

career? Son of Pritha, yield not to cowardice. It ill becomes you. Scorcher of foes, cast off this base faint-heartedness and wake up."

The clue is hereby given to a life of triumph and conquest. This is the core of the teaching of the Gita. Each of the subsequent chapters in the book is an elaboration of this idea from a particular angle. The strong and the virile alone are fit for a life of great consequence. Achievements both here and hereafter are born of competence and manly action. Strength nurtures life. Weakness wears it away. Potency drives away disease; debility aggravates it. Virtue and righteousness are the outcome of strength. Vice and wickedness have their origin in weakness. Cowardice creates crookedness; it is the feeble that resort to foul play. Action born in manliness leads to freedom, and its opposite to bondage. Strength and *Sreyas* are identical. This is the teaching of the Gita.

The Bhagavad Gita Upanishad

The Upanishads have their origin in the Vedas. The belief is that the Vedas are without a beginning. For this reason great sanctity is attached to them. But the Bhagavad Gita is an integral part of the Mahabharata, an epic that came into being only the other day. Notwithstanding its recency, the Gita occupies a place on a par with the Upanishads. The reason is not far to seek. The essence of all the Upanishads is contained in the Gita. If those ancient books are cows, the Gita is their milk. Cows are of various hues and of differing stature. But the milk yielded by them is