

॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

BHAGAVAD GEETA – 16

*The Divine & the
Devillish Estates*

“THE SANDEEPANY EXPERIENCE”

Reflections by

SWAMI GURUBHAKTANANDA

TEXT

28.16





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List of All the Course Texts in Chronological Sequence:

Text No.	TITLE OF TEXT	Text No.	TITLE OF TEXT
1	<i>Sadhana Panchakam</i>	24	<i>Hanuman Chalisa</i>
2	<i>Tattwa Bodha</i>	25	<i>Vakya Vritti</i>
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4	<i>Bhaja Govindam</i>	27	<i>Kaivalya Upanishad</i>
5	<i>Manisha Panchakam</i>	28.16	<i>Bhagavad Geeta (Discourse 16)</i>
6	<i>Forgive Me</i>	29	<i>Mundaka Upanishad</i>
7	<i>Upadesha Sara</i>	30	<i>Amritabindu Upanishad</i>
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9	<i>Dhanyashtakam</i>	32	<i>Tapovan Shatkam</i>
10	<i>Bodha Sara</i>	33	<i>The Mahavakyas, Panchadasi 5</i>
11	<i>Viveka Choodamani</i>	34	<i>Aitareya Upanishad</i>
12	<i>Jnana Sara</i>	35	<i>Narada Bhakti Sutras</i>
13	<i>Drig-Drishya Viveka</i>	36	<i>Taittiriya Upanishad</i>
14	<i>"Tat Twam Asi" – Chand Up 6</i>	37	<i>Jivan Sutrani (Tips for Happy Living)</i>
15	<i>Dhyana Swaroopam</i>	38	<i>Kena Upanishad</i>
16	<i>"Bhoomaiva Sukham" Chand Up 7</i>	39	<i>Aparoksha Anubhuti (Meditation)</i>
17	<i>Manah Shodhanam</i>	40	<i>108 Names of Pujya Gurudev</i>
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A NOTE ABOUT SANDEEPANY

Sandeepany Sadhanalaya is an institution run by the Chinmaya Mission in Powai, Mumbai, teaching a 2-year Vedanta Course. It has a very balanced daily programme of basic Samskrit, Vedic chanting, Vedanta study, Bhagavatam, Ramacharitmanas, Bhajans, meditation, sports and fitness exercises, team-building outings, games and drama, celebration of all Hindu festivals, weekly Gayatri Havan and Guru Paduka Pooja, and Karma Yoga activities.

This series is an effort to promote the learning of Vedanta; it does not replace the Course, but hopes to inspire young people to spend two years of their life for an experience that is sure to make a far-reaching spiritual impact on their personal lives. Sandeepany is an all-round spiritual course that gives proper direction to the youth and to those approaching retirement. Hinduism is in dire need of a band of systematically trained teachers or Acharyas who can serve this Eternal Religion.

– The Author, February 2019, Shivaratri Day

Om Namah Shivaaya!

Text
28.16



दैवासुरसम्पद्धिभागयोगः

THE BHAGAVAD GEETA – 16

“The Divine & Devillish Estates”

Sri Veda Vyasaji

Reflections

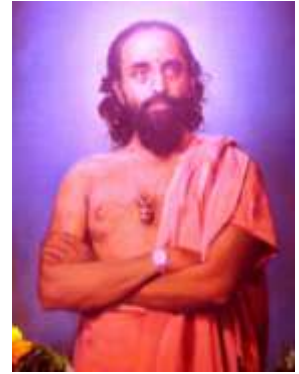
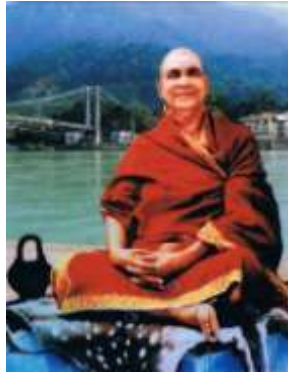
by Swami Gurubhaktananda

on the 5 Lectures delivered by **Swami Advayanandaji**

Acharyaji, 15th Batch Vedanta Course

at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai

4th August – 8th August, 2013



Adi Shankaracharya

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Personal Dedication

1. To my Parents, Smt Sharadaben & Sri Ratilalbhai Kapitan

who inspired me to study in life, to stick to the path of Dharma and pursue the highest ideals; and swamped me with their abundant Love;

2. To Pujya Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj

the President of the Divine Life Society of Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India, who constantly encouraged and supported this effort;

3. To Pujya Sri Swami Tejomayanandaji (Guruji)

for his boundless vision and inspiration to create a vibrant organisation;

4. To Sri Swami Advayanandaji and Sri Swami Sharadanandaji

my Acharyaji and Upa-Acharyaji at Sandeepany, who imparted their bountiful knowledge and wisdom with rare selfless Divine Love, just as the Rishis of yore would wish to see them do.

BHAGAVAD GEETA – 16

“The Divine & the Devilish Estates”

॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

अथ षोडशोऽध्यायः
दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगः

THE BHAGAVAD GEETA

Discourse – 16 (24 Verses)

“The Divine & Devillish Estates”

INTRODUCTION

UP TO THIS POINT, we have focused greatly on the knowledge needed in order to attain Self-realisation. The question as to who is the **Adhikari** or fit person to pursue this path has been touched upon in several sections already. The following are key places where the qualities of the Siddha are elaborately listed:

- i) The **Sthitaprajna**: in Chapter 2;
- ii) The **Four Types of Devotees**: in Chapter 7;
- iii) The **Forty Qualities of a Bhakta**: in Chapter 12;
- iv) The **20 Qualities of a Jnani**: in Chapter 13;
- v) The **Gunateeta**: in Chapter 14.

In all these cases, the positive qualities required to be cultivated by the Adhikari are given, and they make up some of the most inspiring verses in the *Geeta*.

In this Chapter, apart from the first three verses listing the divine qualities, the rest of the Chapter focuses on the demoniacal qualities. By such contrast, the Divine Teacher thinks it to be the most effective way to convey to the average seeker what he should be wary of in his personality.

For aspirants who are finding it difficult to tread the spiritual path with ease, this Chapter may throw light on what could be hampering their progress. This Chapter is of enormous practical value to serious spiritual seekers. It is also called Adhikari Nirnaya.

In every country and in every religion, the list comprising virtues and vices always tallies. Sometimes, minor cultural differences may produce small variations, but there is a worldwide consensus on what is vice and what is virtue. The Geeta reflects that consensus.

The conclusion is obvious: A good man is a good man anywhere in the world at any time; and an evil man is repulsive wherever he may go. A wise saying reads: ***“Some men bring happiness wherever they go; others bring happiness whenever they go!”***



BHAGAVAD GEETA – 16
“The Divine & Devilish Estates”

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16.1 DIVINE & DEMONIAL ENDOWMENTS

(Verses 1-5, 5 No.)

WE HAVE SEEN IN Chapter 14 that the whole of mankind may be classified into three types in accordance with the Gunas predominating in them:

- i) **The Devas:** Sattwic in nature – the good, virtuous man; divine man.
- ii) **The Asuras:** Rajasic in nature – the diabolically fallen man; demoniacal man.
- iii) **The Rakshasas:** Tamasic in nature – the incorrigible wreck of a man.

In this Chapter the first and second are mainly discussed. The third is an acute version of the second, and is included with it. It is touched upon in some verses. It need not be treated separately.

THE DIVINE QUALITIES

Pujya Gurudev advises: “The twenty-six **Divine qualities** give us a complete picture of the nature of a divine man. They serve as a guide to all those who thirst to become perfect. To the extent we are able to reorganize our way of life and change our vision of the world around us on the above lines, to that extent we shall economise our energies that are often wasted in idle pursuits.”

The divine qualities may be sub-divided into three groups exactly as they are according to the verses they belong to, as follows:

Verse 1: Qualities for Personal Development

Verse 2: Qualities that Maintain Inter-Personal Relationships

Verse 3: Qualities Needed to Restore Strained Relationships

Verse 1: Qualities 1-9 : Personal Development

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम्

॥ १६-१॥

śrībhagavānuvāca |

abhayaṁ sattvasaṁśuddhirjñānayōgavyavasthitiḥ |

dānaṁ damaśca yajñaśca svādhyāyastapa ārjavam

॥ 16-1॥

	<i>Shree Bhagavaan uvaacha:</i>	<i>The Blessed Lord said:</i>
1	<i>Abhayam sattwa sam-shuddhih,</i>	¹ Fearlessness, ² purity of mind,
2	<i>jnana-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ;</i>	³ persistence in knowledge and Yoga,
3	<i>daanam damah cha yajna cha,</i>	⁴ charity, ⁵ control of the senses, ⁶ sacrifice,
4	<i>swaadhyayah tapah aarjavam.</i>	⁷ scriptural study, ⁸ austerity and ⁹ rectitude;

Qualities for Personal Development

If we examine the nine virtues of this verse, we find that they can be developed independent of any other person. They can be cultivated on one's own, in solitude.

They do not require any joint effort with others. They require only a firm determination to stick to good principles of personal development. Their development lies entirely in one's own hands.

These virtues depend solely on the values we hold dear to our heart, regardless of what others may think of them.

Verse 2: Qualities 10-20: Maintaining Relationships

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम्

॥ १६-२॥

ahimsā satyamakrōdhastyāgaḥ śāntirapaiśunam |

dayā bhūteṣvalōluptvaṁ mārḍavaṁ hrīracāpalam

|| 16-2||

1	<i>Ahimsaa satyam akrodhah,</i>	¹⁰ Non-injury, ¹¹ truthfulness, ¹² absence of anger,
2	<i>tyaagah shaantih apaishunam;</i>	¹³ renunciation, ¹⁴ peacefulness, ¹⁵ non-vilification,
3	<i>dayaa bhooteshu aloluptvam,</i>	¹⁶ kindness to beings, ¹⁷ non-covetousness,
4	<i>maardavam hreeh achaapalam.</i>	¹⁸ gentleness, ¹⁹ modesty, ²⁰ absence of fickleness;

Qualities that Maintain Inter-Personal Relationships

In this verse are listed eleven virtues which we need to cultivate in order to have sound and harmonious relationships with others, be they family members or friends.

They are based on the principle of co-operation with others, respect for others, seeing others as we would like them to see us. They all involve the principle of fairness and justice. “Do unto others as you would be done by them” – this would be the key operating principle that will encourage one to cultivate these virtues. That we should not harm others in thought word or deed is in some degree expressed in all these eleven qualities. The value of good neighbourliness is also at work in most of these virtues.

Verse 3: Qualities 21-26: Repairing Relationships

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत

॥ १६-३॥

tējah kṣamā dhṛtiḥ śaucamadrōhō nātimānitā |

bhavanti sampadam daivīmabhijātasya bhārata

|| 16-3||

1	<i>Tejah kshamaa dhritih shaucham,</i>	²¹ Vigour, ²² forgiveness, ²³ fortitude, ²⁴ cleanliness,
2	<i>adrohah na ati-maanitaa;</i>	²⁵ freedom from malice, ²⁶ absence of haughtiness;
3	<i>bhavanti sampadam daiveem,</i>	these (<u>26 qualities</u>) are the divine wealth .
4	<i>abhijaatasya bhaarata.</i>	O Bharata, (you are) born for it.

Qualities Needed to Restore Strained Relationships

In this verse of *six virtues*, we have the equipment by which we can repair relationships which have become strained for some reason or other. This is bound to happen in the course of life. How to deal with such situations becomes easier if these six virtues are consciously practised.

Strained relationships can be very difficult and painful when experienced. **Forgiveness** is the leading virtue that can be applied to fix the defective relationship.

It is always a useful tip to look at where we have gone wrong rather where others have fallen short. Our laziness can be very hurtful to others, and gives them good reason to dislike us. Hence, we should avoid laziness and be full of **vigour** in what we do.

Similarly, many a time, it is our unclean habits that offend others. Hence **cleanliness** has been included in this category. Our clean habits help to reduce conflicts with others.

When we become victims of **malice** from others, the course advised to us by Sri Krishna is never to retaliate and do the same to the other person. Sri Swami Sivananda wisely asks us to return good for evil. Mahatma Gandhiji also advocated non-retaliation. This principle is generally misconstrued as non-resistance, and consequently seen as acceptance of evil. This is not what Gandhiji stood for. He always stood for his principle of good and abhorred injustice, but he never resisted it with violence, but with love.

We take offence easily when we see pride in others. By the same token, others are offended by the pride we may display. Hence, **absence of haughtiness** is a virtue that is a key in avoiding relationships from turning sour in the first place.

Viewed in this way, all 26 virtues help us to make personal spiritual progress, nurture good relationships with others, and fix relationships which may have unfortunately become unsavoury. It all makes for a happier and more peaceful mental environment to further our spiritual growth, and to help others to grow rapidly as well.

A good general rule to follow is to always place ourselves in the shoes of others and see how we will feel if we were faced with the same conditions.

Acharyaji posed a question to us: “If these qualities determined the Adhikari or qualified person, why are they being given to us so late in the Geeta?”

Actually, they have been given five times already in previous chapters as listed in the Introduction. The present list is the most exhaustive of them all. As the subject unfolds, the seeker gets stronger doses to digest. After all, cultivation of virtues is the most vital part of the preparation for spiritual life.

THE DEMONIAL QUALITIES

Verse 4: *The Demoniacal Qualities*

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम्

॥ १६-४॥

dambhō darpō:'bhimānaśca krōdhaḥ pārūṣyamēva ca |

ajñānaṁ cābhijātasya pārtha sampadamāsurīm

|| 16-4||

1	<i>Dambhah darpa abhimaanah cha,</i>	¹ Religious ostentation, ² pride, ³ haughtiness,
2	<i>krodhah paarushyam eva cha,</i>	⁴ anger, as also ⁵ rudeness, and
3	<i>ajnaanam cha abhijaatasya,</i>	⁶ Ignorance – these are the endowments of one
4	<i>paartha sampadam aasureem.</i>	<i>of demoniacal nature, O son of Pritha.</i>

We need not expand on the 6 **demoniacal qualities** here, as the rest of the Chapter deals adequately with each of them with a thoroughness that is rarely seen in scriptures.

THE DIVINE vs. THE DEMONIAL

The above two sets of endowments differentiates the divine from the demoniacal, and clearly tells us the type of person who is meant for the spiritual path. Sridhara Acharya has said: “Abandoning the Asuric nature, and embracing the Divine nature, such a Viveki alone gets liberation.”

When the demoniacal qualities are taken to their extreme limits, they become the Rakshasic qualities of absolutely vicious people. Bondage alone does not describe the Rakshasa’s state. It is much worse than just bondage. The Rakshasa has a firm noose around his neck. He does not feature anywhere in the realm of spiritual development as he is running in the opposite direction.

Verse 5 *Liberation vs. Bondage*

दैवी सम्पद्धिमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।

मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव

॥ १६-५॥

daivī sampadvimōkṣāya nibandhāyāsūrī matā |

mā śucaḥ sampadam daivīmabhijātō:'si pāṇḍava

|| 16-5||

1	<i>Daivee sampat vimokshaaya,</i>	<i>The divine nature is for <u>Liberation</u>, whilst</i>
2	<i>nibandhaaya aasuree mataa;</i>	<i>the Asuric nature is for firm <u>Bondage</u>.</i>
3	<i>maa shuchah sampadam daiveem,</i>	<i>Do not grieve – for with the divine nature</i>
4	<i>abhijaatah asi paandava.</i>	<i>you are destined, O Pandava.</i>

1-2 Sage Vyasa dramatises the clash between the divine and the demoniacal.

If we can picture a football match that is about to kick-off, we will get some idea of the dramatisation running through the Sage’s mind in this verse. The two sides are lined up against each other, each in their own half. The referee is about to blow the starting whistle.

The commentator identifies the two teams: the divine side is in the fair strip on the ‘right’ half of the ground; the demoniacal side is in the dark strip in the ‘wrong’ half of the ground.

He then tells his listeners which goal each team is going to attack: the divine side is attacking the goal of **Liberation**; the demoniacal side is attacking the goal on the opposite side of the field – the goal of **Bondage**.

The players of the two teams have already been announced: they are the virtues on the divine side and the vices of the demoniacal side.

3-4 Arjuna is being reassured that he need not be worried, for he is certainly endowed with the Daivi Sampati in large measure, and qualifies to play for the divine team. He is asked not to grieve because he is on the winning side!

“Good always overcomes evil” – that is the message that comes across to us.

The Pandavas are not just the favourites but it is a certainty that they are going to defeat the Kauravas, even though they are outnumbered.

One more interesting fact about this particular game: It’s a local derby! Both sides, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, are from the same clan, the same city. What could be more savoured than a clash between two local rival teams!

Verse 6: *The Two Camps of Humanity*

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च ।

दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु

॥ १६-६॥

dvau bhūtasargau lōkē:'smindaiva āsura ēva ca |

daivō vistaraśaḥ prōkta āsuram pārtha mē śṛṇu

|| 16-6||

1	<i>Dvau bhoota-sargau loke asmin,</i>	<i>In this world, two kinds of beings exist:</i>
2	<i>daivah aasurah eva cha;</i>	<i>the divine and the demoniacal.</i>
3	<i>daivah vistarashah proktah,</i>	<i>The divine has been spoken of in detail;</i>
4	<i>aasuram paartha me shrinu.</i>	<i>hear from Me about the <u>demoniacal</u>, O Partha.</i>

1-2 Sri Krishna sizes up the two teams, the Divine and Demoniacal. There are only three characteristics by which the teams are gauged: they are Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. The divine side is predominantly Sattwic. The demoniacal side is split into two types, namely, the Rajasic Asuras and the Tamasic Rakshasas, who are “Incorrigibly Indifferent”.

About this third Rakshasic type, Pujya Gurudev writes:

“The Lord’s silence regarding them is perhaps more eloquent than all His eloquence on the other two types! Religion and the techniques of self-development are addressed only to the former two groups and not to Rakshasic type of men. They have not sufficiently grown in their evolution; they are still in the hands of Nature, yet to be moulded and baked in the furnace of life by its scorching experiences.”

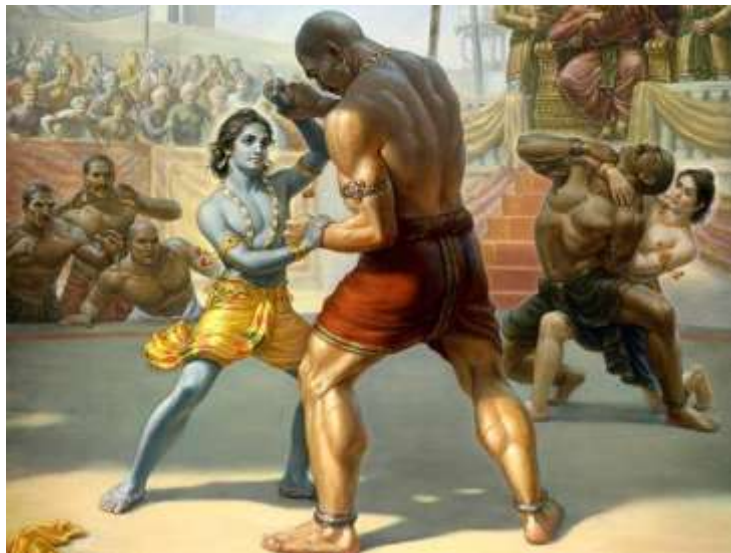
Asmīn Loke: In this context, these words refer to human beings only, not all creatures as it usually does.

3 Daivah: “the Divine team”. In the first three verses, the 26 qualities that were descriptions of the Divine team, placed in a 6-11-9 formation of defenders, midfielders and attackers.

4 Aasuram: “the Demoniacal team”. The focus for the rest of the Chapter is the lineup of the Asuras and Rakshasas in the opposing team, the demoniacal sector of human beings. As we go through them, we will see that some verses deal specifically with the

Rakshasic type. They are more like rugby players than footballers! (No offence intended to the beautiful game of Rugby.) The immoral levels to which they can stoop are vividly described in the words of the Lord Himself.

THE TWO TEAMS: “VIRTUES” & “VICES”



VERSE	ITEM	QUALITY	MEANING & REMARKS
DAIVI SAMPATI			
1	1	Abhayam	<u>Fearlessness</u> : Fear is present only in ignorance. Fear is of loss or pain. A seeker accepts any situation since he is not wanting anything, but realisation.
	2	Sattwa-Samshuddhi	<u>Purity of Mind</u> : Actions must have good intentions. Not using wrong means for what we want.
	3	Jnaana-Yoga-Vyavasthitih	<u>Persistence in Knowledge & Yoga</u> : These are Ritam and Satyam, understanding and experiencing. One keeps focused on that knowledge with one-pointedness.
	4	Daanam	<u>Charity</u> : This is to be done as per one's capacity, and without any ostentation.
	5	Damah	<u>Control of the Senses</u> : The outgoing senses are kept in check.
	6	Yajna	<u>Sacrifice</u> : The Pancha-yajnas are personal duties that are mandatory for householders.
	7	Swaadhyayah	<u>Scriptural Study</u> : This is the chanting and study of the scriptures. It has been kept separate from Yajna here to give it more importance.
	8	Tapah	<u>Austerity</u> : The three types will be discussed in Chapter 17.
	9	Aarjavam	<u>Rectitude</u> : also translates as straightforwardness. It does not being rude to people. It is polite openness and honesty.
2	10	Ahimsaa	<u>Non-injury</u> : This is not hurting anyone in thought, word and deed. One makes a conscious effort to do so.

VERSE	ITEM	QUALITY	MEANING & REMARKS
	11	Satyam	<u>Truthfulness</u> : to speak the truth. It includes apologizing if one has lied. If we have spoken badly about a person, we should go to him and admit what we have said. If we have to point out an error, first prepare the person by telling him some good qualities.
	12	Akrodhah	<u>Absence of Anger</u> : to get angry is to punish oneself for another's error! We alone suffer, not others. Just smile it off.
	13	Tyaagah	<u>Renunciation</u> : This is the highest kind of self-sacrifice, up to the point of Sannyasa. It includes generosity and giving up bad company. There are various ways of practicing it.
	14	Shaantih	<u>Peacefulness</u> : This is a form of mind-control; calmness of mind.
	15	Apaisunam	<u>Non-vilification</u> : This is the opposite of highlighting the faults of others. It is a highly skillful quality requiring great restraint.
	16	Dayaa Bhootesu	<u>Kindness to Beings</u> : compassion towards all.
	17	Aloluptvam	<u>Non-Covetousness</u> : absence of greed or tendency to acquire. It requires the development of contentment.
	18	Maardavam	<u>Gentleness</u> : This is to have a Sattwic attitude. Even under great provocation, a Sattwic person does not retaliate.
	19	Hreeh	<u>Modesty</u> : Shy, modest and coy; unostentatiousness; sweet-natured; staying away from the limelight. This is a beautiful quality for women.
	20	Achaapalam	<u>Absence of Fickleness</u> : not restless; quiet and not frivolous.
3	21	Tejah	<u>Vigour</u> : energetic; one with radiance; hard-working.
	22	Kshamaa	<u>Forgiveness</u> : this is the strength of virtue. One resists the temptation to hit back even when he has the capacity. To those who have hurt us, we remain calm and bear it.
	23	Dhritih	<u>Fortitude</u> : to hold on to virtue in the face of sorrow & hardship.
	24	Shaucham	<u>Cleanliness</u> : This needs an orderly mind; to keep all our things neat and clean indicates a pure mind.
	25	Adrohah	<u>Freedom from Malice</u> : having no hatred towards anyone. It burns a lot of energy to hate anyone. We lose our own space.
	26	Na Atimaanitaa	<u>Absence of Haughtiness</u> : not having a high opinion of oneself. The truly great ones never describe themselves as high. Knowledge should make us more humble. Pride of knowledge is a quality of the weak. This humility is not an 'act', but an attitude of mind.
ASURI SAMPATI			
4	1	Dambhah	<u>Religious Ostentation</u> : This is a 'show-off'.
	2	Darpa	<u>Pride</u> : or arrogance.
	3	Abhimaanah	<u>Haughtiness</u> : One thinks of oneself as a very wonderful person.
	4	Krodhah	<u>Anger</u> : an expression of the Rajasic nature in us.
	5	Paarushyam	<u>Rudeness</u> : This is a Tamasic approach to situations, the opposite of Maardavan; it is having a harsh approach to people.
	6	Ajnaanam	<u>Ignorance</u> : this is the root cause of delusion, the basis of the "wealth" of Asuric Sampati. If these 6 qualities are present, one qualifies as an Asura!

16.2 DEMONIAL VISION

(Verses 7-9, 3 No.)

The Principle of “Goodness Within Badness”

THERE IS A TENDER forgiveness in the words of the Lord regarding demoniacal behaviour. The Lord does not see it as the opposite of good, but rather as a pollution of good. If goodness is a clean mirror, then badness is a mirror that is covered in thick dust. The important point here is that the mirror is still there deeply hidden, even in the bad.

Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji observes:

“Bad is only good misconstrued.

Virtue, poisoned with ignorance, is Evil.

Evil, treated and cured of its poison, becomes Virtue.”

This is a key point to remember throughout this chapter. It tells us that every person is inherently good. The demoniacal quality that is being displayed is only an aberration or distortion of the good that is inherent. That is why the same yardstick can be used to measure both. Understanding, purity, good conduct and truthfulness – this is the yardstick used to measure even the demoniacal nature.

We can take an overview of what makes up ‘badness’, as opposed to ‘goodness’. The two are not totally different sets of values, unrelated to each other. They are the same basic values. The human heart has the same basic needs, feelings, etc, and so whether divine or demoniacal, the same thermometer can measure both. The demoniacal qualities are a contaminated or poisoned version of the divine qualities. The contents of the bad mind are the same as those of the good mind, but with a good measure of poison added to it!

Let us see what the Lord has to say further on this theme . . .

Verse 7: Discrimination is the Yardstick

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।

न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते

॥ १६-७॥

pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca janā na vidurāsurāḥ |

na śaucaṁ nāpi cācārō na satyaṁ tēṣu vidyātē

॥ 16-7॥

1	<i>Pravrittim cha nivrittim cha,</i>	<i>What is to be done, and what is not to be done,</i>
2	<i>janaa na viduh aasuraah;</i>	<i>demoniacal persons have no <u>understanding</u>.</i>
3	<i>na shaucham na api cha aacharah,</i>	<i>Neither do <u>purity</u>, nor even <u>good conduct</u>,</i>
4	<i>na satyam teshu vidyate.</i>	<i>nor <u>truthfulness</u> exist in them.</i>

1 Lord Krishna now begins to elaborate on the demoniacal nature which He had just touched upon in verse 4. As may be expected, He has only one yardstick to measure both the divine and the demoniacal. What is that yardstick? It is **Discrimination** – the ability to know what is right and what is wrong. The demoniacal type of person seems to have no idea about this.

The presence or absence of discrimination determines whether one is classified as divine or demoniacal. That was also Sri Shankaracharya's standard, as seen in his *Viveka Chudamani*. The same standard was upheld by Sri Veda Vyasa a millenium earlier.

It may help clear matters in the student's mind to note that the standard adopted by both sages is a non-partisan one based on firm conviction in one's intellect. Divine or demoniacal does not depend on which religion we belong to; nor on which part of the world we hail from; nor on whom we take as our Guru; nor on how learned or devoted we are seen to be by others. It is dependent solely on our power of clear discrimination.

The Line of Demarcation

Four walls demarcate the boundaries of the Demoniacal nature. They are part of Lord Krishna's yardstick. To measure darkness, one measures the intensity of light.

In cricket, bad light can stop the play. The umpires come together and use a light-meter to measure the light on the field. If it is below a pre-determined level, the game is called off. Similarly, Lord Krishna measures four divine qualities, and when they do not come up to the minimum accepted standard, the person is declared to be "demoniacal".

Similarly, the following four qualities, when they are deficient in a person, indicate the onset of the demoniacal nature in that person:

2 i) Na Vidhuh: Lack of Understanding. The demons have no idea what is to be done (Pravritti) and what is not to be done (Nivritti). The codes governing human existence are Dharma. They completely ignore these codes, and conduct their lives along the lines of Adharma. Departing from the standard, their principle switches to "What I do is right; you cannot dictate to me what to do."

The basic law of Justice is violated, with the result that the 'Law of the Jungle' takes precedence over it – "*Might is Right*".

3a ii) Na Shaucham: Lack of Purity;

3b iii) Na Aacharah: Lack of Good Conduct;

4 iv) Na Satyam: Lack of Truthfulness.

These three follow swiftly on the heels of 'lack of understanding'. Together they form the four wheels of the vehicle which hurtles downhill like a car without brakes. The plunge in character is inevitable. The person is hell-bent towards his own destruction.

Verse 8: *The Vision: Godless and Driven By Lust*

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।

अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम्

॥ १६-८ ॥

asatyamapratistham tē jagadāhuranīśvaram |

aparasparasambhūtaṁ kimanyatkāmahaitukam

॥ 16-8 ॥

1	<i>Asatya apratishtham te,</i>	<i>“Without any <u>truth</u>, without any <u>support</u>,</i>
2	<i>jagat aahuh an-eeshvaram;</i>	<i>without any <u>God</u>.” This is how they <u>view the world</u>.</i>
3	<i>aparah-para-sambhootam,</i>	<i>They add, “It is brought about by <u>mutual union</u>.</i>
4	<i>kim anyat kaama haitukam.</i>	<i>What else but lust is its cause?”</i>

The Importance of Vision

Our Vision of the world determines how we interact with it. As is our vision, so is our thought, speech and action. If we believe that men are essentially good, we will treat everyone with respect. If we believe that men are essentially bad, we will treat everyone with suspicion. This verse focuses on the low, demoralising vision in the demoniacal mind, from which springs all the cruelty, injustice, and sensuality that we see in it.

Key characteristics of the demoniacal vision are the following two principles:

1-2 i) An-Eeshwaram: The belief that there is no good in this world comes from the belief that there is no God in the world. The demoniacal vision has no room for God. There is no high goal to strive for. There is no motivation to live the pure, decent life, let alone the spiritual one. It is not based on the solid foundation of Truth, hence anything built upon it is shaky. A slight tremor can ruin the entire structure of a life lived with such a fragile vision.

3-4 ii) Aparah-Para-Sambhootam: Since there is the total absence of the higher, the emphasis in their life shifts entirely to the lower. Life is centred on the low, God-less view. That means it is body-centred and sense-centered. This implies that the only purpose they see in life is to fulfil their lustful passions. Lust is seen by them as the sole driving force behind this world.

Driven by such a low ideal, what can we expect in their behaviour?

Verse 9: The Consequences of Such a Vision

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।

प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः

॥ १६-९॥

ētāṁ dṛṣṭimavaṣṭabhya naṣṭātmānō:'lpabuddhayaḥ |

prabhavanti ugra-karmaṇaḥ kṣayāya jagatō:'hitāḥ

|| 16-9||

1	<i>Etaam drishtim avashtabhya,</i>	<i>Holding on to this (vile) view,</i>
2	<i>nashta-aatmaanah alpa-buddhayah;</i>	<i>these depraved characters of little intellect,</i>
3	<i>prabhavanti ugra-karmaanah,</i>	<i>come forth with their fierce deeds,</i>
4	<i>kshayaaya jagat ahitaah.</i>	<i>set to destroy the world by their harmfulness.</i>

1 The consequences of the demoniacal vision are now the focus. It is a case of hate begets hate; destruction begets destruction. Everything gets flung back at the person who sees the world as being at war with him.

A God-less and lustful vision of life ‘achieves’ the following results:

2 i) Nashta-Atmanah: A destroyed inner life.

3 ii) Ugra-Karmaanah: An fierce, vicious personality.

4 iii) Kshayaaya Jagat: A destroyed world.

The Destruction of Inner Life

The demoniacal person has ruled the Divine Presence out of his life. He is so strongly bound to his own mind and body as being his deities, that he is unable to recognise anything higher than these little, transient deities. The total absence of any acknowledgement of the Presence of God means there is no inner, spiritual life for him. His whole attention is focussed on himself and whatever he associates with it. With no anchorage in his inner being, his life is at the mercy of the winds of circumstance.

The judgement of oneself is based on the ego. The Ego becomes the centre of his universe. Everything is weighed against the pan of selfishness. This is what makes such a life valueless in terms of inner growth. Spiritually, the demonic life is utterly worthless. It is the most dangerous state to be in. One becomes one's own deadliest enemy. The path of self-destruction lies open for him.

An Outrageously Vicious Personality

The primary impulse for "*fierce deeds*" arises in a mind filled with *fear* and *hatred*. The demoniacal being has the delusion that he has to survive in a world where everyone is against him. This keeps him ever on guard against others. He feels threatened at every turn. The Sattwic quality of love and trust are absent in a large measure.

A second perspective on violence arises from his view that lust is the only purpose in life. To fulfill his passions, what evil will he not commit? Thus, added to fear of the outside is desire from the inside. Together, the road to self-destruction and destruction of others is flung wide open.

We see this whole scenario played out in the demoniacal person. The following verses provide some outstanding and vivid details of the kind of life the above vision fosters.

The Destruction of the World

When the impulse towards violence is left unchecked, it can grow to frightful heights. The terrorism we see is one of the ugliest faces of a violent outlook on life. The impulse gets a boost from the success it is seen to achieve. For instance, after a few successful attempts at using violence to subdue the resistance from others in small things, the person gets a little confidence to use it to gain bigger ends.

Collective, organised violence becomes the next step. This, too, can grow to nationwide proportions, until a government itself becomes the "organisation" to impose its violence on the nation at large. This is not a fairy tale, but actual instances in modern history verify that they have become realities in many parts of the world. The rise of western colonialism is a case in very recent history. Glaring examples of tyrannical rule are not myths but realities. The demoniacal mind, when it coalesces with other like minds, can be devastating in its destructive power.



16.3 DEMONIACAL BEHAVIOUR

(Verses 10-18, 9 No.)

ARISING FROM THE DEMONIACAL nature is the demoniacal vision; and from the latter arises the demoniacal behaviour. This is what the Lord now takes a close look into.

Man's actions follow the goal he sets before himself, and the resolve of his will is connected fully to his goal. Will is the Master of one's energies; will directs and channelizes our energies towards our goal. This section throws light on how the demoniacal will, impelled by the goal of fulfilling desire, renders one's behaviour demoniacal.

The correction of wrong behaviour lies in re-defining one's goal in life. Every effort made to educate people to reset a proper, wholesome, constructive goal is helpful in averting demoniacal behaviour. Absurd selfish desires direct our will into demoniacal behaviour; whereas a spiritual aspirations direct our will into divine behaviour.

To learn this lesson is the purpose of the nine verses of this section of the Chapter.

Self-Analysis – the Purpose of Reading Geeta

The Geeta is a text that is intended for self-analysis and self-introspection. When we read the Geeta, it is helpful to feel that the Geeta is a mirror which is reflecting our own mind to ourselves. The thought that should arise is "How am I guilty of this? Does this apply to me? If so, then let me try and correct myself on this point. Let me apply this knowledge for self-correction."

If we have this approach, the Geeta can truly help us divinise ourselves. We will use the Geeta for the purpose intended – namely, self-correction. However, if we drift off into thoughts of assessing others along the lines suggested in the Geeta, we risk the danger of becoming vain and perhaps arrogant. Our study will defeat its very purpose.

The passages in this section, are meant to make us turn within and take a good look at ourselves. If we find something that applies in our life, then the reading becomes more relevant and interesting to us. If not, we can pass it by and move on. But never are we to linger on a verse thinking of whom it applies to other than ourselves.

In Chapter 9, under verse 30, we have read "The Story of Anguli Mala", and noted the great transformation that had taken place in his life. This can be inspiring to us. It is a reminder that even if we are guilty of the worst sins, there is room for transformation.

Verse 10: Stage 1: Passion, Objectives & Resolves

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।

मोहाद्गृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः

॥ १६-१०॥

kāmamāśritya duṣpūraṁ dambhamānamadānvitāḥ |

mōhādgṛhītvāsadgrāhānpravartantē:'śucivratāḥ

॥ 16-10॥

1	<i>Kaamam aashritya dushpooram,</i>	<i>Given to insatiable <u>passion</u>,</i>
2	<i>dambha-maanam-adaanvitah;</i>	<i>filled with <u>hypocrisy</u>, <u>pride</u> and <u>arrogance</u>,</i>
3	<i>mohaata griheetvaa asad-graahaan,</i>	<i>adopting <u>vile objectives</u> due to <u>delusion</u>,</i>
4	<i>pravartante ashuchivrataah.</i>	<i>they work with <u>impure resolves</u>.</i>

1 The first Pada lays out the condition under which demoniacal behaviour occurs. The condition is to hold an unwholesome, immoral, unrighteous desire in the mind. If we do hold such desire or desires, we have a lesson to learn from the rest of the verse.

2 We are immediately warned of what could happen to us under this condition. We now have a way of tracing the potential dangers we are likely to face.

In the case at hand, in following such insatiable passions, we become vulnerable to being bound by three knots – vanity, pride and arrogance. It may not have even struck us that this could be happening to us. That is why the Geeta is there for us, for our own good.

3 A step beyond the above triple danger that may arise, is that we may start thinking of clever or ingenuous ways of fulfilling these desires. These are the “vile objectives” that the Lord warns us of. Driven by the infatuation, we apply our intellects in the wrong direction and try to devise some cunning way to bring it to fruition.

We may not even know that we are doing this, because we are under the influence of Delusion. The Geeta thus guides us in understanding our own mind’s tricks played on ourselves. How ingenious is this mind of ours! It will not stop this planning until it finds a way to get the desire fulfilled.

4 And now the most treacherous of all the mind’s tricks. Having worked out a plan to obtain the desire, invariably a concocted plan full of conniving tricks, it then sets about working on these “impure resolves”, hoping at every step that it will meet with success and the corresponding enjoyment!

If we read the remaining verses of this chapter in this manner, we stand to be blessed by the Lord Himself to cleanse ourselves of all impure desires, impure objectives, and impure resolves – and, of course, the build-up of **Paapa** or impure Karma.

Help from the Vama Shastra: In this scripture is mentioned how people driven by such vile objectives become shameless in their abuse of power over others. Such people are known to use Mantras to subjugate others. They do not hesitate to gain control over women to fulfill their desires, they use every means possible to bring harm to others. Strategies are formed to bring people into submission to their evil designs.

If the foundations are false, the edifice we build will prove to be no firmer than a castle of cards. The economic crashes, social evils, political turmoils, and general unrest that we see in the world today are a result of the actions described in this verse. Such people, due to their insatiable desires, gain power over others easily, and can even rise quickly to positions of temporal power, wherein they have wider scope to satisfy their lust.

Verse 11: ***Stage 2: Actions, Cares & Anxieties***

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः

॥ १६-११॥

1	<i>Chintaam aparimeyaam cha,</i>	<i>Beset with innumerable cares,</i>
2	<i>pralayaantaam upaashritaah;</i>	<i>which they are relieved of only with death;</i>
3	<i>kaamah upabhoga paramaa,</i>	<i>regarding gratification of lust as the highest aim,</i>
4	<i>etaavat iti nishchitaah.</i>	<i>and feeling certain that there is nothing like it;</i>

The Relief Brought by Death

1-2 The above passions, objectives and resolves get converted into unending actions, cares and anxieties. This goes on throughout life. Passions are never quenched. This restlessness is ‘relieved’ only by the coming of death.

Acharyaji gave us other interpretations of “death” as used in this verse. They are:

i) The usual death that we all know, of the body, is the best meaning that fits the context. It relieves the mind of all its restlessness and anxiety.

ii) The death could also mean the death of Brahmaji, which occurs at the end of the Kalpa, after millions of years! For all this period, there is this painful experience of unsatisfied passions in the lives of such people.

iii) Theoretically, ‘death’ could well mean the death of all desires, which would put an end to restlessness and anxiety once and for all, and bring genuine relief from the roasting experience of Samsara. But this is hardly likely to happen in the case of demoniacal people, so it can be ruled out.

3-4 The vision expressed in verse 8 on lust being the cause of the world, has now grown into an obsession, and begun to infect every action. At the core of all activities is the intense lust which drives such people. It could be lust for power, lust for enormous wealth, or (most commonly) lust for the opposite sex. Feeling that this is all that is worth striving for, these demoniacal souls work ceaselessly towards their short-term goals.

Verse 12: *Stage 3: The Race to Accumulate Wealth*

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।

ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान्

|| १६-१२||

āsāpāśaśatairbaddhāḥ kāmakrōdhaparāyaṇāḥ |

īhantē kāmabhōgārthamanyāyēnārthasañcayān

|| 16-12||

1	<i>Aashaa-paasha-shataih baddhaah,</i>	<i>Bound by a hundred shackles of hope,</i>
2	<i>kaama-krodha-paraayanaah;</i>	<i>giving themselves wholly to passion and anger,</i>
3	<i>eehante kaama-bhoga-artham,</i>	<i>they strive to attain, for sensual enjoyment,</i>
4	<i>anyaayena artha-sanchayaan.</i>	<i>hoards of wealth by unlawful means.</i>

Hope – the Inspiration for Enjoyment

1-2 Where does the energy come from to continue the quest for more and more pleasures? The fire of passion is fed by the ghee of hope. The discriminating intellect

recognises hope as being a shackle which binds through addiction to pleasure. When seen squarely for what it is worth, hope traps the soul by the promise of enjoyment. But this hope is vain and empty. It is fleeting. It cannot deliver what it promises.

The demoniacal person is never satisfied until he gets more and more enjoyment. Hope for more enjoyment spurs him on to continue make more effort to get more sensual pleasure. He is caught “hook, line and sinker” by the empty promise of enjoyment.

The “Passport” & “Visa” for Enjoyment

3-4 All sensual enjoyments require funding. In order to get more enjoyment, more funds are needed. Daivi Sampat, the wealth of Virtue is of no use here; only Asuri Sampat, the wealth of Money, helps. Money becomes the Passport to whatever a person wishes to enjoy. To meet this need, he plunges himself into frenzied activity to accumulate wealth by all means possible, by hook or by crook, however irregular and unlawful it may be.

Visa in the usual sense of travel, refers to consent from the host country to accept the visiting traveller. In the figurative sense of enjoyment, it refers to consent from the conscience within to accept the visit of the enjoyer. When money alone becomes the passport for enjoyment, no Visa is needed. As far as the demoniacal man is concerned, he needs no such consent; his money itself buys him that consent at any price!

All our activities and enjoyments need to have God’s consent. It is the visa needed by the enjoyer to have his enjoyment. Conscience is God’s visa from within. But the demon mind does not have a God to answer to – that God has long been snuffed out of his conscience by the thick cloud of delusion. Thus, any means to enjoyment is acceptable, even if it violates God’s Laws. What then to speak of man’s laws? – Unlawful means such as bribery and corruption to accumulate wealth are quite acceptable for him.

Thus, the **Need** for money turns into **Greed** for money. The next verse has more –

Verse 13: Stage 4: The Greed for Wealth

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।

इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम्

॥ १६-१३॥

idamadya mayā labdhamimam prāpsyē manōratham |

idamastīdamapi mē bhaviṣyati punardhanam

|| 16-13||

1	<i>Idam adya mayaa labdham,</i>	<i>“This has been <u>gained</u> by me today;</i>
2	<i>imam praapsye manoratham;</i>	<i>I shall <u>acquire</u> this desired object (tomorrow);</i>
3	<i>idam asti idam api me,</i>	<i>this is <u>mine</u> now, and this also</i>
4	<i>bhaviṣyati punah dhanam.</i>	<i>shall be <u>mine</u> in future.”</i>

From need to *greed* – that is the scenario we have reached at this point. This verse is the voice of **Greed**. Can we recognise it in our own minds? If we do, we need to become alert and curb it at once, before it progresses from the thought level to the level of actions.

“Today This, Tomorrow That”

The lust for wealth can be frighteningly overpowering. Every fine emotion is trampled in the relentless march towards grabbing as much wealth as possible.

1-2 The mind does not settle in the now. It is always planning ahead of time, looking into the future. It is anxious about what tomorrow will bring. The mind of such a person can never rest contented in the present moment. He can never have peace of mind.

3-4 In order to give this fact graphical emphasis, it is repeated in the second line, too. Repetition of this type draws our attention to the importance of the point being made. For, indeed, the desire for 'more' is a thirst that is unquenchable. This, then, becomes a warning that is meant to be unforgettable. The Lord is dead serious when He repeats a warning!

The demoniacal intellect is ever planning and plotting, conjuring and conniving, crooking and scheming, firing and hiring! What will he not do to obtain more wealth? His whole life is spent in making ruthless plans to acquire more and more wealth. In the process, other people are used and manipulated. Their lives become miserable, too.

At the end of the day the demon sits back. But not for long . . . tomorrow is another day. He starts the day looking at more strategies that he can come up with to get what he wants. Such a man is already in the throes of Hell!

Verse 14: ***Stage 5: Violent Means Adopted***

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी

॥ १६-१४॥

asau mayā hataḥ śatrurhaniṣyē cāparānapi |

īśvarō:'hamaham bhōgī siddhō:'ham balavānsukhī

|| 16-14||

1	<i>Asau mayaa hatah shatruh,</i>	<i>"That enemy has been slain by me;</i>
2	<i>hanishye cha aparaan api;</i>	<i>and others also shall I destroy;</i>
3	<i>eeshwarah aham aham bhogee,</i>	<i>I am the Boss, I am the enjoyer,</i>
4	<i>siddhah aham balavaan sukhee.</i>	<i>I am perfect, powerful and happy."</i>

We move on to Stage 5. Sooner or later Greed is going to be obstructed or frustrated. The demoniacal mind has one and only one way to face an obstruction – he bulldozes his way past any obstacle. The demon stops at nothing that stands in his way.

We have the contextual example of **Duryodhana** for such a man. Every word of the Lord seems to be a commentary on the life of Duryodhana, who refused to grant any land to the Pandavas – even the land covered by the point of a needle!

Resort to Violence

1-2 If pushed to the limit, he does not hesitate to kill his opponents who hinder his evil designs. He is no respecter of man-made laws, and God's Laws do not exist as far as he is concerned. He has no idea of the Law of Karma – that is for religions fools, not for worldly-wise people like him!

How does he escape the law? Money – money comes to his rescue on every occasion. It's his trump card. He is a firm believer in the power of his money to fish him out of troubled waters. To him who has already reduced every man to his God-less level, every man has a price, and can be bought with money. That is his concept of "justice".

Arrogance Taken to its Ugliest Limit

3 The feeling of being in charge is very strong in him. He is not aware that such an attitude appears nauseous to all those around him. He is a picture of the arrogant “fat-cat” whose sole claim to hold other people’s allegiance lies in making them slaves to his wealth. He has a swarm of selfish people around him.

Eeshwarah: “the Lord of Creation”. He compares himself to the high position held by none other than the Creator Himself. Ishwara is the equivalent to ‘God’ in the western religions. In Puranic literature, we find many instances of demoniacal lords who consider themselves to be superior even to the Lord of Creation. Even the word ‘arrogance’ is too mild a term to describe such a person!

“Perfect, Powerful and Happy”

4 His arrogance does not stop there. Like Brahman, it wants to be Infinite and omnipotent. The demon has an enormously inflated opinion of his own importance. He feels that his wealth entitles him to the respect of all others.

His **Perfection** is nothing more than the lip-service paid to him by his ‘admirers’.

His **Power** is nothing more than the slavery of those who are in his employment.

His **Happiness** is nothing more than the sorrow of others whom he has cheated.

Verse 15: Stage 6: Rise to Material “Success”

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।

यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः

॥ १६-१५॥

ādhyō:'bhijanavānasmi kō:'nyō:'sti sadṛśō mayā |

yakṣyē dāsyāmi mōdiṣya ityajñānavimōhitāḥ

|| 16-15||

1	<i>Aadhyah abhi-janavaan asmi,</i>	<i>“I am rich and high-born;</i>
2	<i>kah anyah asti sadrishah mayaa;</i>	<i>who else is equal to me?</i>
3	<i>yakshye daasyaami modishya,</i>	<i>I shall perform sacrifices, charity, I shall rejoice,”</i>
4	<i>iti ajnaana-vimohitaah.</i>	<i>thus are they diversely deluded by ignorance.</i>

In Stage 6, the demoniacal man – who can be undeniably very brilliant, intelligent, learned and skillful in many arts, especially Management – reaches the top of the ladder of worldly success. He now has no piers; he has risen to the pinnacle of his career. We may be talking of a man with amazing prowess and acumen.

His only deficiency is his zero spirituality!

The Dizzy Heights of Egoism

1-2 Like the Vedantin who rises from Jeevahood to Shivahood, from Atman to Brahman in the spiritual field, this man has risen to become the God of his conception – the all-powerful Ego! He has risen to the apex in the field which is the very antithesis of spiritual illumination and perfection. There is now no one equal to him.

Having become “successful” in his marauding efforts to become rich, the demon takes a moment to look at his success and gloats over it. He sees himself as successful, unassailable, incomparable, and many other such uncountable epithets – but fails to see the

hollowness of his success, built on the sweat and toil of other people whom he has exploited on the way.

The Tall Head of Vanity

3 Now, having acquired so much wealth, he has to let others know about it. Thus begins his “*religious*” life. He undertakes some popular pilgrimages like going to Mt. Kailas by helicopter; he does the Char Dham Yatra in one day by private aircraft, and jumping the long queues as a VIP to save time; he does impressive Yajnas with a thousand fires, gathering together an awesome array of the most learned pundits of his day, and having a huge Bhandara at the end of it; he gives liberally in charity to the most spectacular and gigantic temple of his time. Indeed, there is nothing that is impossible for him to do, for he has all the wealth to do it.

The intention here is to depict the ostentatious worship performed by the demoniacal man. There is no trace of love for God in the entire proceedings.

At the end of a string of such benevolent deeds, he takes a moment to sit back in his lounge to rejoice over what has been accomplished. Out come the photo albums, the press reports, the interviews with great Mahatmas, and many other memorabilia gathered during all those occasions. He rejoices and has a hearty laugh over these memories, but his laughter has a hollowness in it – it is built upon the cries of many creditors!

4 Thus, we see that even in his ‘religious’ life, the full play of Maya creeps in. Indeed, Ajnana or Ignorance has made its home in his narrow heart.

Verse 16: Stage 7: Fall into “Hell” Most Foul

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ

॥ १६-१६॥

anēkacittavibhrāntā mōhajālasamāvṛtāḥ |

prasaktāḥ kāmabhōgēṣu patanti narakē:'śucau

|| 16-16||

1	<i>Aneka-chitta-vibhraantaah,</i>	<i>Bewildered by many a fanciful thought;</i>
2	<i>moha-jaala-samaa-vritaah;</i>	<i>entangled in the snare of delusion;</i>
3	<i>prasaktaah kaama-bhogeshu,</i>	<i>addicted to the gratification of lust;</i>
4	<i>patanti narake ashuchau.</i>	<i>they fall into a foul hell.</i>

From the heights of the fickle popularity attained in the previous verse, the actual achievement is now assessed. What has all this extravagant display of worship really achieved? Stage 7 describes the real situation, the real gain after the show is over.

1-2 If all these “fanciful” frenzied activities of pomp and show result in making him see the hollowness of his worship, that would be some gain, indeed. The effort will not have gone in vain. Just to know that it was a wasted effort is a very big gain.

But, alas, that does not happen. The demonic mind is too gross to pick up a lesson like that. It only gets more and more bewildered, more and more entangled and deluded!

3 The net of lust in which this demon is ensnared is waiting to trap many others as well. Acharyaji said that we should try and keep as far away as possible from such lustful

people. If we run after them because of their wealth, we are doomed. They are already neck-deep in delusion and will pull us into their pit without any mercy.

4 Where does all this lead the demoniacal being? The Lord says that he “falls into a foul hell”. Hell is already a foul place to be; what then is a ‘foul hell’? Acharyaji said with a tinge of sarcasm, “It should read ‘the BEST hell’. Only the ‘best’ is reserved for such people. The ‘best’ hell is made of faecal matter and urine, and its inhabitants take a bath in phlegm and other repulsive substances!”

No doubt, Acharyaji said this with the good intention of creating an aversion in us for objects of lust. Who knows, in reality hell may be even worse than this description!

These explanations and comments are meant for us to understand the reversal of values – in a temple, instead of devotion, wealth is splashed out. Such explanations are given in scriptures like **Garuda Purana**, for the sake of inducing some disgust in us for this type of lustful behaviour. If verses like this help us to avoid being *bewildered* by thoughts, *entangled* by delusion, and *addicted* to lust, then their purpose is fully justified.

Verse 17: ***Stage 8: The Desire to be “Worshipped”***

आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम्

॥ १६-१७॥

ātmāsambhāvitāḥ stabdhā dhanamānamadānvitāḥ |

yajantē nāmayajñāistē dambhēnāvidhipūrvakam

|| 16-17||

1	<i>Aatma-sam-bhaavitaah stabdhaa,</i>	<i>Self-conceited, haughty (stubborn);</i>
2	<i>dhana-maanam-adaanvitaah;</i>	<i>filled with pride and drunk with <u>wealth</u>;</i>
3	<i>yajante naama-yajnaih te,</i>	<i>they perform sacrifices in name only,</i>
4	<i>dambhena avidhi-poorvakam.</i>	<i>out of <u>ostentation</u> and contrary to <u>scriptures</u>.</i>

The demoniacal man is a peculiar specimen of mankind. He has just been consigned to hell. It’s a place that most sensible people would feel ashamed to go to. Not the demoniacal man. He seems to think that it is some kind of a compliment. He feels he must have done something great to have achieved to go there!

1-2 This is due to his self-conceit and haughtiness, which fails to see any fault in oneself and sees everyone else as being far short of the qualification for it. Here is an interesting story to illustrate this:

3-4 Acharyaji gave some graphic descriptions: “These people hold these Yajnas without observing any of the religious spirit that should accompany them. Naturally, good priests will not accept their invitations, so they get the worst type of priests to whom the profession is just a business. Priests who are looking for rich clientele will be attracted to such events.

“The sacrifice is accompanied by feasting. Tamasic foods and drinks are freely available to people who are invited to these ‘prayers’. They give a lot in charity on these occasions, but it is not good things, and it is certainly not with good intentions.”

Thus the demon’s display of his wealth creeps into religion also, because he finds a willing audience coming to attend such occasions.

Such people, because of the wealth at their command, tend to gather a whole lot of ‘worshippers’ around themselves, who sing their praises. They can also climb into seats of power easily because they are hard-working and smart. That is not too difficult to achieve. The final verse in this section shows us how this is achieved . . .

STORY: NARADA’S PRIDE QUELLED

Swami Sivanandaji has written a very thrilling story of how Narada’s pride was quelled. This is a summary of it. Narada, a long time before he acquired great virtue and became regarded as a saint beyond any comparison, was filled with some self-conceit. He was to go to a Swayamvara where the princess was to garland the man of her choice from a long line of prospective suitors. Her beauty was so stunning that Narada became instantly attracted towards her.

Narada desired to win the princess. He thought of a plan to make it very easy for her to choose him. He asked the Lord to bestow upon him the most handsome face for the occasion so that the bride would be transfixed by his appearance. The Lord agreed. Narada walked into the hall of the Swayamvara with an air of confidence. There came the graceful princess, nearer and nearer to Narada, and his heart skipped a few beats as he admired her unparalleled beauty. But, lo! she turned the other way and went right past him.

Other suitors laughed and mocked at Narada. One said, “Which princess will wish to marry a monkey!” Narada winced at the remark. Secretly, he looked into a mirror and was shocked to see the face of an actual monkey! What a nasty trick for the Lord to play on him! He rushed out of the hall in anger and went straight to the Lord to complain.

The Lord said, “It is no trick, My dear friend. I gave you what you asked for. You did not say which creature’s face. The most dear to Me is Hanuman, so I gave you Hanuman’s face, and thought it would be a compliment to you.”

Then Narada realised how the Lord had actually taught him a good lesson. The Lord had that day quelled his pride and lust.

That is when Narada took a new turn in life and plunged himself into chanting the Lord’s Name and became the greatest sage the world has ever known.

Demoniacal souls can take heart from this story that they can always transform themselves and mend their ways, and the Lord is ever ready to give them a big hand in doing this, in His own mysterious manner!

Verse 18: Stage 9: The Hunger for “Power & Lordship”

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।

मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः

॥ १६-१८॥

ahaṅkāraṁ balaṁ darpaṁ kāmaṁ krōdhaṁ ca saṁśritāḥ |

māmātmaparadēhēṣu pradviṣantō:'bhyasūyakāḥ

|| 16-18||

1	<i>Ahamkaaram balam darpam,</i>	<i>Egoism, power, arrogance,</i>
2	<i>kaamam krodham cha samshritaah;</i>	<i>passion and anger – taking resort in these,</i>
3	<i>maam aatma-para-deheshu,</i>	<i>hating Me in their own and others' <u>bodies</u>,</i>
4	<i>prad-vishantah abhi-asooyakaah.</i>	<i>(they become) <u>malicious</u> by nature.</i>

Finally, we come to the last of these nine verses describing the demoniacal person. It is also Stage 9 of the rise and fall of the demoniacal 'Lord'.

1-2 Five characteristics are listed which describe the demoniacal **Mind**. These are all qualities of the mind. That is where the "demon" sits on his throne, reigning over all that he perceives. These are the roots of demoniacal behaviour: Egoism, power, arrogance, passion and anger. They are the five fingers of the demon-fist, by which he wields all his power.

3 Worshipping these qualities, the demon completely ignores the Lord who dwells in his own heart. The Lord has no one to complain to but us – through Arjuna. He tells us how He feels in such circumstances. He who is the true Lord of all beings, is left as an unattended guest by the demon. How would the Lord feel being hated by the Jeeva of such deluded souls!

4 Abhi-asooyakaah: This is another very expressive term for the demons who have closed their hearts to the Lord. The word has its root in the meaning "to stitch or sew". It means here that these demons have "sewn up" their hearts tightly against any entry into it from the Lord. The word can also mean "extremely malicious people". They are not available for any improvement, being incorrigible, unrectifiable.

The Indwelling Lord bears the ignominy of being a stranger in His own home!



16.4 DEMONIAL & DIVINE REWARDS

(Verses 19-22, 4 No.)

Verse 19: *Into Wombs of Demons*

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु

॥ १६-१९॥

tānaham̐ dviṣataḥ krūrānsamsārēṣu narādhamān |

kṣipāmyajasramaśubhānāsuriṣvēva yōniṣu

|| 16-19||

1	<i>Taan aham dvishatah kruraan,</i>	Those <u>hateful</u> and <u>cruel</u> evil-doers,
2	<i>samsareshu nara-adhamaan;</i>	the <u>vilest</u> among men in the world,
3	<i>kshipaami ajasram ashubhaan,</i>	I hurl these <u>impure</u> men forever
4	<i>aasureeshu eva yonishu.</i>	into the wombs of demons only.

In a verse that has four very strong words (underlined in the meaning) describing the evil nature of the demoniacal beings, the Lord expresses His equally strong disapproval of their behaviour. Those who are full of the spirit of hate, violence, arrogance and lust, now receive their just reward. Sri Krishna does not use sweet words to describe them. The angry tone used is to emphasise the Lord's disapproval.

This is one of the ways that a scripture is to be interpreted. One has to be alert to spot the trend and the implied meaning arising from it. Scriptures always say more than the words themselves. Here is an example in the very first line:

1 Dvishatah, Kruraan: “the hateful and most cruel ones”. In the last verse we had the word *Pradvishantah*, meaning “hating”. **Dvishatah** is the noun derived from it. By using a derivative of the same word, Sri Veda Vyasaji links the whole of the present section to the whole of the previous one, meaning “all that behaviour leads to all these results.”

2 Here is another example: **Nara** means “man”; **Adha** means “vile, low”. **Adhamaan** makes it “vilest among the vile”. A strong word is made even stronger in this manner.

3 And a third example: **Kshipaami**: This verb does not mean just “sending”, nor does it mean “throwing”; it is something like “hurling”. This is where we infer the angry tone of Sri Krishna's words. Where are they hurled?

4 Aasurishu Yonishu: “into the wombs of demons” – so bound are these souls to the grossness of earth's sensuality, that they are hurled into the worst wombs available on earth. This is not done out of the anger of the Lord; it is by natural selection based on the principle of “Like attracts like.” The demoniacal being condemns himself to the lowest birth by his own vile deeds and vile behaviour.

One may reasonably extend this idea: If the being were to be born in the nether worlds, it might even be in worse wombs. There are seven lower planes of existence, and conditions are much worse and unbearable there than on earth. The style of the scriptures is such that it permits such extrapolations of meaning that helps to bring out the spirit

intended. In the nether worlds, there are Rakshasas, Pisachas, Bhoota Ganas, etc, who are much lower than the lowest human beings on earth.

Verse 20: *The Downward Spiral into Hell*

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
 मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥ १६-२०॥
 āsurīm yōnimāpannā mūḍhā janmani janmani |
 māmaprāpyaiva kauntēya tatō yāntyadhamāṁ gatim || 16-20||

1	<i>Aasureem yonim aapannaa,</i>	<i>Being born among the demoniacal species,</i>
2	<i>moodhaah janmani janmani;</i>	<i>in births after births, these <u>deluded fools</u>,</i>
3	<i>maam apraapya eva kaunteya,</i>	<i>without ever reaching Me, O son of Kunti,</i>
4	<i>tatah yaanti adhamaam gatim.</i>	<i>they <u>fall</u> into conditions even <u>lower</u> than that.</i>

Down, down and down . . . these souls go roller-skating down into the deepest hells, through each cycle of birth and death. Does that sound condemning? It is meant to.

Acharyaji again reminded us that this was not out of the anger of the Lord against such people. Sri Krishna is not a ‘jealous God’ who is disturbed if people do not worship Him. The Lord is full of compassion for all souls. He is only saying here what the principle of justice demands in the governing of the universe. Vengeance is not the agenda here.

1-4 The above condition of sinking deeper and deeper into worldliness is only as long as the person is not willing to correct himself and start an upward turn in his life. The Hindu scriptures have never spoken of an “Eternal Hell” condemning evil-minded souls. Nor do the Hindu scriptures condemn people if they do not conform to a particular path.

Strict cosmic laws govern all fruits of one’s actions. It is in obedience to these universally applied laws that the souls of demoniacal beings sink lower and lower.

The reverse is also true. We have come across this case in Chapter 6 when the Lord explained the **Yogabrashtha**. The reverse happens in a Yogabrashtha. He obtains favourable circumstances to further his evolution. Everything seems to just work out for him. From early years, he gets drawn to the spiritual path mysteriously, due to his past Samskaras.

Verse 21: *Abandoning the Gates of Hell*

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।
 कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ १६-२१॥
 trividhaṁ narakasyēdaṁ dvāraṁ nāśanamātmanah |
 kāmaḥ krōdhastathā lōbhastasmādētattrayaṁ tyajēt || 16-21||

1	<i>Trividham narakasya idam,</i>	<i>Of hell, these are the three</i>
2	<i>dvaaram naashanam aatmanah;</i>	<i>gates, destructive of the Self (mind) –</i>
3	<i>kaamah krodhah tathaa lobhah,</i>	<i><u>LUST</u>, <u>ANGER</u> and also <u>GREED</u>.</i>
4	<i>tasmaat etat trayam tyajet.</i>	<i>Therefore, one should abandon these three.</i>

Now, Sri Krishna puts in a nutshell the very cause of the downward pull:

The condition has been mentioned earlier, but now, for the sake of emphasis, it is repeated: “Abandon the triple gateway to Hell – Lust, Anger and Greed.”

Even this instruction can be chiseled down to just one condition: “*Abandon LUST*”.

KAAMA is “*intense desire*” for something. From it follow all the other vices:

i) **Lobha**: “*greed*”. If Kaama is fulfilled, it mounts up and becomes insatiable **greed**. A millionaire wants to become a billionaire, and then a trillionaire!

ii) **Krodha**: “*anger*”. If Kaama is obstructed, **anger** arises, destroying peace of mind.

iii) **Matsarya**: “*jealousy*”. Again, if Kaama is fulfilled but not in the same measure as one’s neighbour, then **jealousy** pops up its head, against the neighbour.

iv) **Mada**: “*pride*”. And again, if Kaama is fulfilled exceeding one’s neighbour’s, then **pride** raises its hood.

v) **Moha**: “*delusion*”. There are two levels of delusion: one precedes Kaama and one succeeds Kaama. The first is primary delusion that is the root cause of Kaama itself. This delusion blinds us from the Truth. Then there is secondary delusion which arises from Kaama. It intoxicates a person who is immersed in sensuality. He loses all sense of propriety.

So Kaama can be said to be the main gate, and greed and anger the side gates. All three give one access into Hell. Having shut these three gates tightly, bolted them, and thrown away the key, the seeker is ready for the Sadhana which leads him to the highest reward . . .

Verse 22: *The Birth of Spiritual Sadhana*

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।

आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम्

॥ १६-२२॥

ētaiṛvimuktaḥ kauntēya tamōdvāraistribhīrnaraḥ |

ācaratyātmanah śrēyastatō yāti parāṁ gatim

|| 16-22||

1	<i>Etaiḥ vimuktaḥ kaunteya,</i>	<i>Free from these, O son of Kunti,</i>
2	<i>tamo-dvaaraīh tribhīh narah;</i>	<i>the three gates to darkness, a man</i>
3	<i>aacharati aatmanah shreyah,</i>	<i>strives for the good of his soul,</i>
4	<i>tataḥ yaati paraam gatim.</i>	<i>thereby attaining the Highest Goal.</i>

1-2 Once the gates named Lust, Anger and Greed are shut, then one cannot enter Hell. Where else can one go to? When one cannot go into the dark, what does it mean? He has to remain in the Light! Even so when one is barred, as it were, from going to Hell, then what else can one do but go to Heaven – that is the only other option for him!

It is like saying, “If you are unable to succeed in becoming a beggar, then the only option left for you is to become rich!” Lord Krishna seems to be in a playful mood, as He directs the devotee’s mind solely towards Him by closing all the escape routes.

3 The first fruit of shutting the above gateways is that *Viveka Shakti* or discrimination arises in our mind. We begin to distinguish between the two paths that always present themselves before us: the path of **Preyas**, the pleasant, and the path of **Shreyas**, the good.

The Beginning of Sadhana

Thus, having chosen Shreyas, we officially become Adhikaris for the spiritual life. We are in the divine Hands of Sri Krishna, and He can shape and mould us at His bidding.

Aacharati: “*Striving*” for one’s own self-improvement is called Sadhana. Spiritual Sadhana is the most important aspect in a Sadhaka’s life. He should always engage his mind in some form of Sadhana. The essential task of all Sadhana is to fix our mind on the Lord.

Sadhana begins with the cultivation of *Daivi Sampat*. Whatever may be the outer form of one’s spiritual practice, the inner purpose of it is to cultivate divine virtues. The eradication of the Asuric qualities goes on side by side with accumulation of virtues.

4 Paraam Gatim: “*the Supreme Goal*”. The goal is always held dangling before the Sadhaka’s eyes. The Sadhaka should never forget his goal in life. This is not a psychological trick; it’s a psychological necessity. Man’s mind works like that. “Out of sight, out of mind” – thus runs an old practical adage, and Sri Krishna applies this adage fairly often. That is what makes Him such a good Teacher.

To cut a long story short, the verse says that the Highest Goal is reached in due course. What that “due course” refers to will be made clear in the last two chapters. Patience is needed. Once the *direction* we have taken is set right, it is only a matter of time and proper effort before we reach the final goal.



***The Goal of Life
is the Light of Life***

16.5 SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY

(Verses 23-24, 2 No.)

THESE LAST TWO VERSES of the chapter highlight the value of the Scriptures in the unfolding of one's spiritual life. They give us an entry into the next chapter, rather than a conclusion to this chapter. It sows the seed for Arjuna's question in the next chapter. In some way it is the bridge that leads us from the demoniacal to the divine.

Correct moral guidance is crucial. It determines the goal we set ourselves. This is where the scriptures, and with it everything and every person connected with promoting them in society, play a key role. In the overwhelming majority of cases, it is this connection which turns people's minds to the Godward path and keeps it there.

When one is fortunate enough to get the necessary guidance from the proper, reliable source, the most important decision in life begins to formulate in the minds of spiritually-inclined persons, and then the seed of desire to follow the path of the Good is sown in the society of man in any part of the world.

That is the perspective that is launched in this section, and continued till the end of the Geeta. The Lord now holds aloft texts like the Bhagavad Gita for the guidance of man.

Verse 23: *Where Not to Look for Guidance*

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।

न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम्

॥ १६-२३॥

yah śāstravidhimutsrjya vartatē kāmākārataḥ |

na sa siddhimavāpnōti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim

|| 16-23||

1	<i>Yah shastra-vidhim utsrjya,</i>	<i><u>Casting aside</u> the Ordinances of the Scriptures,</i>
2	<i>varate kaama-kaarataḥ;</i>	<i>and acting under the impulse of <u>passion</u>,</i>
3	<i>na sah siddhim avaapnoti,</i>	<i>such a person <u>does not attain</u> perfection,</i>
4	<i>na sukham na paraam gatim.</i>	<i>nor happiness, nor the supreme Goal.</i>

The Lord begins this topic by telling us where not to look for spiritual guidance.

1 Shastra-Vidhim: Shastra refers to the scriptures, and Vidhim refers to the guidelines given in these scriptures telling us how to live. Vidhim are the do's and don'ts of spiritual Sadhana. Like the instruction manual which assists us in servicing and maintaining our vehicles, the scriptures are the 'instruction manual' that helps us to service and maintain our soul, to keep it a healthy condition.

Can one afford to ignore what it says?

We are advised to follow it with utmost care, failing which we run the risk of misusing this precious 'vehicle' of the human birth given to us by God.

Utsrija: “rejecting”. If we reject what it instructs us to do, we run the risk of mishandling our life and ruining it by every abuse that it is capable of, in thought, word and deed. One who acts in this manner, and does what he feels like, attains nothing.

The implication of rejecting the scriptures is quite frightful. Some authority has to be there to promote our inner well-being. If it is not the scriptures and those connected to it, then the only other choice is that one installs oneself as the ‘authority’. That is suicidal to one’s spiritual growth. The most unreliable person to give the reins of life to is one’s own Ego. It is like a policeman giving the gun to a convict to execute himself; the convict is sure to use it to kill the policeman himself.

2 What is the problem with self-guidance? What can go wrong in following one’s own inclinations? The answer is that in the early stages the Ego is too powerful and resists the attempt being made to destroy it. This is a natural defense mechanism of the ego. So, listening to it gets us nowhere on the path; yet not listening to it is impossible unless we follow the advice given in the scriptures on how to keep it in check.

The ego knows only the language of Kaama or **Desire**. The inborn passions are the only language it understands. That makes it totally unqualified to guide us, unless we are prepared to be ruined and become demoniacal in nature.

Attainment of Perfection, Happiness and the Goal

3 Perfection cannot be attained by following the dictates of passion. That is a certainty. There is nothing alarming about that. However, if an explanation is required, we need only read this chapter again and discover for ourselves the vast chasm between perfection and the demoniacal behaviour.

Passions are an expression of intense Rajas on the side of Tamas. Perfection is an expression of Sattwa with a leaning towards Rajas. Much Sadhana is needed before the former type can be transformed into the latter.

4 Happiness, too, is unattainable whilst one is in the throes of passion. Passion seeks happiness through the senses. Sensual happiness is transient and temporary. It cannot give permanent satisfaction. The satisfaction it gives is such that it craves to have more and more to bring further satisfaction. This leads to addiction. An addiction can never be satisfied with more; it has to be eliminated through a higher knowledge.

And finally, the supreme Goal is not for the passionate. Passion draws one away from the Goal; it is opposed to the Goal. Only renunciation takes towards the Goal. Renunciation takes one towards the Goal. Renunciation and passion pull our soul in opposite directions.

How then can we make progress?

Verse 24: *Finding Guidance in the Scriptures*

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि

॥ १६-२४॥

tasmācchāstraṁ pramāṇaṁ tē kāryākāryavyavasthitau |

jñātvā śāstravidhānōktaṁ karma kartumihārhasi

॥ 16-24॥

1	<i>Tasmaat shaastram pramaanam te,</i>	<i>Therefore, the scripture is the prime <u>authority</u></i>
2	<i>kaaryaa-kaarya-vyavasthita;</i>	<i>in deciding what ought or ought not to be done.</i>
3	<i>jnaatvaa shaastra-vidhaana-uktam,</i>	<i>Knowing what is the command of the scriptures,</i>
4	<i>karma kartum iha arhasi.</i>	<i>one should <u>act accordingly</u> in this world.</i>

There is only one sure option – to follow the directions of **Mother Sruti**.

The Necessity of a Guru

1-2 The kindly advice of the scriptures is like that of a mother towards her child. A mother has only the good of her child at heart. Even when she scolds the child, it is only for the good of the child. For this reason, the scriptures have earned the name “Mother Sruti”.

One of the most powerful guideline of the scripture at this stage is for the seeker to find a Guru who will guide him personally along the right path. The Guru will not contradict the scriptural injunctions. He will be able to observe us carefully and correct our errors. He will bring out the latent spirituality in us, by carefully steering us away from Egoism.

The spiritual life is fraught with dangers when attempted without such guidance. The ego itself is full of tricks to escape being disciplined. It always wants its own freedom. This is why the Guru is necessary – he keeps one on the rails, as it were, and ensures we reach our destination.

As one progresses, one’s purified mind itself becomes one’s Guru. The Guru will give the green light to get guidance from within when the mind reaches the required purity.

Obedience to Scriptures

3-4 Being told about the injunctions of the scriptures is one side of the solution. The other side to obey those injunctions. To act according to what scriptures say is another matter altogether. Acharyaji was of the opinion that it could be learned as we learn any other skill – by practice.

Acharyaji quoted some experiments done on rats by which they were trained to co-operate in their effort to get at food. The experimenters tried unsuccessfully to get rats to share their food. However, they found that children, under the right conditions, will share what they have spontaneously. It proved that for human beings it was natural to share.

The experiment brought out the fact that humans have an inborn capacity, which animals do not, to think of higher ideals. We can use that capacity to grow spiritually, or we can stifle it out by being trained from small to be selfish. Most of our social training unfortunately teaches us to think selfishly.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगो नाम षोडशोऽध्यायः ॥ १६॥

ॐ tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu
brahmavidyāyām yōgaśāstrē śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvādē
daivāsurasampadvibhāgayōgō nāma ṣoḍaśō'dhyāyaḥ || 16||



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END OF DISCOURSE 16

“THE YOGA OF DIVINE & DEMONIAL ENDOWMENTS”

