

Brāhminhood which is Brahman manifest on earth, and for ensuring the stability of the world. Because, when Brāhminhood is preserved the Vedic dharma becomes well guarded, for the distinctions among castes and stages of life depend on it.

And He, the Bhagavān, ever endowed with Knowledge, Sovereignty, Power, Strength, (8) Valour and Formidability, (9) exercises His command over His own Māyā which naturally belongs to (Him as) Visnu, (10) and which goes by the name Primal Nature, (11) consisting of its three *gunas* (*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*), and as such, through His own Māyā, He appears as if embodied, as if born, and as if (12) favouring people—though by His nature, He is birthless, changeless, the Bhagavān of all creatures, eternal, pure, conscious and free. (13)

Although He had no need for Himself, still for the sake of favouring the creatures, He imparted that very two-fold Vedic dharma to Arjuna who had sunk into the sea of sorrow and delusion, with the idea that the dharma would surely propagate if it is accepted and put into practice by people who are endowed with an abundance of good qualities. Vedavyāsa, (14) who was omniscient and possessed of godly qualities, (15) set forth in seven hundred verses under the name *Gītā*, that dharma as it was instructed by the Bhagavān. This scripture called the *Gītā*, which is such, is the collection of the quintessence of all the teachings of the Vedas, and its meaning is difficult to understand. Finding that although its words, meaning of words, meaning of sentences, and arguments (16) have been expounded by many for the sake of discovering its import, still because of the multiplicity and extreme contradictoriness of the expositions it is not comprehended by people, I shall explain it briefly with a view to determining its meaning distinctly.

Of that scripture, viz the *Gītā* which is such, the highest purpose, stated briefly, is Liberation characterized by the complete cessation of transmigration together with its causes. And that results from the dharma (virtuous path) consisting in steady adherence to Knowledge of the Self, preceded by renunciation of all rites and duties. Thus,