritual disciplines with shradha but without following the scriptural injunctions (out of ignorance, and not out of negligence). Is it of the nature of sattva (goodness), rajas (passion), or tamas (ignorance)?

The Lord then categorised the various acts, according to sattva, rajas and tamas (also please see chapter XIV for explanation of these terms). The shradha of each person is in accordance with one's own natural disposition. A person is made of his faith; what his faith is, he indeed is that.

Sattvic people worship celestial gods (Indra etc.), rajasik people worship demigods, and tamasik people worship ghosts and spirits. When worshipped with shradha, these deities answer the prayers of their devotees, but they cannot lead a person to higher planes of existence. However, these deities are manifestations of the Lord Himself.

Most people are impelled by the force of their lust and attachment, and hence worship in a rajasik or tamasik way. In the process, they perform severe austerities, and thus torture the body, organs, and the indwelling Lord (by transgressing His injunctions recorded in the scriptures). These people have fiendish disposition.

Three types of Food: Sattvic, Rajasik, tamasik (sl 7- 10)

Sattvic food promotes longevity, vitality, strength, health, happiness, and joy. Food of this type are juicy, smooth, substantial, and agreeable. Rajasik food are excessively bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent, dry, and burning; and cause pain, grief, and disease. Tamasik food are ill cooked, stale, tasteless, putrid, rotten, impure, and left over. The term leftover (uchhista) means the food that has already been partaken by someone. Hindus lay a lot of emphasis on not partaking of anything that has already been tasted/partaken by someone else. Dining or drinking from the same palate/container is a strict no, no.

Three types of sacrifices (yajnas) (sl 11- 13): Yajna was an integral part of a householder's life in ancient India. This included offering to gods through worship, ritual or sacrifices; serving people through hospitality and gifts, and offering sacrifices to the indwelling self in the form of austerities. These three are now being classified.

Sattvic yajna is performed according to the rules of the scriptures, without any desire for a reward, and with a firm belief that it is a sacred duty for him. Rajasik yajna has a great element of show and grandeur, and is performed with an expectation of reward in return. And, the sacrifice which is not performed according to the scriptural rules, and in which no hymns are chanted, no fees is paid to the priests, and which is devoid of faith, is said to be tamasik yajna.

Three types of tapas (austerities): (sl 14- 19): Now is described the ways of purifying body, mind and speech. The austerities performed with this purpose are called tapas.

The worship of gods, Brahmins, teachers, and of the wise; external and internal purity, honesty, celibacy, and non violence -- these are said to be the austerity of the body. Speech that is non-offensive, truthful, pleasant, beneficial, and a regular study of scriptures is called the austerity of speech. Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control, and purity of thought are called the austerity of the mind.

The above mentioned threefold tapas are also of three kinds according to the gunas. Sattvic tapas is performed by the steady persons without a desire for the fruit; Rajasik tapas is performed for mere show with an eye on gaining respect, honour, and reverence. Results of such austerity are inevitable uncertain and transitory. Tamasik austerity is performed with foolish stubbornness, or with self-torture, or with an intention of harming others.

Three types of gift/charity (sl 20- 22): The gift that is made to a worthy person without any expectation, but with the conviction that that it is his duty to give, and is made at the right place and time (i.e. in a holy place and on auspicious occasions), is considered to be a sattvic gift. Gift that is made unwillingly, or to get something in return, or with a hope of returned favour is called rajasik gift. And, gift that is made to an unworthy person, at a wrong place and time, or without paying proper respect to the receiver, is said to be a tamasik gift.

Purifying imperfect actions (sl 23-28): According to the Hindus, yajna is the key to existence. Yajnas are performed by the Brahmins for the stability of the world order (see chapter IV also). The Lord says that Brahma/ Prajapati creates the Brahmins, the Vedas, and the sacrifices (the three essentials of yajna) by means of "Aum Tat Sat", which is also the threefold designation of Brahman, the Supreme Reality.

Therefore, the acts of sacrifice, gift, and austerity prescribed by the scriptures are always begun by the followers of the Vedas by uttering "Aum". The seekers of mukti perform various acts of sacrifice, gift, and austerity by uttering "Tat" (meaning 'That': the Indefinable, which can only be indirectly described as "That") and without any expectation of recompense. The word "Sat" (Reality, the supreme and unchanging Existence) is used in the sense of Reality and goodness. The word "Sat" is also used for an auspicious action (like marriage). Steadfastness in sacrifice, gift, and austerity is also called "Sat". And, anything else connected with sacrifice, austerity, gift or with Brahman is also called "Sat".

But, whatever sacrifice or gift is made, whatever austerity is performed, whatever ceremony is observed -- is called "Asat" (non existence), if it is done without shraddha. Such acts have no value here or hereafter.

To conclude: Even if a person is ignorant of scriptural injunctions, he should lead his life with proper shraddha and should make efforts to cultivate habits that are entrenched in sattva. Whenever a person feels that his gift, worship or austerity may be defective, he should purify it by uttering 'Aum Tat Sat'. In this way he would cultivate noble qualities, and will ultimately attain the highest.

Chapter XVIII

Moksha Sannyasa Yoga: The way to Liberation through renunciation

This last chapter sums up the whole of Gita and also presents the gist of the Vedic religion, philosophy and its way of life.

Action and renunciation (sl 1-6): Arjuna wanted to know the difference between sannyasa (giving up all actions) and tyaga (giving up the results of action). Actually, these two terms convey the same idea of renunciation, and have been used thus in Gita. However, as will be shown later, there is fine difference between these two. Reference may also be made to chapter V to understand them.

In reply to Arjuna's question, the Lord said that sannyasa is the renunciation of works which are performed due to desire, while the offering of the fruits of all action to the Lord is called tyaga. He further added that there are philosophers who declare that all works should be given up; whereas others say that works of sacrifice, gift and austerity should not be given up. The Lord himself supports the second view and says that noble acts like sacrifice etc. must not be given up, since they purify the mind; and this performance of action should be without any attachment or desire for fruit of action.

Keeping in harmony with the overall philosophy of Gita, Acharya Shankara explains that these verses are not applicable to sages who are endowed with the Supreme Knowledge of Brahman. Action is possible only when a person is conscious of multiplicity in the form of agent (i.e., performer), instrument of action, object on which action is performed, and result of action. This means that only a person who has not yet become perfect, is fit to perform action. Not only that, it is imperative that such persons perform detached action (of course, only prescribed duties), and through it strive to attain purity of heart, which would ultimately make him fit for the Knowledge of Reality. Also, those who feel tempted to give up work due to delusion or laziness, must work to overcome their tamasik tendencies.

The view of Acharya Shankara has special significance. It implies that when a person attains the state when he sees only unity all around, he has no more duties to perform, and he need not work anymore. But those who have not yet reached that state, they must continue to work without attachment.

On renunciation (sl 7-12): There are four kinds of action: nitya (obligatory duties), naimittika (rites that are performed on special occasions), kamyas (acts performed with a particular desire in mind), and nisiddha (prohibited action). The first two types are purificatory in nature, whereas the last two are condemnable acts for spiritual aspirants. The discussion in these verses is only on the first two types of actions.

Renunciation of duties due to delusion is called tamasik; renunciation due to fear of physical suffering or pain is called rajasik; but performance of these actions as a matter of duty, and also with no desire to any fruit, is called sattvic renunciation. So, the wise men endowed with sattva do not give up disagreeable duty, nor does he feel attachment to a duty that is likeable.

It is impossible for a common man to give up action entirely. But he who has no desire for the results of the actions performed, is as good as one who has renounced everything, and is a Knower of Brahman.

The threefold results of action -- desirable, undesirable and mixed come after death only to he who is not yet a Knower of Brahman, i.e. has not yet renounced fully. On the other hand, a perfect sannyasin, who has renounced all, is neither reborn, nor does he get affected by the three kinds of fruit that result in births in heaven, earth, or in lower species.

Action (sl 13-18): Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech, or mind, whether right or wrong -- requires five causes for its accomplishment: the body, the doer, the senses, the pranas (vital breaths), and the presiding deity of the senses (It is the firm belief of the Hindus that every sense performs its respective action only because there is a presiding deity that

controls it). This is how Vedanta, the philosophy of knowledge -- by studying which one becomes free of action-- preach the philosophy of action.

The philosophy of action being so, anyone who thinks that the Self is the agent of action, is deluded. Hence, he who is free from the feeling of I-consciousness, and whose understanding of philosophy is clear, even if he slays these men (this was being preached just before the war), he kills not, nor is he bound by the results of this kind of action (sl 17).

The verse 17, marks the conclusion of the topic that had begun with "The self slays not, nor it gets slain" (II. 19). The essence of the teachings is: A sannyasi is free from "I. me. mine", so the results of action cannot touch him; even if it be killing or his own death.

The Lord further adds that knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower are the threefold incitement to action; and the instrument, the object, and the doer are the threefold basis of action. Thus action is not possible unless there is an incitement, and also a real act.

Threefold character of knowledge, action, doer (sl 19-28): In XVIIth chapter, the Lord classified austerity etc. in three types. He now continues with the classification of some more things, beginning with knowledge, action and doer. These also belong to Prakriti, and hence have sattva, rajas and tamas in them.

The knowledge that makes a person see One indestructible substance in all beings -- undivided in the divided things-- is said to be of sattvic nature. When one sees different realities of various types in all beings as separate from one another (i.e., one sees different souls in different bodies with different characteristics, such as happiness, misery etc.), then that knowledge is called rajasik. And, the knowledge that results in seeing the whole in one single limited things, then it is of tamasik type. Thus, a man with tamasik knowledge sees his body as the Self, and thinks that the Lord is confined to a single image or symbol. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that an inferior devotee thinks that God resides in the heaven, a mediocre devotee thinks that God resides in his heart, and a superior devotee sees God as all pervasive.

An action is characterised by sattva only if it is an obligatory duty, performed without love or hate, and with no desire for its fruit. Action performed with great effort, and with an eye on gratification of desire, or performed out of pride and conceit is of rajasik nature. And, action performed through ignorance, without regard to its consequence, loss, injury, or even one's own capability, is of tamasik nature.

A sattvic doer (anyone who does anything is a doer) is free from attachment and egoism, is endowed with fortitude and zeal, and is unaffected by success and failure. A rajasik doer is passionately attached to action and its result, is greedy, violent, impure, and is moved greatly by joy or sorrow. A tamasik doer is unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, deceitful, malicious, indolent, despairing and delaying by nature.

Some more classifications (sl 29-40): Sattvic buddhi (buddhi means intellect/understanding that determines the course of action in us) determines the path of work and renunciation, and right and wrong action. It also determines for a man the cause of fear, fearlessness, bondage, and liberation, and thus leads the person to the right course of action. Rajasik buddhi gives a distorted understanding of dharma and adharma, and also of what one should do and what one must not do. Tamasik buddhi makes a person comprehend adharma as dharma and reverses all values.

Dhriti means firmness, the power to hold on to one's strength when he is faced with adversity. This particular trait of mind is extremely important for everyone in life to succeed, and is particularly important for spiritual aspirants. Dhriti also is of three kinds. Sattvic dhriti is accompanied by unswerving concentration on the ideal of Brahman, and is responsible for the control of the activities of the mind, the pranas (vital forces of the body), and the senses. Rajasik dhriti makes one hold on to dhrama (way of life), pleasure, and wealth with intense attachment and also with a strong desire for the fruits of these. Tamasik dhriti makes a stupid person hold on to his sleep, fear, grief, despondency and sensuality.

Happiness of sattvic nature is born of the clear knowledge of the Self. In this kind of happiness one rejoices by what one has achieved through long practice (i.e. it is not instant sense gratification), and also reaches the end of pain. This happiness is attained through means that initially look like poison, but like nectar in the end (for example, study looks like poison to a kid, but it gives him lasting joy in the long run). Rajasik happiness is born of contact of the senses with their respective objects, and is like nectar in the beginning, but like poison in the end. Tamasik happiness deludes the soul at the beginning, and also after its termination. It originates from sleep, sloth and error.

Thus, there is no creature here on earth, nor in heaven or anywhere else, who is free from the three gunas born of Prakriti. The goal is to transcend Prakriti, or at least be established in sattva.

The four Castes and their duties (41- 44): Giving up the world to attain Self Knowledge may be the best path, but for the majority it is not possible to do so. They have to depend on work to attain liberation. For this reason, Hinduism evolved a system of duties and responsibilities, known as caste system, based on nature of individuals. The philosophy was that if a person followed the duties of his caste properly, without giving it up out of greed or fear, then that person was sure to attain the Highest. In addition, Hinduism also stressed that a spiritual aspirant should perform his duty in a detached way and he should offer the fruit of its action to the Lord. This is the meaning and concept of svadharma -- sacred duty of a person.

The duties of brahmins, kshatriyas, vaishyas and shudras have been assigned according to their respective gunas (sattva, rajas, tamas. see also chapter XIV). A brahmin has more of sattva, a kshatriya has excess of rajas over sattva, a vaishya has excess of rajas over tamas, and a shudra has excess of tamas over rajas. Depending on the inherent tendencies of a person, he gets born in different castes, and hence he must follow the duties of his caste if he wishes to attain enlightenment.

The duties of a brahmin are: Serenity, self control, austerity, purity, patience, honesty, knowledge, realisation and faith in the scriptural words. The duties of a kshatriya are: Heroism, vigour, firmness, dexterity, not fleeing from battle, generosity, and administrative skills. The duties of a vaishya are: Agriculture, cattle rearing, and trade. The duties of a shudra are: Action consisting of service.

Attaining perfection through performance of duty (sl 45-48): All beings are born from the Lord, and He pervades the whole universe. By worshipping that Lord through performance of duty, one attains perfection. One's own dharma, even if imperfect, is better than the well performed dharma of another. He who performs his prescribed duty, does not incur any sin. The Lord thus explains to Arjuna that by killing his opponents he won't be incurring any sin.

An unenlightened person cannot remain inactive, and again, work prompted by one's own nature can never be injurious to him. So, a person must not give up the work to which he is born, even if it may seem imperfect; for, all undertakings are bound to have some kind of imperfection associated with it, as fire is always accompanied by smoke.

Actually, no social system can ever be perfect. A look at history shows the failure of every social experiment after a period of glorious existence. The system of caste also has its imperfections, but on the brighter side, it served the Indian society for thousands of years.

With the advent of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, the concept of caste and its importance in performance of duty to attain perfection has undergone a complete change. Caste barriers are now breaking down, and one can aspire to attain the Highest by doing the duty that he takes up in a detached way. Surrender of the fruit of action to the Lord, however, continues to be the all important condition for spiritual growth and success.

Perfection through Karmayoga (sl 49-53): Freedom from action is perfection. This is attained when a person's mind is not attached to anything, who has subdued his emotions, who is free from longing, and who renounces everything knowing that the Self is one with the actionless Brahman.

Knowledge of Brahman is the consummation of true knowledge. It is then that one's mind dwells unceasingly on Brahman. This is attained when one is endowed with a pure understanding, subdues the mind with a firm resolve; turns away from sound and other objects of the senses; gives up likes and dislikes; lives in solitude, eats lightly, controls the mind, speech, and organs of action, is ever absorbed in meditation, cultivates freedom from passion; and, gives up egotism, power, pride, lust, anger, and proprietorship. It is thus that one becomes peaceful, free from the petty ego, and becomes worthy of becoming one with Brahman.

Result of Brahmajnana (sl 54- 56): Absorbed in Brahman, the Perfected one becomes serene. He now neither grieves nor desires, is impartial to all beings, and attains supreme devotion for God. This devotion for God gives him the knowledge of God -- who He is (Lord, the Absolute --devoid of name and form), and what He is (Lord -- the essence of all that exists). Then, having known the true nature of God, he forthwith gets absorbed in Him. After this, even if that person stays engaged in any kind of action, he reaches the eternal and Imperishable Abode of the Lord by His grace.

It can thus be seen that the paths of knowledge, devotion and action lead to the same goal -- realisation of God as one with the Absolute, non-dual Brahman. Both the devotees and jnanis have the same kind of realisation -- Jnanis realise Brahman and then attain devotion; devotees attain devotion and then attain the realisation of Brahman.

Self Surrender and duty (57- 60): The Lord then advised Arjuna to surrender all his actions to Him, to regard Him as the Supreme Goal, to practise steadiness of mind, and to fix his heart on the Lord. He also cautioned Arjuna that if he fixed his heart on the Lord, then he would overcome every difficulty; but if due to self conceit he disregarded the Lord's words, then Arjuna was sure to perish utterly. If out of pride Arjuna was to think that "he would not fight", then that resolve would be vain and useless, since his very nature would compel him to fight. "Bound by your own karma, O Arjuna, which is

born of your very nature, what you do not want to do through delusion (i.e., run away from battle), you shall be forced to do even against your will."

In this way, the Lord cautions everybody that there is no way that a person can escape his nature. So the best way to lead one's life is to perform one's duty, and surrender its results to the Lord.

The Yoga of Surrender (sl 61- 66): The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, and by His maya causes them to revolve as marionettes mounted on a machine. (Also please see notes on IX . 7-10). So, Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to take refuge in Him whole heartedly. Only then he could hope to gain supreme peace by His grace.

Having told all this, the Lord says, 'I have expounded the profoundest of wisdom to you; now you do what you wish to do'. Thus, the ultimate responsibility of following the right course of action lies with the individual only.

Out of compassion for Arjuna (and the mankind) the Lord once again sums up his words in brief for his benefit. The Lord says, 'Fix your heart on Me, love Me, worship Me, bow down before Me, and you shall come to Me. This is My pledge to you, for you are dear to Me. Abandon all kinds of dharma (i.e. give up attachment to all actions, good or bad) and come to Me alone for shelter. I will rescue you from all sins; do not grieve."

Technically this verse (18.66) marks the end of Gita. The verse sums up the essence of all spirituality, all religion, the Vedas, and the Gita -- 'Give up all, and come to the Lord'. Through the huge mass of philosophy discussed in Gita, the nature of multiplicity, its cause, its effect in the form of action and desires, and the way to end it through attaining the knowledge of oneness has been discussed. That very thing has been summed up here.

The glory of Gita (67- 71): Being a highly respected spiritual treasure, this knowledge must not be passed on to someone who is not austere in life, has no devotion, does not want to hear about it, or is a hater of God. But he who teaches this deeply profound philosophy to those persons who are devoted to the Lord, he would surely reach God. Such teachers of Gita are the most dear to the Lord. And, he who studies this sacred Gita with devotion, he would be worshipping the Lord through knowledge as sacrifice (see IV. 24-33). Even those who merely hear this work with faith, would be liberated from sin and attain the happy regions of the righteous after death.

The end (72-78): The Lord then asked Arjuna if he had heard his words with undivided attention, and if Arjuna's delusion, born of ignorance was destroyed. Arjuna gratefully answered that his delusion was gone, he had regained his former strength and vigour through His grace. He was now free from doubt and firm in resolve. Arjuna assured Sri Krishna that he would act as told.

Concluding the work, Sanjay, the minister-charioteer of king Dhritarashtra, exclaimed at his good fortune -- brought about by Vyasa -- for having heard and reported the dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna. He expressed his joy again and again, and concluded with the words, ' The side that has Krishna -- the Lord of Yoga, and Arjuna -- the holder of the ferocious bow, Gandiva -- there surely will be fortune, victory, prosperity, and righteousness. Such is my conviction.'

Thus ends Gita.

Bhagawad Gita Dhyanam

Translated by P. R. Ramachander

[Those who do Parayana of Bhagawad Gita should chant this prayer before starting r Gita. This remarkable prayer brings out the greatness of Bhagawad Gita brilliantly. I o know who is the author of this Dhyanam.]

1. Om Parthaya prathi boditham bhagawathaa narayanena swayam,
Vyasaena grahitham Purana muninaa madhye Mahabaratham,
Advaithamrutha varshaneem bhagawtheem ashta dasa dhyayineem,
Ambaa thwaam anusandadhami bhagwad geethaa bhava dweshineem.

Om, that which was taught to Arjuna by Lord Narayana himself,
Which was written by the epic Sage Vyasa in the middle of Mahabharatha,
Oh Mother goddess who showers the nectar of advaita called the Bhagawad
Gita,
Which has eighteen chapters, I meditate on you mother who removes all past
karma.

2. Namosthute Vyasa vishala budhe, phullaravindata tha pathra nethra,
Yena thwayaa Bharatha thaila poorna prajjvalitho jnanamaya pradheepa.

Salutations to Vyasa who has immense intellect, who has eyes like petals of
a lotus flower,
Who has filled up the oil to the lamp of Mahabaratha, and lighted it to pinpoint
wisdom.

3. Prapanna parijataya, tota vetraika panaye,
Jnana mudhraaya Krishnaaya geethamritha duhe nama.

Salutations to Krishna who is a wish giving tree, who holds a cane to drive the
cattle,
Who also shows the seal of Jnana and gave us all the nectar of Gita.

4. Sarvaopanishadho gaavo dogdhaa Gopala Nandana,
Parthoo vathsa sudheer bhokthaa dugdam Geetamritham mahath.

All the Upanishads are the cows and Krishna is the one who milks them,
Arjuna is the calf, the devotees are the consumers of the great nectar of Gita.

5. Vasudeva sutham devam kamsa Chanoora mardhanam,
Devaki paramanandam Krishnam vande Jagat Gurum.

I Salute the teacher of the world, who is the son of Vasudeva,
Who killed Kamsa and Chanora and is the one who gave divine joy to
Devaki.

6. Bheeshma drona thata jayadratha jalaa, Gandhaara neelothphala,
Shalyaaa grahavathee, kripena vahanee, karnena Velakulaa,
Aswathama Vikarnaa ghora Makaraa Duryodhana varthinee,
Sotheerno kalu Pandavai, rana nadhee kaivarthaka Kesava.

Bheeshma and Drona were two banks, Jayadrada was the water, Sakuni the
king of Gandhara was the blue lotus,
Salya was the crocodile, Kripa was the tide, Karna was the mighty wave,
Aswathama and Vikarna were the dangerous alligators and Duryodhana was
the whirlpool,
And the Pandavas crossed this river of war with Krishna as their helmsman.

7. Parashrayaa vacha Sarojamamalam Geethartha gandothkatam,
Nanakhyanaka kesaram harikatha Sambodhanaa bodhitham,
Loke Sajjana shat padairaharaha pepeyamaanam mudhaa,
Bhooyad Bharatha pankajam kali mala pradhwamsina shreyase.

Let the lotus flower of Mahabharata, which arose from the water,
Which are the words of son of Parasara, which has the pollen grains of
different stories,
Which is taught in the form of stories of Lord Vishnu,
That is drunk by the honey bee of very good people,
Help those who want to remove the ills of Kali age.

8. Mookam karothe vaachalam, pankhum lankayathe girim,
Yath krupa thaham vandhe Paramananda madhavam.

I Salute that Madhava of divine joy, whose graceful mercy,
Makes the dumb as master of words and the lame to cross the mountain.

9. Yam brahmaVaruna indrua Rudra maruthsthunvanthi divyai sthavai,
Vedai Saang padakrama upanishadair gayanthi yam Samaga,
Dhyanasthitha thadgadaina manasa pasyanthi yam Yogino,
Yasyaantham na vidhu surasura ganaa devaaya thasmai nama.

I Salute him who is worshipped by divine chants of Brahma, Varuna, Indra,
Rudra and Vayu,
Who is pleased by singers of Sama Veda by singing Vedas and Upanishads,
by following the word sequence,
Who is seen by yogis who are absorbed in him, with their mind merging in
him, And whose end is not known even by the hordes of devas and Asuras.

Bhagawad Gita Mahathmyam

By Lord Vishnu

Translated by P. R. Ramachander

[After the Bhagawath Gita Parayana is completed, it is a common practice to read this (Mahathmya) which is taken from the Varaha Purana. Goddess earth asks Lord Vishnu, how the human being drowned in the net of domestic problems can become his devotee. Lord Vishnu replies that it is done by reading Gita, either fully or a chapter or a verse or even a part of the verse.]

Dharo Uvacha:-

The earth Said:-

1. Bhagawan parameshaanaa Bhakthiravyabhi charinee,
Prarabdham bhujiyamanasya kadam bhavathi hey Prabho.

Oh God, Oh divine lord, how can spotless devotion arise and
Exist in one who is affected by domestic problems?

Sri Vishnor Uvacha:-

Lord Vishnu Said:-

2. Prarabdham bujyamano hi Gita abhyasatha Sadaa,
Sa muktha, Sa sukhee loke Karmana nopalipyathe.

If those affected by domestic problems always practice Gita,
They would become free, have a pleasant life and would not be tied by
Karma.

3. Maha paapadipaapaani Gitadhyayanam karothe cheth,
Kwachith Saparsam na kurvanthi nalinidalam ambuvath.

If one reads and masters Gita, even the greatest sins,
Would not be able to touch you like water would not be able to make lotus leaf
wet.

4. Gitayah pusthakam yatra yatra paathaah pravarthathe,
Tatra Sarvaani theerthaani prayagadheeni thathra vai.

Wherever the book of Gita is read, there all sacred waters,
Do act and Sacred places like Allahabad are also there.

5. Sarve devaanacha rishayo yogeena pannagascha ye,
Gopala Gopika vaapi naaradha uohava parasadai.

All devas, sages, yogis, serpents, cowherds,
Gopis and sages like Narada and Udhava exist there.

6. Sahayo jayathe seegram yatra Gita pravarthathe,
Yatra Gita vicharascha patanam srutham,
Tatraaham nischitham prithvi nivasami Sadaiva hi.

Help will reach quickly where Gita is there,
And Oh earth, in the places where Gita is read or heard,
I would definitely be there always.

7. Gitashrayeham thishtaami Gita may cha uthamam Graham,
Gita janam upasrithya, treen lokaan palayamyaham.

I Stay in Gita as Gita is my best home,
I protect all the three worlds, taking recourse to Gita.

8. Gita may parama Vidhyaa, brahma roopa ne Samsaya,
Ardha mathra akshara nithyaas sva nirvachya padathmika.

Gita is the divine knowledge and has the form of Brahman without any doubt.
And the half syllable letter "om" is the one defining one's own self.

9. Chid aanandena Krishnena prokthaa swamuktho Arjuna,
Vedastrayee Paranandaa thathwartha Jnana Samyutha.

It was spoken by Krishna who is divinely happy and free of himself to Arjuna,
And it has the knowledge of the philosophy of divine joy of the three Vedas.

10. Yo ashta dasa japen nithyam naro Nischala Manasa,
Jnan sidhim Sa labhathe thatho yaathi parmam padam.

Those men who read its eighteen chapters would not have a wavering mind,
They would get wisdom and power and later attain the feet of the divine lord.

11. Padathe asamartha Sampoomnam tatho ardhham patam aachareth,
Thadaa Go danajam punyam labhathe naatra SamSaya.

Those who are not able to read it fully should read half of it,
And they would get the blessing of Cow as a gift, there is no doubt about it.

12. Tribagam padamaanasthu, ganga snana phalam labeth,
Shadamam japmanastha soma yaga phalam labeth.

Those who read one third of it would get the effect of taking bath in Ganga,
And those who read one sixth would get the effect of performing Somayaga.

13. Yeka adyaanam thu yo nithyam padathe, bhakthi Samyutha,
Rudralokam avapnothi, gano bhoothwaa vaseth chiram.

Those who read one chapter a day along with devotion,
Would reach the land of Rudra and live there as a Gana for a long time.

14. Adhyayam sloka padam vaa nithyam yah padathe nara,
Sa yaathi naraatham yaava manvantharam, Vasundare

Oh earth, the human being who reads one verse of a chapter daily,
Would retain their human form in the rule of one Manu.

15. Gitayo sloka Dasakam Saptha Pancha chathushtayam,
Dwathrin yekam thadhaa ardham vaa slokanaam ya paden nara.

16. Chandralokam avapnothi varshaanaam aayutham druvam,
Gita Pata Samayuktho mritho manu shathaam vrajeth.

If one reads ten or seven or five or four or two or one stanza
Of Gita or at least one half the stanza, he would,
Reach the land of moon and live there for ten thousand years,
And when a human being has the habit of reading Gita.
After his death, he comes back again as a human being.

17. Gitabhyasam puna kruthwa labhathe mukthim uthamam,
Geethethyu charana Samyuktho mriyamano gathim labheth.

By thoroughly learning the Gita, one gets great Salvation,
And one who utters a word of Gita at the time of death attains liberation.

18. Gitartha shravana aasaktho maha papa yutho apivaa,
Vaikuntam Samavapnothi Vishnunaa Saha modathe.

Those who are interested in hearing the meaning of Gita,
Though they are great sinners, they would go to Vaikunta,
And lead a life of Joy in the presence of Vishnu.

19. Gitartham dhyayathe nithyam, kruthwaa karmaani bhooriSaha,
Jevan mukthaa Sa vijneyo deha anthe paramam padam.

Those who daily meditate on the meaning of Gita, after doing many good deeds,
Would be deemed as ones who have got Salvation while being alive,
And at the end of his life, he would reach the divine status.

20. Gitam ashrithya bahavo bhoobujo janakadhayaa,
Nirdhootha kalmashaa loke Geeta yatha paramam padam

Many kings like Janaka have taken refuge in Gita,
Have attained highest status in the divine world
After leading a life without any sin in this world.

21. Gitayaa patanam krithvaa mahathmyam naiva ya padeth,
Vrithaa pato bhaveth thasya srama hyudarithaa.

Those who read Gita and do not read the Gita Mahatmya,
Are doing a reading without any aim and only their great effort would remain.

22. Yetan mahathmya Samyuktham Geeta bhasyam karothe ya,
Sa that phalamapnothe durlabhaam gathim aapnuyath.

One who studies Gita along with Gita Mahatmya,
Would get results for that and would get an unattainable state.

23. Sutha Uvacha
Sutha Said

Mahathmyam yethad Gitaya maya proktham Sanathanam
Gitanthe cha padethyastha yaduktham thath phalam labeth.

This eternal Gita Mahatmya which was told by me,
Should be read at the end of Gita and then one would realize the results mentioned.

Ithi Sri Varaha purane Sri Gita Mahatmyam Sampurnam
Thus ends the "Greatness of Gita", which occurs in the Varaha Purana.

Gita Mahathmya

By Adhi Sankara

Translated by P. R. Ramachander

[The Gita Mahathmya which normally one reads after reading Gita is from Varaha Purana. I also found this prayer in the web. It is not listed in the Complete Works of Adhi Sankara. You can see another translation of this prayer at: www.jagannathavallabha.com/gita/html/gita_mahatmya.html. The summary meaning of one more version, which gives Mahathmya chapter wise is given at: omshivam.wordpress.com/sreemad-bhagavad-gita/gita-mahatmya-the-glories-of-the-bhagavad-gita-from-the-padma-purana/]

1. Gita Sasthram idham punyam,
Ya padeth prayatha Pumaan,
Vishno padam avapnothi
Bhaya Sokadi Vrajeth

That gentleman who reads with humility,
The science of Gita which is blessed,
Would reach the feet of Lord Vishnu,
And would be bereft of sorrow and fear

2. Gita adhyayaa sheelasya,
Pranayama paraasya cha,
Naïve Santhi hi paapani,
Poorva janma kruthani cha.

He who makes reading of Gita a Habit,
And also practices the Pranayama (breathing exercise)
Is not affected by sins, even those of previous births.

3. Mala nirmochanam pumsaam,
Jala snanan dhine dhine,
Sakud Gitam bhasi snanam,
Samsara mala nasanam.

People have to take bath,
In the water day after day to remove dirt,
But by taking bath once in the waters of Gita,
He can get rid of the dirt accumulated by the domestic life.

4. Gita, sugita karthavya,
Kim anyai Sastra vistaraihi,

Yaa swayam Padmanabhasya,
Mukha padmad vinisrutha.

It is our duty to sing the Gita,
Which originated from the mouth,
Of Padmanabha lying on a lotus flower,
And there is no need for any other Sastra in detail.

5. Bharath Amrutha Sarvasvam,
Vishnor vakthraad vinisrutham,
Gita Gangodhakam peethwaa,
Punar janma na vidhyathe.

Gita which is the entire nectar of Mahabharatha,
Is the one which fell out in the words of Lord Vishnu himself,
And so if to drink Gita which is like the Sacred waters of Ganga,
You would not have one more birth.

6. Sarvo upanishadho Gavro,
Dogdha Gopala Nandana,
Partho vatSah Sudhir bhokthax,
Dugdham Gita amrutham mahad.

All the Upanishads are cows,
The one who is to milk them is the boy Gopala,
Arjuna is the calf and those who have pure intellects are consumers,
And the milk is the great nectar of Bhagwad Gita.

7. Yekam Sastram, Devaki puthra Gitam,
Yeko devaa Devaki puthra yeva,
Yeko mantra thasya namani yaani,
Karmapi yekam thasya devasya seva.

The only religious book is Gita by the son of Devaki,
The only one God is the son of Devaki herself,
The only chant is the name of him, himself,
And the only job is to service to that God.

Saptha Sloki Gita

Translated by P. R. Ramachander

[These seven slokas in this order from Bhagawad Gita has been published by Gita press, Gorakpur, in their collection of stotras called Stotra Ratnavali. It is supposed to represent in a nutshell the teachings contained in the 700 slokas of Bhagawad Gita. I understand that this Saptha Sloki Gita is being recited as a daily prayer by the Kashmiri Pundits for hundreds of years.]

Bhagawan Uvacha:

Om ithyaksharam Brahma,
Vyaharan maam anusmaran,
Ya prayathi thyajan deham,
Sa Yathi Pramamam gathim. 1 (8-13)

The God said:

He who, meditates on me, As Om, which in Brahman,
While leaving this ephemeral body,
Will surely attain the most supreme state.

Arjuna Uvacha:

Sthane Hrisikesa, Thava prakeerthya,
Jagath prahrushthya anurajyathe cha,
Rakshamsi bheethani diso dravanthi,
Sarve namasyanthi cha sidha sangha. 2 (11-36)

Arjuna said:

In this state, Oh Lord, Singing about you.
The world is happy and is rejoicing to see,
The evil ones flying away with fear,
And all those devoted ones saluting you.

[This is told after seeing the Viswa Roopa of the Lord.]

Bhagawan Uvacha:

Sarvatha pani padam thath,
Sarvatho akshi siro mukham,
Sarvatha sruthimalloke,
Sarvamavithya thishtahi. 3 (13-14)

The God said:

It has hands and legs everywhere,
It has eyes head and mouth everywhere,
It has ears everywhere in this world,
And it exists as everything in this world.

Kavim purana anusasithara-
Manoramaneeyaam samanumaredhya,
Sarvasya dhataram machinthya roopa-
Madithya varnam thamasa parasthath. 4 (8-9)

Think of Him, as ancient, spread everywhere,
Ruler of all, much subtler part of an atom,
Protector of all with his form which is beyond thought,
With the colour of Sun and transcendental beyond dark thoughts.

Oordhwamoolamadha sakham,
Aswatham prahooravyayam,
Chandamsi yasya parnani,
Yastham Veda sa Vedavith. 5 (15-1)

With roots above and branches Growing down,
This Banyan tree with Vedas as its leaves,
Is everlasting and immortal,
And whosoever knows it, really knows the Vedas.

Sarvasya chaham, hrudhi sannivishtho,
Matha smrithir jnana mapohanam cha,
Vedaischa sarvaih, rahameva Vedhyo,
Vedanthakruth veda vidheva chaham. 6 (15-15)

I live in everybody's heart,
And from me one gets,
Memory, wisdom and forgetfulness,
And for all the Vedas, I am the one that is to be known,
For I created them and I am the one who knows them.

Manmana bhava Mad bhaktho,
Madhyajee maam Namakuru,
Mamevaishyasi sathyam they,
Prathijane priyo asi may. 7 (18-65)

Concentrate your mind on me,
Always show devotion to me,
Sacrifice for me, salute me,
And I swear to you because you are dear to me,
That definitely you will reach me.