

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

BHAGAVAD
GITA



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Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Illuminations on the Perfection of Yoga

WITH COMMENTARY BY

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PREFACE

The sublime message of *Bhagavad-gītā* is timeless and is applicable in every facet of life. Within the *Bhagavad-gītā* are the answers to the mysteries of existence – our real purpose in this world, how we should act and why we suffer, or are oftentimes helpless in our struggle for survival.

To understand the *Bhagavad-gītā* one must enter into the spirit of the *Gītā* by accepting the path of devotion (*bhakti*). Accordingly, the *Gītā*'s message cannot be properly understood by mental speculation. To this end, the sublime process illuminated within the *Gītā* must be accepted as given by the speaker Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The active principle of understanding the message of the *Gītā* is to hear directly from the Master of *yoga*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is glorified throughout the Vedic literature as the Supreme Person, the Absolute Truth. Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* and thus one who studies the *Gītā* hears from Kṛṣṇa directly.

The philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* is clear for the sincere reader, yet for some, approaching the *Gītā* may seem daunting – its language too ancient. However, this obstacle is easily overcome by a straightforward translation and commentary (*Anuvṛtti*). The requirement for a translation and commentary on the *Gītā* is as necessary today as anytime in the past. With the passing of time, our values and our world view are constantly changing, and this demands a fresh approach to the understanding of the *Gītā*.

This translation and commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* provides simple, yet profound knowledge to elevate us to a higher state of consciousness whereby we can realise our

true self and progress towards attaining a life of spiritual fulfilment. Self-realisation means to realise our actual purpose in life and act towards it, gradually freeing us from the yoke of material bondage. Where there is light, darkness cannot stand — where there is proper knowledge, ignorance cannot remain. The *Bhagavad-gītā* unravels the mysteries of life, providing not only knowledgeable answers, but also a progressive process to uplift us to pure consciousness.

One of the more remarkable features of the *Gītā* is that its readers can easily observe and feel its philosophy working, like poetry in motion, in their everyday lives. The knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* is a true science — its formulas for success clear and observable in action. The *Bhagavad-gītā* thus provides a complete outline for self-realisation in everyday life.

Anyone who is fortunate enough to dive deeply into the wisdom of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and embrace its message will surely achieve success, for this is guaranteed in the *Gītā*'s final verse:

*yatra yogeśvarah kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanur-dharah
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama*

Where there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of *yoga*, and where there is Arjuna, the mighty archer, there will always be prosperity, victory, opulence and righteousness — this is my firm conviction.

Svāmī B.B. Viṣṇu

INTRODUCTION

Bhagavad-gītā is the oldest and most widely read book of theistic science in the world today. Also known as the *Gītopaniṣad*, the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been the principle handbook of *yoga* for more than 5,000 years. In contrast to many mundane literatures of the present day, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is free from mental speculation and is complete in knowledge of the eternal self (*ātmā*), the process of *bhakti-yoga* and the nature and identity of the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As such, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is the single most important book in the world, surpassing all others in wisdom and enlightenment.

The first word of *Bhagavad-gītā* is *dharma*. Sometimes *dharma* is mistaken to mean religion or a particular belief, but it is not so. *Dharma* means the quintessential duty or knowledge that elevates our consciousness to a direct connection with the Absolute Truth. This is also known as *sanātana-dharma*, the occupational duty of all living beings. The *Bhagavad-gītā* begins with the word *dharma* – thus we can understand from the outset that *Bhagavad-gītā* is not about dogma or a sectarian way of thinking. Indeed, *Bhagavad-gītā* is the complete science of realising the Absolute Truth.

For an observant person it is clear that the world around us is a bewildering place with many unsolved mysteries. If one is seeking answers to the age-old questions of ‘Who am I?’ ‘Why do we suffer?’ ‘Where do we come from?’ ‘What is the purpose of life?’ ‘What happens after death?’ – then one will find great satisfaction in the *Bhagavad-gītā* because the *Gītā* answers these questions and more with the utmost clarity.

As a young seeker of truth, I first came in contact with the *Bhagavad-gītā* in 1968. In subsequent years I travelled to India and studied *Bhagavad-gītā* under the foremost gurus of the late 20th Century, A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda and Svāmī B.R. Śrīdhara Deva Gosvāmī. By the goodwill of these two great masters, the essential message of *Bhagavad-gītā* entered my heart and I was soon to be situated on the path of self-realisation.

As with any path in life, one will certainly encounter crossroads. The first crossroad that I came to while studying the *Bhagavad-gītā* was to decide on the path – personal or impersonal. Was I to follow the path of personalism – to perfect the individual self, to enter into the spiritual sky of Vaikuṇṭha planets and live eternally with the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Or was I to follow the path of impersonalism – ending existence as an individual living being and merging myself into the *brahma-jyoti* of infinite bliss? I chose the former, personalism (*bhakti-yoga*).

Bhagavad-gītā is specifically meant for those following the path of *bhakti-yoga*. Many impersonal philosophers have tried to lay claim to the *Gītā* over the years, at times even claiming to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa – a claim that is exposed by the simple fact that they do not understand the message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*, despite its profound clarity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā*, therefore He must know the message of the *Gītā* better than anyone, and Kṛṣṇa says in the Eighteenth Chapter that the message of the *Gītā* is exclusively meant for those who are aspiring to know the Absolute Truth on the path of *bhakti-yoga*.

Bhagavad-gītā is certainly a scholarly work, but one need not be a scholar to understand the *Gītā*'s straightfor-

ward and simple message. Indeed, Arjuna, the first student of *Bhagavad-gītā*, was not a scholar, but a warrior. In the past many great scholars, gurus and self-realised masters have written illuminating commentaries to accompany the *Gītā* – its ‘as it is’ meaning, its poetry, philosophy and its hidden treasure – so that the people of their time, as well as the people of future generations, may have a better appreciation of the message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

We have now completed the first decade of the 21st Century and a host of such erudite commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gītā* sit upon our bookshelves and in our libraries – surely there is no call for yet another!

The message of *Bhagavad-gītā* is eternal and unchanging, but the time that surrounds us is always changing, thus our perception of life, our current situation and our necessity is also always changing. To meet the changing times and the present necessity, yet another commentary is being presented – a brief commentary, or *Anuvṛtti*.

According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī, a renowned commentator on the *Bhagavad-gītā* from antiquity, the first six chapters of the *Gītā* mainly pertain to *karma*, the second six chapters to *bhakti* and the final six chapters to *jñāna*. But the answers to life’s most puzzling questions are found throughout the eighteen chapters of the *Gītā* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s last and conclusive instruction to Arjuna in verse 66 of the last chapter – *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekāṁ śaraṇam vraja*.

In our *Anuvṛtti* we have not commented on each and every verse spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa as we feel that by directly hearing from Kṛṣṇa with one’s intelligence, one receives the greatest knowledge and further comment is not always

necessary. The comments made in the *Anuvṛtti* are to highlight certain points and to reflect on what Kṛṣṇa says with relevance to our world today. What lies ahead in our *Anuvṛtti* are the basics of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy (*acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*) and the essential understanding for the practice of *bhakti-yoga*.

Many readers may want to delve deeper into the knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* and for such persons we highly recommend the study of the 1973 Macmillan edition of *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* by A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. Other recommended readings are the commentaries of Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Svāmī B.R. Śrīdhara Deva Gosvāmī.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation for those who have encouraged us in our work and helped to bring *Bhagavad-gītā – Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Illuminations on the Perfection of Yoga* to completion. We especially want to mention here our godbrothers, Svāmī Bhakti Bhāvana Viṣṇu, Jayadeva, Jagadīśvara, our godsister Dhīra-lalitā, and our *sannyāsī* disciples, Svāmī Bhakti Vijñāna Giri and Haridāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.

May this publication be an offering unto the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa – *kṛṣṇārpaṇam astu*.

Svāmī B.G. Narasingha

August 22nd, 2011
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī
Gaurābda 526

THE HISTORY OF BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

Since time immemorial, the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been a prime source of inspiration for many great thinkers and philosophers in both the east and the west. In ancient times, the first commentary on the *Gītā* was written by Ādi Śaṅkara, who was the first *ācārya* to treat it as a free-standing text. Subsequently, other great *ācāryas* such as Rāmānuja, Madhva, Śrīdhara Svāmī and others wrote commentaries on the *Gītā* that presented its essential devotional significance, in stark contrast to Ādi Śaṅkara's impersonal interpretation.

In the western world, the *Bhagavad-gītā* has been highly appreciated by erudite scholars and philosophers such as Henry David Thoreau, Friedrich Schlegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Carl Jung and Herman Hesse. Upon reading the *Gītā*, the famous American transcendentalist, Ralph Waldo Emerson commented:

I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad-gītā. 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. (Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Originally, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is part of the ancient historical epic, the *Mahābhārata*, composed by the great sage Vyāsa in approximately 3100 BCE. The eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavad-gītā* are found within the Sixth Canto of the *Mahābhārata* known as the *Bhiṣma-parva*, which alto-

gether contains 117 chapters. Initially Vyāsa wrote the 8,800 core verses of the *Mahābhārata* and later his disciples Vaiśampāyana and Sūta added further historical details until the *Mahābhārata* finally consisted of 100,000 verses – seven times the size of Homer’s Illiad and fifteen times the size of the King James Bible.

The word *Mahābhārata* means ‘The History of Greater India’ and recounts the story of two feuding royal families, the Pāṇḍavas (the sons of Pāṇḍu) and their cousins, the Kauravas (the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra). Both Pāṇḍu and his brother Dhṛtarāṣṭra belonged to the royal Kuru Dynasty of Hastināpura (modern day Delhi). Although Dhṛtarāṣṭra was the elder of the two, he was born blind and so the throne was passed on to Pāṇḍu, who became the heir-apparent.

However Pāṇḍu died untimely, leaving five children – Yudhiṣṭhīra, Arjuna, Bhīma, Nakula and Sahadeva. While the Pāṇḍavas were still young, their uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra assumed the throne as regent until they were of age to rule the kingdom. Yet due to his excessive paternal attachment, Dhṛtarāṣṭra schemed that his own sons, led by the corrupt Duryodhana, would ascend the imperial throne. To this end, and with the consent of his father, Duryodhana made several assassination attempts upon the lives of the Pāṇḍavas. Despite the wise counsel of his grandfather Bhīṣma, his uncle Vidura and his military teacher Droṇa, Duryodhana continued to plot against his cousins. Yet, due to the protection of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas were able to foil all his murderous attempts.

Historically speaking, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the nephew of Pāṇḍu’s wife Queen Kuntī and was thus the cousin of the

Pāñḍavas. However, Kṛṣṇa was not simply a royal prince, but the Supreme Person Himself who had descended to Earth to perform His pastimes and to establish the principles of *dharma*. Due to their righteous behaviour, Śrī Kṛṣṇa always favoured the Pāñḍavas.

After numerous failed murder attempts, Duryodhana finally challenged the Pāñḍavas to a rigged game of dice. Duryodhana cheated and won the game, and the Pāñḍavas lost their kingdom. The result was that the Pāñḍavas were forced into exile for thirteen years.

After completing their thirteen years of exile, the Pāñḍavas returned to the capital and requested Duryodhana to return their rightful kingdom. When the proud Duryodhana flatly refused, they requested him to at least give them five villages to rule over. At this Duryodhana curtly remarked that he would not even give them enough land in which to drive a pin.

Although the Pāñḍavas sent Śrī Kṛṣṇa as an ambassador to sue for peace, Duryodhana blatantly refused to listen. War was now inevitable.

Rulers as far west as Syria and as far east as China came to take part in the battle – some supporting the Kauravas due to their political designs, and others favouring the Pāñḍavas due to their piety. During this fratricidal war Kṛṣṇa stated that He would not take up arms for either side, but accepted the position as Arjuna's charioteer. Thus, in the month of December, in 3138 BCE, both armies assembled on the planes of the holy place known as Kurukṣetra.

The significance of Kurukṣetra is related in the *Vāmana Purāṇa* that narrates how the virtuous king Kuru, the ancestral patriarch of the Pāñḍava and Kaurava

Dynasty, performed rigorous austerities at Kurukṣetra. Because of this act, Kuru was given two blessings – firstly that Kurukṣetra would be named after Kuru and secondly, that anyone who died at Kurukṣetra would attain the celestial planets.

The *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken on the first day of the war at Kurukṣetra. As the two armies prepare to fight, the blind Dhṛtarāṣṭra sits in his court with his faithful servant Sañjaya and inquires from him as to what the virtuous Pāṇḍavas are doing. Sañjaya, a disciple of the great sage Vyāsa, had been blessed with the mystic power to observe the conflict far from the battlefield at the palace in Hastināpura. Sañjaya then narrates to the old emperor the sacred conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. Thus the *Bhagavad-gītā* was received by Sañjaya and repeated to Dhṛtarāṣṭra for the spiritual benefit of all humanity.

Svāmī B.V. Giri

MAÑGALĀCARANA

(AUSPICIOUS INVOCATION)

*oṁ ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitam yena tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ*

I offer my obeisance unto my spiritual master, who has opened my darkened eyes that were blinded by ignorance, with the torchlight of spiritual knowledge.

*śrī caitanya-mano'bhīṣṭam sthāpitam yena bhūtale
svayam rūpaḥ kadā mabyam dadāti sva-padāntikam*

When will Rūpa Gosvāmī, who has established within this world the mission to fulfil the desires of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, give me shelter at his feet?

*vande'hami śrī-guroḥ śrīyuta-pada-kamalam
śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
śrī-rūpam sāgrajātam saha-gaṇa
raghunāthānvitam tam sa-jīvam
sādvaitam sāvadbūtam pari�ana-sahitam
krṣṇa-caitanya-devam
śrī-rādbā-krṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa
lalitā-śrī-visākhānvitāṁś ca*

I offer my respects unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master and to all the other preceptors on the path of devotional service. I offer my respects unto all the Vaiṣṇavas and unto the Six Gosvāmīs including Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, and their associates. I offer my respects unto Advaita Ācārya, Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and all His devotees,

headed by Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura. I then offer my respects unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and all the *gopīs*, headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā.

*nāma-śreṣṭham manum api śacī-putram atra svarūpam
rūpam tasyāgrajam uru-purīm māthurīm goṣṭavāṭīm
rādhā-kuṇḍam giri-varam abo rādhikā-mādhavāśām
prāpto yasya prathita-kṛpayā śrī gurum tam nato ‘smi*

I bow to the lotus feet of my spiritual master, by whose mercy I have obtained the supreme name of Kṛṣṇa, the service of the son of Śacī Mātā (Caitanya Mahāprabhu), the association of Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī and his elder brother, Sanātana Gosvāmī, the Supreme Abode of Mathurā, the blissful abode of Vṛndāvana, the divine Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the best of hills (Govardhana) and the desire within my heart for loving service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

*namah om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
svāmī śrī-bhaktivedānta prabhupādāya te namah
guruvajñām śīrasī-dhāryam śaktiyaveśa-svarūpine
hare kṛṣṇeti-mantrena pāścatya-prācyā tāriṇe
viśvācārya pravaryāya divya kāruṇya-mūrtaye
śrī bhāgavata-mādhurya gītā-jñāna-pradāyine
gaura-śrī-rūpa-siddhānta-sarasvatī niṣevine
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādāmbhoja-bhṛīṅgāya gurave namah*

I offer my respects unto Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

Taking the order of his guru upon his head, he was empowered by Śrī Nityānanda and distributed the name of Kṛṣṇa all over the Western world, delivering and uplifting all fallen souls.

He is the best of millions of *jagad-gurus*, because he is the personification of divine mercy. He has distributed the sweet nectar of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and the transcendental knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* all over the world.

He is constantly engaged in the exclusive service to his guru, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I offer my humble obeisances unto Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is like a bumblebee always tasting the nectar of the lotus feet of Rādhā-Govinda.

*vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yoga-
apāyayāṁ māṁ anavisyum andham
śrī-śrīdhara-bhakti rakṣaka-nāma
kṛpāmbudhir yas tam abāṁ prapadye*

I surrender unto Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Gosvāmī who is an ocean of mercy. Although I was blind and in the darkness of ignorance, he gave me the light of transcendental knowledge. He taught me the real meaning of detachment and made me drink the highest nectar of divine love.

*vāñcā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubbhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah*

I bow before the Vaiṣṇavas who are like desire trees and are like an ocean of mercy as they deliver the fallen souls from material existence.

*vande śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya nityānandau saboditau
gauḍodaye puṣpavantau citrau śan-dau tamo-nudau*

I offer my respects unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu who are like the sun and the moon. Rising simultaneously in Gauḍa (Bengal), they destroy the darkness of ignorance and bestow their wonderful blessings on all.

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
krṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namah*

I offer my most humble respects unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa who has appeared in the most merciful golden form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya in order to distribute *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

*śrī blādinī-svarūpāya gaurāṅga-subhṛdāya ca
bhakta-śakti-pradānāya gadādhara namo'stu te*

I offer my respects unto Gadādhara Pañdita, who is the personification of the *blādinī-śakti*, the dearest associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the bestower of spiritual strength to the devotees.

*pañca-tattvātmakāṁ kṛṣṇāṁ bhakta-rūpa-svarūpakāṁ
bhaktāvatāram bhaktākhyām namāmi bhakta-śaktikam*

I offer my respects unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is non-different from His features as a devotee, devotional *avatāra*, devotional manifestation, pure devotee and devotional energy.

*be kṛṣṇa karuṇā-sindho dīna-bandho jagat-pate
gopeśa gopikā-kānta rādhā-kānta namo'stu te*

O Kṛṣṇa, You are an ocean of mercy. You are the friend of the distressed and the Master of the universe. You are the Master of the cowherd men, the lover of the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana and the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I offer my respects unto You.

*jayatāṁ suratau paṅgor mama manda-mater gatī
mat-sarvasva-padāṁbhojau rādhā-madana-mohanau*

All glories unto the most merciful Rādhā-Madana-mohana. I am weak and foolish, yet Their lotus feet are everything to me.

*dīvyad-vṛndāraṇya-kalpa-drumādhabḥ
śrīmad-ratnāgāra-simhāsana-sthau
śrīmad-rādhā-śrīla-govinda-devau
presthālibhiḥ sevyamānau smarāmi*

In a temple of jewels in the forest of Vṛndāvana under a desire tree, Rādhā-Govinda sit upon a jewelled throne and are served by Their most confidential associates. I offer my respects unto Them.

*śrīmān rāsa-rasārambhbī vāṁśīvaṭa-taṭa-sthitabḥ
karṣan veṇu-svanair gopīr gopī-nāthabḥ śriye ‘stu naḥ*

Śrī Gopinātha who created the divine mellow of the *rāsa* dance, stands on the shore of Vāṁśī-vaṭa, attracting the attention of the *gopīs* with the sound of His flute. May Rādhā-Gopinātha shower Their blessings upon us.

*tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgī rādhe vṛndāvaneśvarī
vṛṣabhānu-sute devī praṇamāmi hari-priye*

I offer my respects to Rādhārāṇī whose bodily hue is like molten gold. She is the Queen of the Vṛndāvana forest, the daughter of King Vṛśabhānu and most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*vṛndāyai tulasi-devyai priyāyai keśavasya ca
viṣṇu-bhakti-prade devī satya-vatyai namo namah*

I offer repeated respects unto Vṛndā, Tulasī-devī, who is very dear to Keśava (Kṛṣṇa). O goddess, you bestow *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa and possess the highest truth.

*ugraṁ vīraṁ mahā-viṣṇum
jvalantam sarvato-mukham
nṛsimham bhīṣaṇam bhadram
mr̥tyu-mr̥tyum namāmy-abam*

I offer my respects unto Śrī Narasimha, who is ferocious, heroic and non-different from Mahā-Viṣṇu. He is fiery and His face pervades all directions. He is the half-man, half-lion *avatāra* who is extremely frightening. He is most auspicious and He is the death of death itself.

*jaya śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya, prabhu nityānanda
jaya advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma bare bare*



अथ प्रथमोऽध्यायः

सैन्यदर्शनः

CHAPTER 1
SAINYA-DARŚANA

Observing the Armies on the Battlefield

VERSE I

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच ।
 धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेतायुयुत्सवः ।
 मामकाः पाण्डवाश्वैव किमकुर्वत सञ्जय ॥ १ ॥

dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca —

*dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre samavetā yuyutsavah
 māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva kim akurvata sañjaya*

Addressing Sañjaya, Emperor Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: After assembling with great enthusiasm for battle at the holy place of Kurukṣetra (*dharma-kṣetra*), what did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu do?

VERSE 2

सञ्जय उवाच ।
 दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।
 आचार्यमुपसम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

sañjaya uvāca —

*dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkam vyūḍham duryodhanas tada
 ācāryam upasaṅgamya rājā vacanam abravīt*

Sañjaya replied: O Emperor, at that time your son Duryodhana, after observing the military arrangements of the Pāṇḍavas, approached his mentor Droṇa and spoke as follows.

VERSE 3

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।
 व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

*paśyaitām pāṇḍu-putrāṇām ācārya mahatīm camūm
 vyūḍhām drupada-putreṇa tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā*

Behold, O great teacher, the military formation of the army of the sons of Pāṇḍu arranged by your gifted student, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the son of Drupada.

VERSE 4

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासाभीमार्जुनसमायुधि ।
युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥४॥

*atra śūrā māheṣvāsā bhīmārjuna-samā yudhi
yuyudhāno virātaś ca drupadaśca mahārathāḥ*

Within those ranks are great archers who are equal to Bhīma and Arjuna in war such as Sātyaki, Virāṭa and the powerful charioteer Drupada.

VERSE 5

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।
पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैव्यश्च नरपुंगवः ॥५॥

*dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānāḥ kāśi-rājaś ca vīryavān
purujit kuntibhojaś ca śaibyaś ca narapuṅgavaḥ*

Great heroes such as Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna, the heroic king of Kāśī, Purujit, Kuntibhoja and Śaibya are also present.

VERSE 6

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ ६ ॥

*yudhāmanyuś ca vikrānta uttamaujāś ca vīryavān
saubhadro draupadeyāś ca sarva eva mahārathāḥ*

The chivalrous Yudhāmanyu, the courageous Uttamaujā, Abhimanyu the son of Subhadrā, and the sons of Draupadī are indeed all mighty chariot warriors.

VERSE 7

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्बवीमि ते ॥७॥

*asmākam tu viśiṣṭā ye tān nibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya saṁjnārthaṁ tān bravīmi te*

However, O best of *brāhmaṇas*, you should also know who amongst my army is qualified to lead our military force. Just for your information I shall name them.

VERSE 8

भवान्पीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिजयः ।
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥८॥

*bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karṇaś ca kṛpaś ca samitiñjayah
aśvatthāmā vikarṇaś ca saumadattis tathaiva ca*

Your good self as well as Bhīṣma, Karṇa and Kṛpa are always victorious in battle, as well as Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa, Bhūriśravā and Jayadratha.

VERSE 9

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।
नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥९॥

*anye ca bahavah śūrā mad-arthe tyakta-jīvitāḥ
nānā-śastra-praharaṇāḥ sarve yuddha-viśāradāḥ*

They are all armed with various weapons, and they are expert in the art of war. All of them are prepared to give up their very lives for my sake, as are many other warriors.

VERSE 10

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।
पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ १० ॥

*aparyāptam tad asmākam balam bhīṣmābhiraṅkṣitam
paryāptam tv idam eteṣām balam bhīmābhiraṅkṣitam*

Our army, protected by the might of Bhīṣma is unlimited.
However, the strength of the opposition, protected by
Bhīma is insufficient.

VERSE II

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
भीष्मेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

*ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu yathā-bhāgam avasthitāḥ
bhīṣmam evābhiraṅkṣantu bhavantah sarva eva hi*

You must support and protect Bhīṣma at all costs, at the
strategic points of our battle formation.

Anuvṛtti

War is nothing new to this world. Thousands of years ago wars were being fought, such as the one at Kurukṣetra, to resolve the differences between good and evil and for the purpose of material gain. From ancient times to our modern era, practically not a day on this Earth has passed when someone, somewhere, was not fighting over something. Throughout history men have gathered on the field of battle to fulfil their greed for wealth and glory, sometimes nobly, but more often ignobly. The same is happening in the 21st Century. War it seems is an unavoidable karmic destiny of human civilisation.

Peace, on the other hand, is rather elusive. Peace is talked about and even prayed for, but seldom makes more than a momentary appearance. Most of our lives, even for the humblest of souls, are spent struggling for existence either socially, politically, financially, mentally or physically. For most of us the temporary absence of any major crisis is what we would call peace. However, peace (or *sānti* as it is known amongst *yogīs*) is a state of consciousness and not a condition relative to the external affairs of the material world. Peace is an internal experience.

The wisdom of the Vedic literature, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* says, *jīvo-jīvasya-jīvanam* – one living being is food for another living being. From the minutest forms of life to the most complex, one life is sustained by the loss of another. Thus, the basic principle for material existence is fundamentally flawed with violence. Peace then, for most of us, comes in doing what we have to do and believing that we have done the right thing. Therein lies the fine line between war and peace. Is what we think to be good, or what we are conditioned to believe, actually right?

The ability to discriminate between right and wrong, or in some cases good and evil, largely depends on the extent of knowledge from which we draw our conclusions. A poor fund of knowledge naturally results in faulty conclusions. Therefore, it is in our best interest to seek out the greatest source of knowledge – knowledge of the Absolute Truth, and familiarise ourselves with that.

Bhagavad-gītā is perhaps the most widely read book of theistic knowledge in the world. Whatever knowledge one finds in similar books such as the Dhammapada, the Bible, the Torah, the Koran etc. is also found in the *Bhaga-*

vad-gītā. But in the *Bhagavad-gītā* one will find knowledge that is not present anywhere else. Consequently, the *Bhagavad-gītā* surpasses all branches of knowledge. What lies ahead in these commentaries is a look into the vastness of the knowledge of the Absolute Truth contained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

VERSE I2

तस्य सञ्जनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।
सिंहनादं विनद्योचैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ १२ ॥

*tasya sañjanayan harṣam kuru-vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ
simha-nādaṁ vinadyoccaih śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān*

Then Bhīṣma, the fearless grandsire of the Kuru Dynasty, roaring like a lion, blew his conch loudly to increase the euphoria of Duryodhana.

VERSE I3

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।
सहस्रैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

*tataḥ śaṅkhaś ca bheryaś ca paṇavānaka-gomukhbāḥ
sahasaivābhyaḥ anyanta sa śabdastumulo'bhavat*

At that point, conches, trumpets, bugles, drums and horns suddenly sounded all at once and the combined sound rose up like thunder.

VERSE I4

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥ १४ ॥

*tataḥ śvetair bayair yukte mahati syandane sthitau
mādbhavah pāṇḍavaś caiva divyau śāṅkhau pradadbmatuh*

On the other side of the battlefield, both Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of wealth, and Arjuna, sitting on a wonderful chariot yoked with horses of fair hue, blew their divine conches.

VERSE 15

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः ।
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्कं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

*pāñcajanyam hr̄ṣikeśo devadattam dbanañjayayāḥ
pauṇḍram dadhmau mahāśaṅkham bhīma-karmā vṛkodarāḥ*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of the senses, blew his conch-shell called Pāñcajanya. Arjuna, the winner of great wealth, blew his conch-shell called Devadatta. Bhīma, the performer of great feats, blew his conch-shell Pauṇḍra.

VERSE 16-18

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्टकौ ॥ १६ ॥
काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।
धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ १७ ॥
द्रुपदोद्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ १८ ॥

*ananta-vijayam rājā kuntī-putro yudhiṣṭhirah
nakulaḥ sahadevaś ca sughoṣa-maṇipuṣpaku
kāśyaś ca parameṣvāsaḥ śikhaṇḍī ca mahārathah
dhr̄ṣṭadyumno virātaś ca sātyakiś cāparājitaḥ*

*drupado draupadeyāś ca sarvaśah pṛthivī-pate
saubhadraś ca mahā-bāhuḥ śaṅkhān dadbmuh pṛthak pṛthak*

Yudhiṣṭhīra, the son of Kuntī, blew his conch-shell Ananta-vijaya. Nakula and Sahadeva blew their conches called Sughoṣa and Maṇipuṣpaka. O emperor, the great archer the king of Kāśī, the expert chariot warrior Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, the invincible Sātyaki, Drupada, the sons of Draupadī and Abhimanyu the mighty son of Subhadrā all blew their conches.

VERSE 19

स घोषे धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।
नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलोऽभ्यनुनादयन् ॥ १९ ॥

*sa ghoṣe dhārtarāṣṭrāṇām hṛdayāni vyadārayat
nabhaś ca pṛthivīm caiva tumulo'bhyanunādayan*

The hearts of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra were shattered as the tumultuous sound reverberated throughout the sky and on the land.

Anuvṛtti

At the outset of the Kurukṣetra war, Duryodhana made the classic military blunder of underestimating the strength of his adversary. Possibly blinded by his greed for the kingdom or by his longstanding hatred for his cousins, the Pāṇḍavas, he entered the engagement thinking that his enemy's strength was limited.

Hate and greed are certainly poor allies of judgment, usually resulting in wrong decisions and the senseless loss of life. No better examples in modern times need be cited than that of the wars in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan

wherein underestimating the will of a people has led to the loss of millions of innocent lives.

The classic commentators on *Bhagavad-gītā* have all pointed out the blunder of Duryodhana at Kurukṣetra. Particularly it has been mentioned that Duryodhana failed to recognise that when Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, was there to advise Arjuna, that Arjuna would be a most formidable opponent.

History has shown us that wars are fought out of greed, hatred or religious prejudice. It is simply a convenience to think that, ‘God is on our side.’ The idea that ‘God is on our side’ is certainly a comforting thought and has accompanied men into almost every war that we know of since the rise of Abrahamic religions. However, the problem has always been that in all these conflicts both sides assumed the banner of righteousness, declaring, ‘God wills it!’ This is sometimes called the ‘theology of convenience’.

Even today it makes good to stir up the troops or rally the suicide bombers to their deaths by declaring that, “God favours our cause.” It is a fact that during these dark periods of history, more people have died, and more innocent people put to death in the name of God, than by any other single unnatural cause. Many people consider despotic political regimes as the ultimate empires of cruelty, but the truth is that religious fanaticism has brought far more unnecessary death to the world than any political system of government.

So what makes the war at Kurukṣetra any different than modern wars fought for greed or between religious fanatics? Is it not simply jingoism to say that because Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, was on the side of the Pāṇḍa-

vas that they were correct in destroying their enemies? The difference is that Kurukṣetra was not fought because one side had a different religious ideology than the other. Kurukṣetra was a fratricidal war – a family feud brought on by human faults: greed for sovereignty, failure in duty, envy, family attachment and falsely identifying the body as the self.

But unlike any other war in history, Kurukṣetra would record a profound lesson for the benefit of all future generations. The lesson was taught by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of *Bhagavad-gītā* – a lesson that would enable humanity to overcome its mundane shortcomings, become established in transcendence and attain self-realisation.

VERSE 20

अथ व्यवस्थितान्द्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिघजः ।
प्रवृत्ते शास्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ।
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ॥२०॥

*attha vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān kapi-dhvajah
pravṛtte śastra-sampāte dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavah
hṛṣīkesāṁ tadā vākyam idam āha mahī-pate*

Speaking to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Sañjaya said: O emperor, just as the war was about to commence, Arjuna, whose chariot was decorated with the banner of Hanumān, observing your sons poised for battle, took up his bow and spoke to Hṛṣīkeśa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of the senses), as follows.

VERSE 21-22

अर्जुन उवाच ।
 सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥२१॥
 यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।
 कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥२२॥

arjuna uvāca —

*senayor ubhaylor madhye ratham̄ sthāpaya me'cyuta
 yāvad etān nirikṣe'ham̄ yoddbu-kāmān avasthitān
 kairmayā saba yoddhavyam asmin raṇa-samudyame*

Arjuna said: O Acyuta (Infallible One), place my chariot between both armies so that I may look upon the soldiers that I must do battle with.

VERSE 23

योत्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।
 धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीषवः ॥२३॥

*yotsyamānān avekṣe'ham̄ ya ete'tra samāgatāḥ
 dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher yuddhe priya-cikīṣavah*

Let me see all those warriors that are dear to Duryodhana, the wicked son of Dhṛitarāṣṭra, assembled here for this battle.

VERSE 24

सञ्जय उवाच ।
 एवमुक्तो ह्रषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।
 सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥२४॥

*sañjaya uvāca —
 evam ukto hrṣikeśo guḍākeśena bhārata
 senayor ubhaylor madhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam*

Sañjaya continued: O descendant of Bharata, being thus requested, Śrī Kṛṣṇa drew Arjuna's grand chariot between both armies.

VERSE 25

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।
उवाच पार्थं पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिति ॥ २५ ॥

*bhiṣma droṇa pramukhataḥ sarveṣām ca mahikṣitām
uvāca pārtha paśyaitān samavetān kurūniti*

In front of Bhīṣma, Droṇa and all the leaders of the world, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O Pārtha (Arjuna, son of Prthā), behold the Kaurava Dynasty assembled here!

VERSE 26

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्यार्थः पितृनथं पितामहान् ।
आचार्यान्मातुलान्न्द्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ।
शशुरान्सुहृदश्वैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ॥ २६ ॥

*tatrāpaśyat sthitān pārthah pitṛn atha pitāmabān
ācāryān mātulān bhrātyān putrān paustrān sakhibīns tathā
śvaśurān suhṛdaś caiva senayor ubhayorapi*

There, between the two armies, Arjuna was able to observe fatherly elders, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, fathers-in-law and friends.

VERSE 27

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्बन्धूनवस्थितान् ।
कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ॥ २७ ॥

*tān samīkṣya sa kaunteyah sarvān bandhūn avasthitān
kr̥payā parayāviṣṭo viṣīdann idam abravit*

Seeing all his relatives before him on the battlefield, Arjuna, the son of Kuntī, became overcome with pity and was grief-stricken.

VERSE 28

अर्जुन उवाच ।

दृष्टेमं स्वजनं कृष्णं युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ।
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यते ॥ २८ ॥

arjuna uvāca —

*dṛṣṭvemāṁ svajanam kṛṣṇa yuyutsum samupasthitam
sīdanti mama gātrāṇi mukham ca pariśusyati*

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, seeing all my relatives assembled here and preparing for battle, the strength drains from my limbs and my mouth becomes parched.

Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as Pārtha-sārathi, the chariot-driver of Arjuna. Because Kṛṣṇa was Arjuna's friend and companion, he requested Kṛṣṇa to draw his chariot between the two armies so that he could see with whom he was to do battle. But upon seeing the enemy before him, Arjuna was shocked and fell into a state of bewilderment.

Now the stage at Kurukṣetra was set, so that Śrī Kṛṣṇa could speak *Bhagavad-gītā* – Arjuna became overwhelmed with grief and gave up his duty. As a warrior Arjuna was duty-bound to fight, but seeing the ordeal that lay ahead he could not proceed.

The world is certainly full of faults, dangers, unfortunate events, cruel and hateful designs to exploit others and a host of other qualities that one would certainly describe as evil. To quote Edmund Burke, the Irish statesman and

philosopher, “The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to stand by and do nothing.”

Arjuna had resolved in his mind not to fight, knowing that the destruction of the dynasty meant the loss of tradition, the onslaught of degradation, the birth of unwanted children etc. and thus evil would be the only outcome. Arjuna also understood deep within himself that to do nothing also assured grim repercussions.

VERSE 29

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ।
गाण्डीवं संसंते हस्तात्त्वकैव परिदृष्टते ॥२९॥

*vepathuś ca śarīre me romaharṣaś ca jāyate
gāṇḍīvam sramisate hastāt tvak caiva paridabyate*

My body trembles, my hair stands on end, my skin burns and my Gāṇḍīva bow slips from my grasp.

VERSE 30

न च शकोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ।
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ॥३०॥

*na ca śaknomy-avasthātum bhramatīva ca me manah
nimittāni ca paśyāmi viparītāni keśava*

O Kṛṣṇa, O Keśava (Killer of the Keśī demon), I cannot keep my composure, my mind is bewildered and I see evil omens.

VERSE 31

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ।
न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ॥३१॥

*na ca śreyo' nupaśyāmi hatvā svajanam āhave
na kāṅkṣe vijayam kṛṣṇa na ca rājyam sukhāni ca*

O Kṛṣṇa, I see no benefit in slaying my kinsmen in this battle. Neither do I desire victory, nor happiness by attaining a great kingdom.

VERSE 32-34

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ।
येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ॥३२॥
त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणास्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च।
आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ॥३३॥
मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा ।
एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्रतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥३४॥

*kim no rājyena govinda kim bhogair jīvitena vā
yeśām arthe kāṅkṣitam no rājyam bhogaḥ sukhāni ca
ta ime'vasthitā yuddhe prāṇāṁs tyaktvā dhanāni ca
ācāryāḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ tathaiva ca pitāmahāḥ
mātulāḥ śvaśurāḥ paustrāḥ śyālāḥ sambandhinās tathā
etān na hantum icchāmi ghnato'pi madhusūdana*

O Govinda (Kṛṣṇa), of what avail to us are kingdoms, happiness, or even life itself when all those for whom we may desire them are now arrayed on this battlefield? Of what use is a kingdom and its pleasures if those for whom we desire all this — our teachers, elders, sons, grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives that are present here on this battlefield — are ready to jeopardise their kingdoms and their lives in this battle? O Madhusūdana (Killer of the Madhu demon), even if they wish to slay me, I have no desire to slay them.

VERSE 35

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोःकिं नु महीकृते ।
निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान् का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ॥ ३५ ॥

*api trailokya-rājyasya hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahī-kṛte
nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ kā prītiḥ syāj-janārdana*

O Janārdana (Maintainer of all living beings), what to speak of ruling this world, even if we gained sovereignty over the three worlds, what happiness would be attained by killing the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra?

VERSE 36

पापमेवाश्रेयेदस्मान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ।
तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्सबान्धवान् ।
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥ ३६ ॥

*pāpam evāśrayed asmān hatvaitān ātatāyināḥ
tasmān nārbā vayaṁ hantum dhārtarāṣṭrān sabāndhavān
svajanām hi kathām hatvā sukhanāḥ syāma mādhava*

O Mādhava (husband of the goddess of fortune), great misfortune will surely come upon us if we kill our relatives, though they may be hostile towards us. It is not proper to slay the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra as well as our friends. What happiness will be derived from killing our own kin?

VERSE 37-38

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।
कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३७ ॥
कथं न इयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।
कुलक्षय कृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विर्जनार्दन ॥ १-३८ ॥

*yadyapyete na paśyanti lobhopahatachetasāḥ
 kula-kṣayakṛtam doṣam mitra-drohe ca pātakam
 kathām na jñeyam asmābbhiḥ pāpād asmān nivartitum
 kula-kṣayakṛtam doṣam prapaśyadbhir janārdana*

O Janārdana, although the hearts of these men are overwhelmed by greed and they cannot see the fault in betraying one's friends and the offence of murdering one's kinsmen, why should we engage in such a terrible activity, knowing well the consequences?

VERSE 39

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।
 धर्मं नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥३९॥

*kula-kṣaye praṇasyanti kula-dharmāḥ sanātanāḥ
 dharme naṣṭe kularūpiṇam adharmo 'bhībhavatyuta*

By destroying one's relatives, the family traditions are vanquished forever, and when such practices perish, unrighteousness prevails over the entire dynasty.

VERSE 40

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।
 स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वार्ष्णेय जायते वर्णसङ्करः ॥४०॥

*adharmābbhībhavāt kṛṣṇa praduṣyanti kula-striyah
 strīṣu duṣṭāsu vārṣṇeya jāyate varṇa-saṅkaraḥ*

O Kṛṣṇa, descendant of Vṛṣṇi, when unrighteousness prevails then the women of the family become degraded. When the women become degraded, then undesirable offspring is the result.

VERSE 41

सङ्करो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥४१॥

*saṅkaro narakāyaiva kula-ghnānāṁ kulasya ca
patanti pitaro hyeṣāṁ lupta-piṇḍodaka-kriyāḥ*

Undesirable offspring creates a dreadful condition for both the family and the destroyer of family values. Their forefathers fall down due to the discontinuation of ceremonial libations of food and water.

VERSE 42

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसङ्करकैः ।
उत्साध्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्मश्च शाश्वताः ॥४२॥

*doṣair etaiḥ kula-ghnānāṁ varṇa-saṅkara-kārakaiḥ
utsādyante jāti-dharmāḥ kula-dharmāś ca śāśvataḥ*

Such terrible deeds by the destroyers of the family create a population of unwanted progeny that totally annihilates all traditions of family and society.

VERSE 43

उत्सन्नकुलधर्मणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।
नरके नियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥४३॥

*utsanna-kula-dharmāṇāṁ manuṣyāṇāṁ janārdana
narake niyatam vāso bhavatīty-anuśuśruma*

O Janārdana, I have heard that those who destroy familial, social and spiritual values eternally reside in wretched conditions.

VERSE 44

अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥४४॥

*abo bata mahat-pāpam kartum vyavasitā vayam
yad rājya-sukha-lobhena hantum svajanam udyatāḥ*

Alas, what wickedness we are determined to commit – simply due to our greed to enjoy royal pleasures we are prepared to kill our own relatives!

VERSE 45

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशङ्कं शश्चपाणयः ।
धार्तराष्ट्र रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥४५॥

*yadi mām apratīkāram aśastram śastra-pāṇayaḥ
dhārtarāṣṭrā rāṇe hanyus tan me kṣematarāṁ bhavet*

If the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, with weapons in their hands, slay me unarmed and unresisting on this battlefield, that would be considered better by me.

VERSE 46

सञ्जय उवाच ।
एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः सख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।
विसुज्य सशरं चारं शोकसंविग्रमानसः ॥४६॥

*sañjaya uvāca –
evam uktvārjunah saṅkhye rathopastha upāviśat
visṛjya saśaram cāpaṁ śoka-saṁvigna-mānasah*

Sañjaya said: Having thus spoken these words, Arjuna cast aside his bow and arrows and sat on the chariot, his heart heavy with sorrow.

Anuvṛtti

Figuratively speaking we would say that Arjuna was ‘caught between a hard spot and a rock’. Therefore, Arjuna intelligently approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa and appealed for His intervention. Knowing that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the Absolute Truth, complete with all opulence and knowledge, Arjuna approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa, addressing Him as Hṛṣīkeśa (Master of the senses), as Acyuta (the infallible), as Keśava (the killer of the Keśī demon), as Govinda (one who pleases the senses), as Madhusūdana (the killer of the Madhu demon), as Janārdana (the Maintainer of all living beings), as Mādhava (the husband of the goddess of fortune) and as Vārṣneya (the descendant of the Vṛṣṇi Dynasty).

Arjuna addressed Śrī Kṛṣṇa by His different names in order to invoke Kṛṣṇa’s mercy and compassion for the predicament that Arjuna was in. As Hṛṣīkeśa, Kṛṣṇa is the Master of the mind and senses – thus He is never bewildered or put into illusion. As Acyuta, He is incapable of making mistakes or wrong decisions. Arjuna needed Kṛṣṇa’s advice urgently – advice that he could depend on, that would give relief to his disturbed mind and senses.

As Keśava, Kṛṣṇa is the killer of the demon Keśī who represents the false sense of greatness. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known to have killed numerous demons during His advent and each of those demons represented negative qualities that hinder one’s progress in spiritual life such as the desire for name and fame, dishonesty, false pride, deceitfulness, cruelty, foolishness, violence, lust, anger, greed, false teachings and bad habits etc. Arjuna was confident that by taking shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, all that was an impediment to his situation would be removed.

By addressing Kṛṣṇa as the descendant of the Vṛṣṇi Dynasty, Arjuna was also reminding Kṛṣṇa of the importance of family traditions and to destroy them was Arjuna's biggest dilemma.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
सैन्यदर्शनं नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śāta-sāhasryām saṁhitāyām
vaiyāsikyām bhiṣma-parvāṇi
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu
brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
sainya-darśanām nāma prathamo'dhyāyah*

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter One entitled *Sainya-Darśana* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhiṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ द्वितीयोऽध्यायः

सांख्ययोगः

CHAPTER 2
SĀNKHYA YOGA

The Yoga of Analysis

VERSE I

सञ्जय उवाच ।

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥

sañjaya uvāca —

*taṁ tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam aśru-pūrṇākulekṣaṇam
viṣidantam idam vākyam uvāca madhusūdanah*

Sañjaya said: Śrī Kṛṣṇa then spoke the following words to Arjuna whose heart was overwhelmed with pity and whose eyes were filled with tears.

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*kutas tvā kaśmalam idam viṣame samupasthitam
anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam akīrti-karam arjuna*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Arjuna, how has such illusion overcome you at this crucial moment? This is not appropriate for an honourable man, nor does it lead to higher planets. It is the cause of infamy.

VERSE 3

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वच्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ ३ ॥

*klaibyam mā sma gamah pārtha naitat tvayy-upapadyate
kṣudram hṛdaya-daurbalyam tyaktvottisṭha parantapa*

O Pārtha, give up this unmanliness. It does not befit you. O chastiser of enemies, get up and do not yield to this petty weakness of heart.

VERSE 4

अर्जुन उवाच ।

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदनं ।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हवरिसूदनं ॥४॥

arjuna uvāca —

*katham bhiṣmam abhiḥ saṅkhye dronam ca madbusūdana
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi pūjārhbāv-arisūdana*

Arjuna replied: How can I counterattack such persons as Bhiṣma and Drona in battle, firing arrows at those who are worthy of my respect, O Madhusūdana?

VERSE 5

गुरुनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहैव भुजीय भोगान्तुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥५॥

*gurūn abhatvā hi mahānubhāvān
śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyam apīha loke
hatvārtha kāmāṁstu gurūn ihaiva
bbuñjīya bhogān rudhira-pradigdhān*

It is better to live in this world by begging than killing our respectable superiors. Otherwise, the wealth and property that we enjoy here in this world will be tainted with their blood.

VERSE 6

न चैतद्विद्यः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्या जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामस्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥६॥

*na caitad vidmaḥ kataranno garīyo
yadvā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuh
yān eva hatvā na jījīviṣāmas
te'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*

I do not know what is better for us – to conquer them or be conquered by them. If we slay the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra who are assembled here before us, I have no desire to live.

VERSE 7

*kārpaṇya-doṣopabata-svabhāvah
yच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥*

*kārpaṇya-doṣopabata-svabhāvah
pr̥chbhāmi tvāṁ dharma-sammūḍhachetāḥ
yachbhreyah syān niścitaṁ brūbi tan me
śiṣyaste'haṁ sādhi mām tvāṁ prapannam*

My natural propensity as a warrior is weakening and I am bewildered as to what is righteous. Kindly tell me what is most beneficial for me. I am your disciple, surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.

VERSE 8

*न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद् यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमूरुं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥८॥*

*na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyād
yat chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
avāpya bhūmāv-asapatnam ṛddham
rājyam surāṇām api cādhipatyam*

Even if I gain a substantial kingdom beyond compare and the power of the demigods, I see nothing that can remove this grief that is eroding my senses.

Anuvṛtti

This second chapter is where the *Bhagavad-gītā* truly begins. *Bhagavad-gītā* literally means the ‘Song of Bhagavān’ and *Bhagavān* means the Absolute Truth. Here for the first time in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is addressed as Bhagavān. According to Vedic scholars such as Parāśara Muni, *Bhagavān* means one who possesses all wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge and renunciation.

*aiśvaryasya samagrasya vīryasya yaśasah śriyab
jñāna vairāgyayos caiva ṣaṇṭāṁ bhaga itīraṇā*

He that possesses the attributes of sovereignty, potency, fame, wealth, knowledge and renunciation in full, is known as Bhagavān. (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.5.74)

Additionally, Jīva Gosvāmī, the 16th Century Vaiṣṇava philosopher, says that Bhagavān is *bhajanīya guṇa ca ananta ca nityaḥ* — He that possesses all adorable qualities and whose all-attractive nature is such that He attracts our feelings of affection and adoration.

In contemporary society there is much debate as to whether God exists or not. First it is necessary to define what we mean by ‘God’ before His existence can be determined or dismissed. Accordingly, seers of the truth in ancient India have concluded that if there is a God, then God must necessarily be the owner and proprietor of everything; He must be all-powerful, the most famous, the most beautiful, the possessor of all knowledge and at the same time, detached or renounced. After careful analysis, those seers of truth concluded that only Śrī Kṛṣṇa could be and is the ultimate fountainhead of Reality, the Abso-

lute Truth. These findings have been corroborated by many sages throughout the ages (from before 10,000 BCE) and are dealt with extensively in the Vedic literatures such as the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Mahābhārata*, *Vedānta-sūtra*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and *Brahma-saṁhitā* etc.

*iśvarah paramah kṛṣṇah sac-cid-ānanda vigrabah
anādir ādir govindah sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Controller. His form is made of bliss, knowledge and eternity. He is the origin of all. He is the Master of the cows and the senses. He has no other origin and He is the primeval cause of all causes. (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.I)

*ete cāṁśa kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri vyākulaṁ lokam mṛdayanti yuge yuge*

The various *avatāras* are either plenary expansions or parts of plenary expansions. But Kṛṣṇa is the original source of all *avatāras*. When impious elements disturb His devotees, He manifests age after age in order to protect them. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* I.3.28)

*harir eva sadārādhyah sarva-deveśvareśvaraḥ
itare brahma-rudrādyā nava-jñeyāḥ kadācana*

Only Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa) should be worshipped as the Master of the entire universe. Brahmā, Śiva and all other demigods never violate this principle at any time. (*Padma Purāṇa*)

*yatrāvatīrṇam kṛṣṇākhyam
param brahmā narākṛtim*

When the Supreme Person descends in His human-like form, He is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Brahman.
(*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 4.II.2)

*tasmāt kṛṣṇa eva paro devas tam dhyāyet
tam raset tam bhajet tam yajet*

Thus Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person. One should meditate on Him. One should delight in Him. One should worship Him and make offerings to Him.
(*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* I.54)

*kṛṣir bhū-vācakah śabdo ṇaś ca nirvṛti-vācakah
tayor aikyam param brahma kṛṣṇa ityabhidhīyate*

The verbal root *kṛṣ* refers to the all-attractive quality of Kṛṣṇa, and the syllable *ṇa* refers to His spiritual bliss. When *kṛṣ* is added to the affix *ṇa*, it becomes the word *Kṛṣṇa*, indicating the Supreme Truth.
(*Mahābhārata, Udyoga-parva* 71.4)

Arjuna has become overwhelmed with compassion for those who are about to die on the battlefield. In fact, such is his grief that he himself is prepared to die rather than kill his enemies. But Arjuna is a warrior and from a noble family, therefore Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna against his weakness of heart. If one is a warrior it is one's duty to face the enemy and not cower away. Fighting is indeed a nasty business, but when duty calls, such fighting may be unavoidable. In ancient times, acts of aggression were abhorred and strictly

forbidden in society and between nations. When such aggression did occur, retaliation and war were acceptable. According to the great sage Vasiṣṭha, there are six types of aggressors and according to *Manu-saṁhitā* these aggressors are to be met with lethal response.

*agnido garadaś caiva śastra-pāṇir dhanāpahāḥ
kṣetra-dārāpahārī ca ṣad ete hyātatāyināḥ*

The arsonist who sets fire to one's house, one who administers poison, one who attacks with deadly weapons, one who usurps a nation's resources, one who invades and occupies a sovereign country and one who kidnaps one's family members - all should be considered as aggressors. (*Vasiṣṭha-smṛti* 3.19)

*ātatāyinam āyāntam banyād evāvicārayan
nātatāyi-vadhe doṣo hantur bhavati kaścana*

Without hesitation a warrior should destroy aggressors, as there is no bad reaction in slaying them. (*Manu-saṁhitā* 8.350)

These verses are according to the rules given in the laws of society (*artha-śāstra*). Yet the laws of *dharma* (*dharma-śāstra*), which are superior to the *artha-śāstra*, state that one should never inflict harm on any living being (*mā himsyāt sarva-bbūtāni*) – what to say of one's family members and superiors?

This was Arjuna's dilemma. Being a softhearted devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna was disinclined to take up arms against his family members, but being a warrior he had to face his destiny. In this state of bewilderment, Arjuna

decided to put aside his casual relationship with Kṛṣṇa as a friend and accept Śrī Kṛṣṇa as his guru (spiritual master). Thus Kṛṣṇa accepted Arjuna as a disciple.

According to Vedic knowledge there are numerous planets and parallel universes wherein life can be found. Some of these planets and universes have higher standards of living than we experience on Earth and some are lower. If one performs one's prescribed duties in this life then accordingly, one is elevated to higher planets. However, if one neglects his duty then only infamy and descending to lower planets awaits one in the next life.

Kṛṣṇa has used the word *anārya* meaning 'non-āryan' to describe Arjuna's disinclination to follow his prescribed Vedic duties. For centuries there has been much controversy about who is an *āryan* and where the *āryans* came from. For the most part, all such considerations have been based upon bodily designations in order to establish one race of people as superior to another. But in *Bhagavad-gītā*, according to the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *āryans* are those who carry out their duties in accordance with the Vedic injunctions. Thus it is understood that the word *āryan* does not pertain to a particular race of people, but to a conception of life and a way of living.

Knowledge of the eternal existence of the infinite consciousness (Kṛṣṇa) and the finite individual unit of consciousness (*ātmā* or the self) is the key to all Vedic wisdom. This will be the central theme of Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Arjuna in this chapter.

VERSE 9

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परंतप ।
न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूवह ॥९॥

*sañjaya uvāca —
evam uktvā hrṣikeśam guḍākeśah parantapa
na yotsya iti govindam uktvā tūṣṇīm babbūvaha*

Sañjaya said: Having thus addressed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the vigilant conqueror of enemies Arjuna declared, “O Kṛṣṇa, O Govinda, I will not fight!” and became silent.

VERSE 10

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ १० ॥

*tam uvāca hrṣikeśah prahasann iva bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye viṣīdantam idam vacah*

Descendant of Bharata, there, between the two armies, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Hṛṣikeśa) smiled and spoke the following words to the grief-stricken Arjuna.

VERSE II

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —
aśocyān anvaśocas tvam̄ prajñāvādāṁś ca bhāṣase
gatāsūn agatāsūmīś ca nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: While speaking like a wise man, you are actually grieving for that which is unworthy of grief. The wise lament for neither the living nor the dead.

VERSE 12

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥१२॥

*na tv-evāham jātu nāśam na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayam atāḥ param*

There was never a time that you, nor I, nor all these warriors assembled here did not exist. Nor shall we ever cease to exist in the future.

VERSE 13

देहिनोऽस्मिन्न्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥१३॥

*dehino'smin yathā dehe kaumāram yauvanam jarā
tathā dehāntara prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati*

As the *ātmā* passes through the bodily transformations of childhood, youth and old age, it similarly transmigrates from one body to another at the time of death. The wise are never deluded by this transition.

VERSE 14

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णासुख दुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino'nityās tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata*

O son of Kuntī, the interaction between the senses and the sense-objects produce the sensations of cold, heat, pleasure and pain. These feelings are temporary, always appearing and then disappearing. Thus, O descendant of Bharata, you must learn to tolerate them.

VERSE 15

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभं ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

*yam bi na vyathayanty-ete puruṣam̄ puruṣarṣabha
sama-dubkha-sukham̄ dhīram̄ so'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

O most virtuous one, a sober man who is equipoised in both pleasure and pain and remains undisturbed is certainly qualified for liberation.

Anuvṛtti

Arjuna is lamenting for the loss of the body, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not approve of his lamentation and reminds Arjuna that all living beings are eternal. Kṛṣṇa says that He, Arjuna and all those present on the field of battle are eternal personalities – they have existed eternally in the past and they will exist eternally in the future.

Arjuna is an accomplished student of Vedic thought and an associate of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but for the benefit of those who will study this erudite conversation in the future, Arjuna is feigning bewilderment and confusion just to encourage the discourse. Arjuna is considered a liberated personality and thus he is actually above ignorance and bewilderment.

Although consciousness is eternal, the material body does not share this quality. The body passes through the stages of birth, childhood, youth, old age, disease and

death. At death, consciousness transfers to another body according to the laws of material nature (*karma*) and begins the cycle yet again. The ever-changing body never bewilders those who are cognisant of the difference between the material body and consciousness.

Embodied consciousness is said to have five stages known as the *pañca-kośa* – *annamaya* (satisfying our existence by eating, as seen in children), *prāṇamaya* (consciousness of the preservation of one's body), *manomaya* (the stage of mental awareness), *vijñānamaya* (the cultivation of consciousness based on higher knowledge, understanding one is not this material body) and *ānandamaya* (cultivating and entering into one's relationship with the Supreme as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa). The first three stages, *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya* and *manomaya* pertain to all living beings that are caught in the doldrums of material sense enjoyment. *Vijñānamaya* and *ānandamaya* concerns those who have acquired knowledge of self-realisation (*vijñāna*) and perfection (*ānanda*).

Those who are asleep, simply absorbed in bodily identification, never experience the world beyond their sense perception. Heat and cold, happiness and distress, pleasure and pain, birth and death – these are the perceptions of life experienced by those with no knowledge of consciousness. But those who are liberated from the bodily concept of life are awake in the conscious world and are always in balance, even in the face of opposing and contradictory situations in the material world. They are undisturbed.

VERSE 16

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतःः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टेऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayor api dṛṣṭo'ntas tv-anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

Of that which is temporary there is no eternal existence. Of that which is eternal there is no destruction or change. Seers of the truth have realised the constitutional position of both.

VERSE 17

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १७ ॥

*avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idam tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsy na kaścit kartum arhati*

Know for certain that individual consciousness, which pervades the whole body, is imperishable. Nobody can destroy the indestructible individual unit of consciousness.

VERSE 18

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युद्घास्व भारत ॥ १८ ॥

*antavanta ime dehā nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇāḥ
anāśino'prameyasya tasmād yudhyasva bhārata*

Embodied consciousness is eternal, imperishable and infinite. Only the material body is perishable. Therefore O Arjuna, fight!

Anuvṛtti

Herein, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is reiterating the superiority of consciousness over matter. Since the time of Darwin, and even amongst some philosophers of ancient India such as

Cārvāka up to the present day, there are those who think that life arises out of matter. The Big Bang Theory and other contemporary scientific ideas also support this opinion. However, the problem with such thinking is that there is no concrete evidence whatsoever to explain or demonstrate how lifeless matter ever developed the symptoms of life. The Theory of Evolution, as the Darwinians understand it, is substantially defeated in the fossil record, since no ‘transitional species,’ that are supposed to reveal the gradual evolution of living organisms from primitive species to advanced life forms, have ever been discovered. Furthermore, there is no suitable model to explain where matter originated.

The numerous theories, new and ancient, that expound that life arose from matter are fundamentally flawed in many ways. On the other hand, from observing microscopic living creatures to giant creatures like the elephant and whale, it is self-evident that life comes from life. Thus, the Vedic perspective on life is that all life comes from an intelligent life source, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Scientific interest in finding the cause of the universe, and indeed to all life, is certainly laudable. Yet when all reasonable and honest research leads us to the conclusion that life/consciousness is not a byproduct of matter and the blueprint of intelligent design can be observed everywhere and in all things, then it should also be intelligently concluded that Super Consciousness is the cause of matter, the universe and all living things.

VERSE 19

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

*ya enāṁ vetti bantāraṁ yaścainaṁ manyate hatam
ubhau tau na vijānīto nāyam hanti na banyate*

One who considers the eternal unit of consciousness to be the slayer, and one who considers it to be capable of being slain are both in ignorance - for it neither slays nor is slain.

VERSE 20

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन् नायं भूत्वाभवितावानभूयः।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥२०॥

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyam bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyah
ajo nityah śāśvato'yam purāṇo
na banyate banyamāne śarīre*

The individual unit of consciousness neither takes birth nor dies at any time. It has never been created nor will it ever be created. It is unborn, eternal, indestructible and timeless - it is not destroyed when the material body is destroyed.

VERSE 21

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थं कं घातयति हन्तिकम् ॥२१॥

*vedāvināśināṁ nityam ya enam ajam avyayam
katham sa puruṣah pārtha kām ghātayati hantikam*

O Pārtha, considering that the individual unit of consciousness is eternal, unborn, imperishable and indestructible, how can a person kill anyone, and whom does he kill?

Anuvṛtti

It is sometimes thought that God, or some source of higher intelligence, has created life in the universe, but herein Śrī Kṛṣṇa expresses that the individual consciousness of a living being is never actually created. It exists eternally as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, as part and parcel of the Super Consciousness. In the Vedic concept of the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa exists eternally along with His energies. Consciousness by that measure is never created; it simply exists eternally as part and parcel of the Absolute Truth.

The characteristics of consciousness are described as unborn, eternal, indestructible and timeless – that which is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. The effects of time on the material body are perceived as growth, maintenance, by-products, old age, dwindling and death. But consciousness, being transcendental to matter, transcends time and therefore never grows old, dwindles or dies.

In certain religious traditions the Creator is sometimes visualised as being an old man in the sky. He is naturally thought of as old because He has fathered the universe a long time ago and He is the oldest of all. But here again the conception of *Bhagavad-gītā* differs dramatically. Consciousness is ever fresh and the source of consciousness, the Super Conscious Being, is always youthful and never old.

Those who are engrossed in material affairs and who ignore the wisdom of *Bhagavad-gītā* will find it very difficult to overcome the bodily concept of life and understand the difference between matter and consciousness.

VERSE 22

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२२॥

*vāsāṁsi jīrṇāni yathā vibāya navāni gr̥hṇāti naro'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vibāya jīrṇāny-anyāni samyāti navāni dehi*

Just as one removes old clothes and accepts new ones,
similarly the embodied unit of consciousness gives up old
bodies and accepts new bodies.

VERSE 23

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥२३॥

*nainam chindanti śastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
na cainam kledayanty-āpo na śoṣayati mārutah*

Weapons cannot cut the individual consciousness; it cannot
be burned by fire; water cannot wet it and air cannot dry it.

VERSE 24

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥२४॥

*acchedyo'yam adāhyo'yam akledyo'soṣya eva ca
nityah sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur acalo'yam sanātanaḥ*

It is indestructible, incombustible, insoluble and cannot be
withered. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immova-
ble and primeval.

VERSE 25

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्य ते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥२५॥

*avyakto'yam acintyo'yam avikāryo'yam ucyate
tasmād evam viditvainam nānuśocitum arhasi*

It is said that it is imperceptible, inconceivable and immutable. Thus, understanding the nature of individual embodied consciousness, it is inappropriate for you to lament.

Anuvṛtti

The transcendental nature of consciousness has been described in the above verses. It cannot be cut, burned or even touched by water or air. However, the material body is subject to all the above. Consciousness is described as eternal because it can never be destroyed. It is omnipresent because it animates and gives feeling to all parts of the body. It is unchanging because it never becomes anything other than what it is – pure consciousness. It is immovable because it does not change its constitutional position. It is primeval because it is the oldest of all. It is imperceptible because it lies beyond the range of the physical senses. It is inconceivable because it is beyond the speculative function of the mind, and it is immutable because it is part and parcel of the Absolute Truth.

VERSE 26

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैनं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २६ ॥

*attha cainam nitya-jātam nityam vā manyase mṛtam
tathāpi tvam mahā-bāho nainam śocitum arhasi*

Even if you believe that the individual consciousness is eternally subject to birth and death, still you have no reason to lament, O mighty-armed one.

VERSE 27

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्धुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येर्थं न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २७ ॥

*jātasya hi dhrubo mṛtyur dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye'rthe na tvam śocitum arhasi*

For one who is born, death is certain. For one who is dead, birth is certain. Therefore, you should not grieve over that which is inevitable.

VERSE 28

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ २८ ॥

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni vyakta-madhyāni bhārata
avyakta-nidhanāny-eva tatra kā paridevanā*

O Bhārata, all living beings are unmanifest before birth, manifest between birth and death, and again unmanifest after death. What then is the reason for lamentation?

VERSE 29

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनम् आश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९ ॥

*āścaryavat paśyati kaścidēnam
āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyah
āścaryavac-cainam anyah śrṇoti
śrutvāpy-enam veda na caiva kaścit*

Some consider the individual conscious unit as astounding, some describe it as astounding, others hear of it as astounding – and some, even after having heard about it, have no knowledge of it.

VERSE 30

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहेर्सर्वस्य भारत।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

*dehī nityam avadhyo'yam dehe sarvasya bhārata
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni na tvam śocitum arhasi*

O descendant of Bharata, the eternal individual consciousness that dwells within the bodies of all beings can never be slain. Thus, you should not lament for anyone.

Anuvṛtti

The individual unit of consciousness is difficult to understand because it is transcendental, a non-material substance, and cannot be seen with the material senses or even with the world's most powerful microscope. It is atomic in size and can only be perceived through perfect intelligence. This atomic unit of consciousness is situated in the midst of the five kinds of subtle life-airs within the body (*prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, samāna, udāna*). It is located within the heart and spreads its influence throughout the body. To give us some idea of the minuteness of the *ātmā* and its positioning within the body, the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* provide the following information:

*bālāgra-sāta bhāgasya śatadbā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvah sa vijñeyah sa cānanyāya kalpate*

When the upper part of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of those parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each part is the dimension of the *ātmā*. (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 5.9)

*eṣo'ṇur ātmā cetasā veditavyo
 yasmin prāṇah pañcadhbā sarīrviveśa
 prāṇaiś cittam̄ sarvam̄ otam̄ prajānām̄
 yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty-eṣa ātmā*

The *ātmā* is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic *ātmā* is floating in the five kinds of airs, is situated in the heart, and spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living beings. When the *ātmā* is purified from its contamination of the five kinds of material airs, its spiritual influence is exhibited. (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 3.I.9)

The cycle of birth and death (*samsāra*) is described as a natural phenomenon for one who is embodied. Although such a conception may be considered a fatalistic world view, both birth and death are an unwanted experience for the embodied consciousness. After experiencing life, no sane person wants to die – everyone has the desire to live as long as possible.

To that end, nowadays the producers of wonder drugs promise us eternal life, although no such life-giving cures exist at present – everyone has to die and before death comes, the wonder drugs and doctors fees are sure to bankrupt the family fortune. However, death is an unnatural experience. The fact that everyone seeks everlasting life should be indicative that such a pure state of life exists beyond birth and death. Indeed it does and Śrī Kṛṣṇa will shed light on that subject as this chapter develops.

VERSE 31

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुर्महसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यतक्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥३१॥

*svadharmam api cāvekṣya na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyāddhi yuddhāc chreyo'nyat kṣatriyasya na vidyate*

Moreover, considering your natural duty, you should not waver as there is no better course of action for a warrior than a battle to uphold righteousness.

VERSE 32

यदच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदशम् ॥३२॥

*yadrcchayā copapannam svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinah kṣatriyāḥ pārtha labhante yuddham idṛśam*

O Pārtha, only the most fortunate warriors are favoured with the opportunity to engage in such a war, which has come of its own accord to you as an open door to the higher planets.

VERSE 33

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्ति च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥३३॥

*atha cet tvam imam dharmyam sangrāmam na kariṣyasi
tataḥ svadharmam kīrtim ca hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi*

But if you decide not to take part in this war of righteousness, your principles of *dharma* will be lost, fame will abandon you and impiety will be incurred.

VERSE 34

अकीर्तिं चापिभूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४ ॥

*akīrtim cāpi bhūtāni kathayisyanti te'vyayām
sambhāvitasya cākīrtir maraṇād atiricyate*

For all time to come, people will speak of your infamy, and for one who is great, infamy is worse than death.

VERSE 35

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥ ३५ ॥

*bhayād raṇād uparatain māṁsyante tvātiṁ mahā-rathāḥ
yeṣāṁ ca tvātiṁ babu-mato bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam*

Illustrious warriors will believe that you ceased fighting out of fear. You will fall into disgrace in the eyes of those that hold you in great esteem.

VERSE 36

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।
निन्दन्तस्त्वं सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६ ॥
*avācyā-vādāṁś ca bahūn vadisyanti tavāhitāḥ
nindantas tava sāmarthyāṁ tato duḥkhatarāṁ nu kim*

Your enemies will insult you with slanderous words, condemning your prowess. Alas, what could be more painful than that?

VERSE 37

हतो वा प्राप्त्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ ३७ ॥

*bato vā prāpsyasi svargam jitvā vā bhoksyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛta-niścayah*

O son of Kuntī, if you are killed you will attain the higher planets, and if you are victorious you will enjoy the Earth. Therefore, be confident of your success – stand up and fight!

VERSE 38

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्यसि ॥३८॥

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivam pāpam avāpsyasi*

Maintain equanimity when faced with happiness and distress, gain and loss, victory and defeat – fight, and in this way you will not incur impiety.

Anuvṛtti

Arjuna's social position was that of a *kṣatriya*, a member of the warrior class. As such, it was Arjuna's solemn duty to uphold righteousness and to protect the kingdom from aggressors. By law and social decree, Arjuna and his brothers were the rightful heirs to the throne, yet the throne had been usurped by his uncle Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Arjuna, his wife Draupadī, his mother Kuntī and his brothers Yudhiṣṭhīra, Bhīma, Sahadeva and Nakula had all been forcibly exiled from the kingdom.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa knows the temperament of Arjuna very well and therefore He is appealing to Arjuna's *kṣatriya* spirit to stand and fight. Kṛṣṇa reminds Arjuna that only shame awaits him if he neglects his duty. His enemies will speak

ill of him and claim that he is a coward. Such neglect of his duty will lead to infamy, not to glory.

A *kṣatriya*, when called to battle, should never abandon his duty under any circumstance. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that if he is killed in battle while defending the kingdom, such an act of heroism will promote him to a higher status in his next life. Or, Kṛṣṇa says, if he is victorious in battle then he will regain the kingdom and enjoy life on Earth. In any case, Kṛṣṇa strongly encourages Arjuna not to abandon his duty.

VERSE 39

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्वमां शृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥

*eṣā te'bbhibitā sāṅkhye buddhir-yoge tv-imāṁ śṛṇu
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha karma-bandham prahāsyasi*

O Arjuna, son of Pṛthā, I have revealed to you the knowledge of individual consciousness. Now hear how to act upon this knowledge, through which you will be able to release yourself from the bondage of action.

VERSE 40

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४० ॥

*nehābhikrama nāśo'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpam apyasya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*

There is no loss, nor is there any diminution of result in performing this *dharma*. Even the slightest effort saves one from the greatest fear.

VERSE 41

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्ध्योऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥४१॥

*vyavasāyātmiikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana
babu-śākhā hy-anantāś ca buddhoyo'vyavasāyinām*

O descendant of the Kurus, spiritual intelligence is one-pointed and exclusive. However, the intelligence of those that desire mundane enjoyment is many branched.

VERSE 42

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेद वादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥४२॥

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam pravadanty-avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*

O Pārtha, those of small intelligence misinterpret the *Vedas* and claim that there is no divine principle in creation. Thus they glorify those statements that are pleasing to the senses.

VERSE 43

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥४३॥

*kāmātmānāḥ svarga-parā janma-karma-phala-pradām
kriyā-viśeṣa-babulām bhogaivarya-gatim prati*

Because their hearts are filled with selfish desires and their goal is the higher planets, they prescribe many rituals that award higher birth, wealth and power and lead to enjoyment and opulence.

VERSE 44

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ नविधीयते ॥४४॥

*bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmiikā buddhiḥ samādhau na vidhīyate*

By such ideas these persons, contemplating sense gratification and mundane pleasures, do not attain the resolve to fix their minds on the Supreme.

Anuvṛtti

The greatest fear that is mentioned in the above verse is the fear of losing the human form of life and taking birth in an animal body or lower. Some people think of the consciousness that is generally called *ātmā* as being human and other *ātmās* as being animal etc. But in reality no such distinction between a human *ātmā* and an animal *ātmā* exists. One transmigrates, according to one's *karma*, through many lower species of life and eventually arrives at the human stage.

Human life offers one the opportunity of self-realisation or the chance to cultivate spiritual knowledge and awareness. One who attempts to become self-realised is not always successful in one attempt or in one lifetime. However, Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives us the assurance that even a little endeavour on the path of self-realisation will save us from the greatest fear, namely that of taking birth in a lower life form.

The perfection of self-realisation in the *yoga* system is called *saṁādhi*, or the complete absorption of our consciousness in the Supreme. The student of *bhakti-yoga* achieves such a state of self-realisation by following the

instructions of Śrī Krṣṇa with steady determination. This state is only possible due to the great boon of having attained a human form of life.

However, if one neglects the opportunity of self-realisation in human life then one certainly runs the risk of sinking down into animal life or worse. It is sometimes argued that animals like cats and dogs have a better, more comfortable life than many humans, and that is certainly true for many cats and dogs in western countries. But there is no guarantee that in losing the human form of life one will become a dog or cat and be taken care of by a rich American family. One may become an animal that is eaten alive by wild beasts or torn apart by predators in the sea. Certainly it goes without saying that such a life and death is full of suffering.

Therefore, to avoid the unnecessary suffering found in animal life, a person who has achieved the human platform should, with great determination and diligence, pursue the path of self-realisation as outlined in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

VERSE 45

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ ४५ ॥

*traiguṇya-visayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

The *Vedas* deal with subjects in the three modes of material nature. O Arjuna, become free from duality, situated in a state of pure spiritual consciousness, free from the pursuits for gain and preservation and thus you will transcend these three modes.

VERSE 46

यावानर्थं उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥४६॥

*yāvān artha udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ*

A large lake serves all the purposes served by a small pond. Similarly, one who is the knower of the Absolute Truth realises all the purposes found within the *Vedas*.

VERSE 47

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

*karmany-evādhikāraste mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo’stv-akarmani*

Your right is to perform your work, but never to the results. Never be motivated by the results of your actions, nor should you be attached to not performing your prescribed duties.

VERSE 48

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

*yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvam yoga ucyate*

O Dhanañjaya, stand firm in *yoga*, perform your activities giving up attachment and be equipoised in both success and failure. Such balance is known as *yoga*.

VERSE 49

दूरेण ह्वरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्वन्नज्ञय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

*dūreṇa hy-avaraiḥ karma buddhi-yogād dbanañjaya
buddhau śaraṇam anviccha kṛpaṇāḥ phala-hetavah*

O Dhanañjaya, fruitive activities are by far inferior to the *yoga* of wisdom. Therefore, take shelter in the wisdom of equanimity. Those that are motivated by the fruitive results of their actions are misers.

VERSE 50

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥५०॥

*buddhi-yukto jabātīha ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte
tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogāḥ karmasu kauśalam*

A wise man refrains from performing both good and bad actions in this world. Thus, engage in *yoga*, as *yoga* is the best of all activities.

VERSE 51

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥५१॥

*karma-jaiḥ buddhi yuktā hi phalam tyaktvā maniṣināḥ
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ padam gacchantly-anāmayam*

The wise give up the results of their actions and thus liberate themselves from the bondage of material birth and death. Thus they attain the plane beyond all suffering.

VERSE 52

यदाते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिव्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥५२॥

*yadā te moha-kalilam buddhir vyatitariṣyati
tadā gantāsi nirvedam śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*

Once your intelligence is able to pass through the dense jungle of illusion, you will become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is yet to be heard.

VERSE 53

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावच्चला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्न्यसि ॥५३॥

*śruti-vipratipannā te yadā sthāsyati niścalā
samādhāv-achalā buddhis tadā yogam avāpsyasi*

When your mind is no longer affected by the false interpretations of the *Vedas*, then you will attain the perfect stage of *yoga*.

Anuvṛtti

To be situated in transcendence means to be liberated from the three modes of material nature – the modes of ignorance, passion and goodness (*tama-guṇa*, *raja-guṇa* and *sattva-guṇa*). *Yoga* is the practice of becoming situated beyond the modes of nature. Everyone in the material world is under the three modes of nature and only a true *yogi* can surpass these modes.

Our activities are categorised in three ways – as action prescribed by the *Vedas* (*karma*), unauthorised action (*vikarma*) and transcendental action (*akarma*). *Karma* means those activities that derive a good result and some-

times promote one to higher planets or higher standards of living. *Vikarma* are those activities that are against the Vedic injunctions and cause suffering to the self and to other living creatures. *Akarma* means those activities that have neither good nor bad reactions.

One who is wise and who knows the science of *yoga* always strives to perform the activities of *akarma*. Such *yogīs* are known as *bhakti-yogīs* and can easily situate themselves in transcendence. Other systems of *yoga* such as *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, *rāja-yoga*, *kuṇḍalinī-yoga*, *haṭha-yoga* and *kriyā-yoga* can also reach transcendence, but the path is very difficult, especially in this modern age.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as Yogeśvara, the Supreme Master of *yoga*, and although *Bhagavad-gītā* discusses other *yoga* systems, it is the *bhakti-yoga* system that Kṛṣṇa ultimately recommends. The *yogī* situated in *bhakti-yoga* is always engaged in devotional activities to satisfy the Supreme Master of *yoga*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, the *bhakti-yogī* is always in complete control of his senses. Without control of the senses no one can perform meditation or engage in spiritual practices properly. Therefore, the *bhakti-yogī* is the topmost *yogī* because he is engaged in the topmost *yoga* system.

There are eight mystical perfections of *yoga* known as the *aṣṭa-siddhis*. These perfections are – becoming very small (*aṇimā-siddhi*), becoming lighter than air (*laghimā-siddhi*), being able to retrieve anything from anywhere, such as extending one's hand while in New York and picking a mango growing in India (*prāpti-siddhi*), to become heavier than the heaviest (*mahimā-siddhi*), to create something wonderful or to destroy anything at will (*iśitva-siddhi*), to control the material elements (*vaśitva-siddhi*), the ability to

fulfil all of one's desires (*prākāmya-siddhi*) and the ability to assume any form one wishes (*kāmāvasāyitā-siddhi*). As the Master of *yoga*, Kṛṣṇa has these eight *yoga* perfections in full.

It is sometimes claimed by *yogīs* that they have achieved one or more of these *aṣṭa-siddhis* and such seems to have been relatively common in ancient times. But in modern times the claim of having one of the *aṣṭa-siddhis*, more often than not, turns out to be fraudulent or simply a show to attract many followers. With the rise in popularity of *yoga*, false claims of *aṣṭa-siddhis* have become a lucrative business.

A higher aspiration for the *yogī* is not the achievement of the *aṣṭa-siddhis*, but the achievement of *samādhi* in *bhakti-yoga* because such achievement frees one from the cycle of birth and death.

VERSE 54

अर्जुन उवाच ।

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ॥५४॥

arjuna uvāca —

*sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta kiṁ āsīta vrajeta kiṁ*

Arjuna said: O Keśava, what are the characteristics of that person who is perfectly situated in divine wisdom and fully absorbed in pure spiritual consciousness (*samādhi*)? How does he speak? How does he sit? How does he walk?

VERSE 55

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
 प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थं मनोगतान् ।
 आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥५५॥

*sri bhagavān uvāca —
 prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān
 ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭah sthita-prajñas tadocaye*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O Pārtha, When the living being abandons all material desires that enter the mind and becomes self-satisfied within, then that person is said to be situated in divine knowledge.

VERSE 56

दुःखेष्वनुद्विभमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
 वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥५६॥

*duḥkheṣv-anudvigna manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spṛhaḥ
 vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucycate*

One whose mind remains undisturbed by distress, who has no desire for pleasure, who is free from mundane attachment, fear and anger, is a sage of steady mind.

VERSE 57

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्त्वेहस्तत्त्वाप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
 नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५७॥

*yah sarvatrānabhisnehas tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham
 nābbhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

One who is unattached to anything in this world and who does not become joyful or resentful on attaining good or evil, is firmly established in wisdom.

VERSE 58

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽज्ञानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५८॥

*yadā samharate cāyam kūrmo'ngānīva sarvaśah
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyaḥ tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

When one is able to withdraw the senses from sense-objects, just as a tortoise withdraws its limbs, then he is firmly established in wisdom.

VERSE 59

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥५९॥

*viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinah
rasa-varjam raso'pyasya param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

An embodied living being may renounce sense-objects, but the taste for enjoying them remains. However, this too also ceases for one who realises the Supreme.

VERSE 60

यततो ह्यापि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥६०॥

*yatato hy-api kaunteya purusasya vipaścitat
indriyāṇi pramāthini haranti prasabham manah*

Yet the turbulent senses can forcibly steal the mind of even a wise man of sound judgment, O son of Kuntī.

VERSE 61

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६१॥

*tāni sarvāṇi samyamya yukta āśīta mat-parah
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

Restraining all the senses, a self-controlled person should fix his mind upon Me. Thus he becomes firmly situated in divine knowledge.

Anuvṛtti

As previously stated, there are numerous *yoga* systems. Śrī Kṛṣṇa states unequivocally that by the system of withdrawing one's senses from the objects of the senses, namely sound, touch, taste, smell and sight for sense satisfaction and concentrating the mind on Him, one becomes firmly situated in divine knowledge and *samādhi*.

Simply suspending the senses without positive engagement for advancing in spiritual life is not very profitable. Many *yogīs* have tried giving up sense activities altogether, but because the taste, or attachment, for sense-objects remains, many have fallen down in their attempts. However, the senses of the *bhakti-yogī* who follows Kṛṣṇa's direction are safeguarded because the senses are engaged twenty-four hours a day in Kṛṣṇa's service. As such, the taste for sensual satisfaction gradually dries up and disappears leaving the *bhakti-yogī* free to advance spiritually.

One who cannot control the senses cannot concentrate the mind. Additionally, the senses are never actually satisfied by material engagement. The senses become satiated for sometime, but then again become stimulated with an even greater avarice. Those who are servants of the bodily senses can never become masters of the self.

Being fully absorbed in pure spiritual consciousness or *samādhi* means to be conscious of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme

Person. Such absorption of the mind and senses in Kṛṣṇa is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

VERSE 62

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्सङ्गायते कामः कामात्कोद्घोषभिजायते ॥ ६२ ॥

*dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt krodho’bhijāyate*

By meditating upon sense-objects, one becomes attached to them. From attachment desire appears and from desire anger manifests.

VERSE 63

क्रोधाद्ववति संमोहः संमोहात्सृतिविभ्रमः ।
सृतिभ्रंशाद्विद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३ ॥

*krodhād bhavati saṁmohaḥ saṁmohāt smṛti-vibhramah
smṛti-bhraṁśād buddhi-nāśo buddhi-nāśat praṇasyati*

Delusion manifests from anger. Delusion causes bewilderment of memory. Bewilderment of memory causes loss of intelligence and when intelligence is lost, one is destroyed.

VERSE 64

रागद्वेष विमुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais tu viṣayān indriyaś caran
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā prasādam adhigacchati*

However, one who can control his mind and senses, and is free from both attachment and repulsion, even while in the midst of sense-objects, attains divine grace.

VERSE 65

प्रसादेसर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥६५॥

*prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām bānir asyopajāyate
prasanna-cetaso by-āśu buddhibh paryavatiṣṭhate*

When one attains divine grace, all miseries cease. Certainly, such a person who achieves a tranquil mind develops divine wisdom.

VERSE 66

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥६६॥

*nāsti buddhir ayuktasya na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir aśāntasya kutah sukham*

One who is bereft of self-control cannot attain wisdom. Without wisdom one can never meditate. One who cannot meditate cannot achieve peace, and without peace how can one attain happiness?

VERSE 67

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाभसि ॥६७॥

*indriyāṇām hi caratām yan mano'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñām vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi*

Whichever sense the wandering mind becomes absorbed in, that sense carries away the intelligence, just as a ship at sea is swept away by a strong wind.

VERSE 68

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥

*tasmād yasya mahā-bāho nigṛhitāni sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyaḥ tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

Therefore, O mighty armed Arjuna, one whose senses are fully withdrawn from the sense-objects is firmly established in divine wisdom.

Anuvṛtti

Unfortunately, there are many charlatan *yogīs* who, for the sake of money and gaining disciples, give their so called ‘blessings’ advocating that there is no need to follow any particular practice of sense-control such as a non-violent diet, sexual abstinence or avoiding intoxication etc. Such charlatans cheat and mislead their followers into thinking that they themselves are gods and that they can enjoy whatever their senses fancy.

But fair warning is given here. Such uncontrolled sense activities lead not to divine grace or divine wisdom, but to attachment, then increased desire, then anger, then delusion, bewilderment, loss of intelligence and ultimately to destruction.

VERSE 69

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānāṁ tasyāṁ jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyāṁ jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneh*

That which is day for the self-controlled sage is night for all living beings, and that which is day for all living beings is night for the introspective sage.

VERSE 70

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥७०॥

*āpūryamāṇam acala-pratiṣṭhaṁ
samudram āpaḥ praviśanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yamī praviśanti sarve
sa sāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmī*

Such a sage who is steadfast in facing the constant flow of desires and who does not strive to satisfy them achieves peace. He remains unaffected, just as the ocean remains calm as rivers enter into it.

VERSE 71

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥

*vihāya kāmān yah sarvān pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhab
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ sa sāntim adhigacchati*

Only one who abandons all desire for sense-indulgence, who lives free from possessiveness and is free of false ego can attain peace.

VERSE 72

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थं नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥७२॥

*eṣā brāhmaḥ sthitibh pārtha naināṁ prāpya vimuhyati
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle'pi brahma-nirvāṇam rcchati*

O Pārtha, having attained realisation of the Absolute Truth one is never bewildered. If one is situated in this state at the time of death, one attains *brahma-nirvāṇam*, the abode of pure consciousness, and all suffering ceases.

Anuvṛtti

The highest achievement by accepting the instructions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā* is given here. One who does so at the time of death, attains *brahma-nirvāṇam*, the spiritual planets of Vaikuṇṭha and the mitigation of all suffering.

According to the knowledge of self-realised souls, the Absolute Truth has three stages of realisation – Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān.

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmeti bhagavān iti śabdyate*

The seers that know the Absolute Truth call this non-dual substance Brahman, Paramātmā or Bhagavān. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* I.2.II)

Brahman means attaining the impersonal light experience or effulgence of the Absolute. The word ‘Brahman’ is found throughout the Vedic literature and according to scholars of *bhakti-yoga*, ultimately means Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa.

The Buddhist philosophers take *nirvāṇa* to be the end of material life and entering into the void, but *Bhagavad-gītā* teaches differently. In the Vedic teachings there is

no void anywhere. Everything is the energy of the Absolute Truth and no existence or non-existence is reconcilable outside of that.

According to the prominent sages of *bhakti-yoga*, Viśvanātha Cakravartī translates *brahma-nirvāṇam* as liberation. His disciple, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa understands *brahma-nirvāṇam* as Paramātmā who is Viṣṇu, the form of liberation. Rāmānuja takes Brahman as the *ātmā* and *nirvāṇam* as full of happiness. Madhvā takes *brahma-nirvāṇam* as Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa without a material form. Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja takes *brahma-nirvāṇam* as freedom from material bondage and A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda takes *brahma-nirvāṇam* as meaning the kingdom of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa. In all cases, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa never accept liberation in the impersonal state of Brahman or the void because they are only interested in service to Kṛṣṇa and are already liberated.

Paramātmā means realisation of the Absolute situated in the hearts of all living things – the Maintainer of the universe, being situated within and in between every particle of matter.

Bhagavān is the realisation of the personal aspect of the Absolute Truth and is considered to be the ultimate stage of self-realisation, because in that stage one realises the Absolute Truth in toto as Kṛṣṇa, the fountainhead of all energies. The abode of Kṛṣṇa is known as Vaikuṇṭha or Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Furthermore, verse 7I refers to the *abaṅkāra*, or the false ego, that is attached to consciousness when driven by the modes of material nature. False ego presupposes the existence of real ego – that real ego being the pure

consciousness of a living being. Thinking oneself to be the material body, or thinking oneself to be the enjoyer of the senses, is the cause and the effect of false ego. Such false ego never leads to enlightenment, but to repeated births and deaths in the cycle of *samsāra*. The false ego is like a shadow of darkness that covers pure consciousness. The pure ego is non-different from pure consciousness itself. Pure ego is to realise oneself as part and parcel of the Absolute Truth and eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
सांख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ  
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu  
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
sāṅkhyā yogo nāma dvitīyo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Two entitled *Sāṅkhya Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.





अथ तृतीयोऽध्यायः  
कर्मयोगः

CHAPTER 3  
KARMA YOGA

*The Yoga of Action*



VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच।

ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।  
तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥१॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*jyāyasī cet karmaṇas te matā buddhir janārdana  
tat kiṁ karmaṇi ghore mām niyojayasi keśava*

Arjuna said: O Janārdana, O Keśava, if it is Your opinion that wisdom is better than action, then why do You wish to engage me in such violent activities?

VERSE 2

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।  
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥२॥

*vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena buddhiṁ mobayasīva me  
tad ekaṁ vada niścītya yena śreyo'ham āpnuyām*

Your words seem to be contradictory and my mind is now confused. Therefore, kindly tell me which particular path is most beneficial for me.

VERSE 3

श्रीभगवानुवाच।

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।  
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥३॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —*

*loke'smin dvi-vidhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayānagha  
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānām karma-yogena yoginām*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O faultless one, previously I explained the two paths found in this world – the path of wisdom for the empirical philosophers and the path of action for those that must perform action.

#### VERSE 4

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्य पुरुषोऽश्रुते ।  
न च सन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समाधिगच्छति ॥४॥

*na karmaṇām anārambhān naiśkarmyaṁ puruṣo'śnute  
na ca sannyasanād eva siddhiṁ samadhibigacchati*

A man cannot attain the state of divine consciousness free from material action simply by abstaining from action. Neither can perfection be attained simply by renunciation.

#### VERSE 5

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।  
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥५॥

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api jātu tiṣṭhaty-akarmakṛt  
kāryate hy-avaśah karma sarvah prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ*

One cannot abstain from activities even for a moment. Indeed, all living beings are forced to engage in activities due to the influence of the modes of material nature.

#### Anuvṛtti

The purpose of *Bhagavad-gītā* is to elevate one beyond the bodily concept of life to the plane of consciousness or understanding the nature of the self. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has already established this in the Second Chapter, but it appears that Arjuna finds some contradiction in what Kṛṣṇa has said. Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa to further explain wisdom and action

so that he may follow the proper path. This confusion is common amongst novices – should one be a philosopher who is indifferent to the affairs of the material world, or should one engage in one's prescribed duties?

What is ultimately to be understood by Kṛṣṇa's instructions is that both wisdom and proper engagement are interdependent. One is not complete without the other. Engagement, sometimes seen as spiritual practices, without philosophy is merely sentiment and philosophy without practice is mental speculation. Religious practices without a solid philosophical basis often lead to fanaticism that results in destruction and death. Our modern world is all too aware of this.

The interdependent relationship between philosophy and spiritual practice is indispensable for one who wants to achieve the perfection of human life. Actions should be performed with proper knowledge, only then does one achieve the proper result and is considered a true *yogī*.

#### VERSE 6

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।  
इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

*karmendriyāṇi samyamya ya āste manasā smaran  
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

One who controls the external senses yet mentally dwells upon the sense-objects is said to be foolish and hypocritical.

#### VERSE 7

यस्त्वान्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।  
कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥ ७ ॥

*yas tv-indriyāṇī manasā niyamyārabhate'rjuna  
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam asaktah sa viśiṣyate*

However, that person who controls the senses with the mind and engages them in *karma-yoga* (the path of selfless action) without attachment is superior, O Arjuna.

### VERSE 8

**नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।  
शरीरस्यात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्धेदकर्मणः ॥८॥**

*niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyāyo hy-akarmanah  
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te na prasiddhyed akarmanah*

You should perform your prescribed duties, since action is better than inaction. You cannot maintain your existence without action.

### VERSE 9

**यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मवन्धनः ।  
तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥९॥**

*yajñārthāt karmano'nyatra loko'yam karma-bandhanah  
tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya mukta-saṅgah samācara*

All activities are meant for sacrifice (*yajña*) to Viṣṇu. Other than that, all other activities bind one to this material world. O son of Kuntī, work for Him alone and be free from any attachment.

### Anuvṛtti

The Vedic injunctions enjoin that all activities should be performed as an offering to Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa – *yajño vai viṣnuḥ*. No embodied being can give up action even for a

moment because in the material world everyone is forced to act under the influence of the modes of nature. It is also said that the pure nature of the *ātmā* is to be engaged in the spiritual activities of serving the Supreme Being, Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, all activities are to be connected to, and for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa. This is known as the constitutional position of the *ātmā*.

It is clear from the above verses that action is better than inaction. As it is said, “An idle mind is the Devil’s workshop.” If the senses are idle and one tries to empty the mind, then what usually transpires is that the mind becomes engaged in unproductive thoughts and eventually the sense-objects carry the mind and senses away.

The influence of the modes of material nature over the *ātmā* is called *māyā*, or illusion. This *māyā* is the external energy of the Absolute Truth. When the *ātmā* is separated, or disconnected from the Absolute Truth by improper philosophical understanding or improper activities, the result is bewilderment, confusion and *samsāra*.

#### VERSE 10

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।  
अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्कामधुक् ॥ १० ॥

*saha-yajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā purovāca prajāpatiḥ  
anena prasaviṣyadhvam eṣa vo'stv iṣṭa kāmadbhuk*

In the beginning of creation, Brahmā created mankind along with the system of sacrifice and said, “Through this sacrifice may you prosper. May it fulfil all your desires.”

VERSE II

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः।  
परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥११॥

*devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vah  
parasparam bhāvayantah śreyah param avāpsyatha*

The demigods, being satisfied with sacrifices, will also satisfy you. By mutually pleasing each other, you will attain the highest benefit.

VERSE 12

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः।  
तैर्दत्तानप्रदायैभ्यो यो भुक्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥१२॥

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ  
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo yo bhūkite stena eva saḥ*

Being satisfied by your performance of sacrifices, the demigods will bestow unto you all the necessities of life. But one who enjoys these gifts without offering them to the demigods is a thief.

VERSE 13

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।  
भुज्जते ते त्वधं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥१३॥

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinah santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ  
bhūjnjate te tvagham pāpā ye pacanty-ātma-kāraṇāt*

Enlightened individuals are liberated from all types of impiety by accepting the remnants of foodstuffs offered in sacrifice. However, those who only cook for themselves perpetuate their own bondage.

### VERSE 14

अन्नाद्ववन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादज्ञसंभवः ।  
यज्ञाद्ववति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ १४ ॥

*annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyād anna-sambhavaḥ  
yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñah karma-samudbhavaḥ*

All living beings subsist on food, and food is produced by rain. Rain is produced due to the performance of sacrifice, and sacrifice is born of prescribed activities.

### Anuvṛtti

In verse 10 Brahmā is mentioned as the creator. According to the *Vedas*, Brahmā is the first living being in this universe and is manifest directly by Viṣṇu. Brahmā's function is as the secondary creator of the planetary systems. In modern times, some atheistic thinkers, such as Professor Richard Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist from Oxford University, have conceded that aliens from another planet may have possibly seeded life on Earth. Far-fetched as this may sound to some of us, the idea does come very close to the truth.

The ancient texts of India state that Brahmā resides in the highest realm in the universe known as Satya-loka. Some of the offspring of Brahmā known as the Prajāpatis are then sent forth to seed life throughout the cosmos. But rather than look at Brahmā as an alien, the Vedic texts describe him as the father of all living beings in the material world.

Since western civilisation first came into contact with the pantheon of Vedic demigods there has always been the speculation that the Vedic people, often referred to

as Hindus, were pagans – pagan meaning the worshippers of many gods and not one Supreme God. Thus western observers conclude that monotheism, the worship or reverence of one Supreme God, originated with the Abrahamic religions of the west. This however is not a fact.

The Vedic pantheon does indeed include many lesser demigods, but the Vedic texts are quite clear that there is only one Supreme Being or Super Consciousness that is above all. That is always referred to as Brahman, Paramātmā, Bhagavān, Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa. For example, the *Rg Veda* (I. 22. 20) states as follows:

*tad viṣṇoḥ paramāṁ padam sadā paśyanti surayah  
divīva cakṣur ātatam*

The divine feet of Viṣṇu are above all, like the sun above our heads. His holy feet are like the vigilant eye of a grand guardian over our heads like the sun.

*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* says:

*ete cāmśa kalāḥ pumsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*

The various *avatāras* are either plenary expansions or parts of plenary expansions. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original source of all these *avatāras*. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* I.3.28)

Historically speaking, it is erroneous to assume that monotheism was developed by Abrahamic civilisations independent of any outside influence. In fact, the Abrahamic religions borrowed the idea of monotheism from the Persians after King Cyrus subjugated Babylon and Judea

circa 500 BCE. Prior to the arrival of the Persians, and continuing into the 2nd and 3rd Centuries, Judaism and Christianity were known to have belief systems based on one or more gods. Thus, monotheism only gradually developed among the Abrahamic religions.

Since the monotheistic concept found in the *Vedas* is much older than the Abrahamic religions, it is only logical to conclude that the latter borrowed their thinking from the former. During the interim, the Persians, under the influence of Zoroaster, took the monotheistic philosophy from India and then transmitted it to the Middle Eastern civilisations. Indeed, monotheism has always been the central theme of India's Vedic literature.

However, failing to look deeply into the philosophy of the *Vedas* or possibly being culturally intimidated by the superiority of Vedic knowledge as opposed to western philosophies and religions, Eurocentric academics and fundamental religionists have marginalised the ancient Vedic civilisation of India. The German scholar Max Muller propagated further misinformation on this subject in the 19th Century with the invention of the Aryan Invasion Theory, stating that Vedic civilisation did not originate in India. Yet all this is quite far from the truth.

According to Muller, the *āryans* were a nomadic tribe from Europe who invaded India. Yet there is no evidence that the *āryans* were nomads. In fact, to suggest that a nomadic tribe of barbarians wrote literature of such profound wisdom as the *Vedas* defies imagination.

Furthermore, within the *Vedas*, there is no mention whatsoever of an original homeland, and archaeologically there is a complete lack of evidence to prove an invasion ever

occurred. It can only be concluded that the *āryan* people and Vedic knowledge were always indigenous to India.

The Vedic knowledge is that Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa is Supreme and the lesser gods and goddesses such as Brahmā, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya, Kālī and Sarasvatī etc. are actually servants of the Supreme Being and are empowered with the duties of managing the universal affairs of material nature. In the above verses Śrī Kṛṣṇa recommends that offerings should be made to the demigods and thus the demigods will be pleased to bestow unto humanity all the necessities of life. This is, in short, a universal law of taxation. In other words, we must give the demigods their dues.

It is also intrinsic to the nature of the *ātmā*, to perform service and sacrifice. Constitutionally the *ātmā*, being part of the organic whole (the Absolute Truth), is duty-bound to serve the whole, both in this life and in eternity. When sacrifice or offerings are made to Viṣṇu such as fruits, vegetables etc. then one's senses become purified by eating the remnants of such offerings. But if one takes the things of this world without first acknowledging to whom they actually belong, then one simply incurs a *karmic* reaction. This also includes our daily food that should first be offered to Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa. It will be explained by Śrī Kṛṣṇa later in *Bhagavad-gītā* that these food offerings should comprise of vegetables, fruits, milk products, flowers etc. Non-vegetarian food items cannot be offered to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa – consequently the servants of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa are vegetarian. Kṛṣṇa will also explain that those who serve the Absolute Truth are not duty-bound to serve the demigods, nor are they bound by any other social consideration.

VERSE 15

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।  
तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५ ॥

*karma brahmodbhavam viddhi brahmākṣara-samudbhavam  
tasmāt sarva-gatam brahma nityam yajñe pratiṣṭhitam*

One should know that prescribed activities originate from the *Vedas*, and the *Vedas* originate from the imperishable Absolute Truth. Thus, the omnipresent Absolute Truth is eternally present within acts of sacrifice.

VERSE 16

एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।  
अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६ ॥

*evaṁ pravartitam cakraṁ nānuvartayatīha yaḥ  
aghāyur indriyārāmo mogham pārtha sa jīvati*

O Pārtha, one who lives in this world but does not accept the Vedic system, lives an impious life in pursuit of sense pleasure – thus he lives his life in vain.

VERSE 17

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।  
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

*yas tv-ātmaratir eva syād ātma-trptaś ca mānavaḥ  
ātmany-eva ca santuṣṭas tasya kāryam na vidyate*

However, for one who finds pleasure in the self, there is no duty to fulfil. He rejoices in the self, and internally is completely self-satisfied.

VERSE 18

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कथन ।  
न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ १८ ॥

*naiva tasya kṛtenārtho nākṛteneha kaścana  
na cāsyā sarva-bhūteṣu kaścid artha-vyapāśrayaḥ*

In this world, he neither gains by action, nor gains by inaction. Neither does he depend upon any other person.

VERSE 19

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।  
असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥ १९ ॥

*tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryam karma samācara  
asakto hyācaran karma param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ*

Therefore, continue to perform your prescribed duties perfectly without attachment to the results. By acting without attachment one attains the Absolute.

VERSE 20

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।  
लोकसञ्चाहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २० ॥

*karmaṇaiwa hi saṁsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ  
loka-saṅgraham evāpi sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

In the past, kings such as Janaka and others attained perfection by performing their prescribed duties. In order to set a proper example to the people in general, you should also act appropriately.

VERSE 2I

यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तदेवेतरो जनः ।  
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥२१॥

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janah  
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

However a great man conducts himself, common men will follow. Accordingly, whatever standards he sets by his actions, others will follow in his footsteps.

Anuvṛtti

The Vedic system of political and spiritual leadership is that one should lead by example. Unfortunately, in today's world, good leaders of any kind are hard to come by. Not only are we disappointed to learn that those we have elected to public office are often pilfering the wealth of the country for their own benefit, but we are even more shocked to learn that many of our so-called spiritual leaders cannot even maintain the most basic principles of morality and engage in abominable, depraved practices.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa states in the above verse that what a great man does the common man will follow. This is most evident when we observe how movie stars, rock stars, and sports personalities influence the majority of people today. That we tend to be influenced by others is a human characteristic, therefore role models are essential. But what human society needs are role models that are knowledgeable, cultured, morally principled and spiritually advanced.

VERSE 22

न मे पार्यास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।  
नानवास्तमवास्तव्यं वर्त एव चकर्मणि ॥२२॥

*na me pārbhāsti kartavyam̄ triṣu lokeṣu kiñcana  
nānavāptam̄ avāptavyam̄ varta eva ca karmaṇi*

O Arjuna, son of Pṛthā, I have no duty to perform whatsoever in the three worlds. I lack nothing nor do I need to gain anything – yet I still engage in activities.

VERSE 23

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः।  
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥२३॥

*yadi by-abam̄ na varteyam̄ jātu karmany-atandritah  
mama vartmānuvartante manusyāḥ pārtha sarvaśāḥ*

If I avoid activity then all men will follow My path and neglect their prescribed duties, O Pārtha.

VERSE 24

उत्सिदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्या कर्म चेदहम् ।  
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥२४॥

*utsidēyur imē lokā na kuryam̄ karma ced abam  
saṅkarasya ca kartā syām upahanyam̄ imāḥ prajāḥ*

If I do not act properly, then the general populace will be ruined and I will be the cause of unwanted progeny. In this way I will cause the destruction of all beings.

VERSE 25

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।  
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चकीर्षुलोकसङ्ग्रहम् ॥२५॥

*saktāḥ karmaṇy-avidvāṁso yathā kurvanti bhārata  
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham*

O descendant of Bharata, just as the ignorant are attached to their activities, similarly the wise must also work, but without attachment, for the welfare of all.

VERSE 26

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।  
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥२६॥

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed ajñānām karma-saṅginām  
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran*

The wise should not disturb the minds of the ignorant who are attached to their selfish activities. Rather, remaining unattached and fully executing their duties, they should encourage the ignorant and engage them in pious activities.

VERSE 27

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।  
अहङ्कारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥२७॥

*prakṛteḥ kriyamānāni gunaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ  
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate*

All activities are performed by the modes of nature. But those who are deluded by the false identification of the body think, “I am the doer.”

## Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa states in the above verses that He has no duty to perform, that He lacks nothing nor has He anything to gain. In other words, Kṛṣṇa is already perfect and complete – *om pūrṇam*. Yet Kṛṣṇa acts; He is not idle. He acts for the benefit of humanity by establishing spiritual practices in every age – *dharmāṁ tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam*. When an *avatāra* of the Absolute Truth makes His appearance in the material world, He does so to establish eternal principles of *dharma*.

Kṛṣṇa appeared at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, 5,237 years ago (3228 BCE) and spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*. However, this was not Kṛṣṇa's most recent appearance. Kṛṣṇa appeared again after the beginning of Kali-yuga 525 years ago. This Kali-yuga *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa is known as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In His *avatāra* as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa taught the process of *saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra*, to accompany the study of *Bhagavad-gītā*. As regards the *mahā-mantra*, the *Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad* states as follows:

bare kṛṣṇa bare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bare bare  
bare rāma bare rāma rāma rāma bare bare

iti ṣoḍaśakāṁ nāmnāṁ kali-kalmaṣa nāśanam  
nātaḥ parataropāyah sarva-vedeṣu dṛṣyate

The sixteen words of this *mahā-mantra* are specifically meant for counteracting the contamination of Kali-yuga. There is no other way but to chant these names of Kṛṣṇa. After searching throughout

the Vedic literature one will not find a process for this age that is more sublime. (*Kali-santarana Upaniṣad* 2)

The transcendental potency of the *mahā-mantra* is further described as follows in *Padma Purāṇa*:

*nāma cintāmaṇīḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrabhaḥ  
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto ‘bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoh*

The name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a transcendental touchstone, full of all transcendental mellows. Complete, pure, and eternally liberating, the name of Kṛṣṇa is non-different than Kṛṣṇa.

The study of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the practice of *saṅkīrtana* have now spread all over the world. It is no longer something that is only available in India. There will be more discussion on this particular topic in Chapter 4, verse 8.

The proper mode of action and the proprietor of the results of action is only understood when one is free from the identification of the self as the body, as being a byproduct of the body or that one is the doer of activities.

We walk, we talk, we digest food, we construct buildings and even empires, but all these activities are made possible for us by a combination of material nature and the Paramātmā, the Super Consciousness that pervades the entire universe. How all this transpires is inconceivable to those under the bodily conception of life. Thus the idea that, “I am this body” arising from the false ego must be abandoned. Who are we? Where do we come from? Why are we here? Is there life after death? The answers to

all these questions begin to fall into place when one gives up the concept of the body as the self. Many great thinkers from western civilisation have struggled with the ultimate questions of life and death, but failed to find the answers or the solutions to the problems. This in part was due to the fact that they contemplated life under the false premise that the body is the self. Self-realisation and realisation of the Absolute Truth begins with the abandonment of the bodily concept of life.

### VERSE 28

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः।  
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥ २८ ॥

*tattvavit tu mabā-bāho guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ  
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta iti matvā na sajjate*

Yet, O mighty-armed one, one who is a knower of the truth concerning action and the modes of material nature, understands that it is the modes interacting with one another and thus he remains unattached.

### VERSE 29

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।  
तानकृत्सविदो मन्दान्कृत्सविन्न विचालयेत् ॥ २९ ॥

*prakṛter guṇa-saṁmūḍhbāḥ sajjante guṇa-karmasu  
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

Those bewildered by the modes of material nature are engrossed in material activities conducted by those modes. The wise should not disturb the ignorant who are bereft of proper knowledge.

VERSE 30

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।  
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ ३० ॥

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā  
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*

Completely surrendering all your activities unto Me, with your consciousness fully situated in the self, without any selfish motivation, without any sense of ownership and without grief – fight!

VERSE 31

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्तिमानवाः ।  
श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥ ३१ ॥

*ye me matam idam nityam anutishanti mānavāḥ  
śraddhāvanto’nasūyanto mucyante te’pi karmabhiḥ*

Those that faithfully follow these instructions of Mine without envy will become free from the bondage of actions.

VERSE 32

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।  
सर्वज्ञानविमूढास्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२ ॥

*ye tv-etad abhyasūyanto nānūtiṣṭhanti me matam  
sarva-jñāna-vimūḍhaṁs tān viddhi naṣṭān acetasaḥ*

However, you should know that those persons who, out of envy, do not follow My instructions are deprived of all knowledge. They have lost sight of the goal of life and are bereft of intelligence.

VERSE 33

सदृशां चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

*sadṛśām ceṣṭate svasyāḥ prakṛter jñānavān api  
prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni nigrahaḥ kim kariṣyati*

Even a wise man acts according to his nature. All living beings act according to their natures, for what can repression achieve?

VERSE 34

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थं रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।  
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥३४॥

*indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāga-dveṣau vyavasthitau  
tayor na vaśam āgacchet tau hy-asya paripanthinau*

The senses are attracted to and repelled by the objects of the senses. But one must not become controlled by such attraction or aversion for they are obstacles.

VERSE 35

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥३५॥

*śreyān svadharmo viguṇah para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhititāt  
sva-dharme nidhanam śreyah para-dharmo bhayāvahah*

It is better to perform one's own prescribed duties imperfectly rather than perform another's duties perfectly. It is better to die while performing one's own duties, for executing the duties of another is fraught with uncertainty.

## Anuvṛtti

The faults of material life are many. Herein, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has mentioned certain faults that a serious student of the *Bhagavad-gītā* should be preeminently aware of. Ignorance, foolishness, selfish motivation, a false sense of proprietorship, as well as attraction and aversion to the sense-objects are mentioned by Kṛṣṇa. But more dangerous than any other fault is envy. Envy, it seems, is purely evil as Kṛṣṇa says that those who do not follow the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gītā* out of enviousness are bereft of all knowledge and intelligence.

Another danger is the tendency of neglecting one's own duty and trying to perform the duty of another. In other words, Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to tend to his own business. Arjuna is a *kṣatriya* and his duty, as already discussed, is to protect and defend the kingdom. Arjuna however, is showing leanings towards renunciation – becoming a monk, a *sannyāsī*. Arjuna wants to abandon his duty and perform that of another, but Kṛṣṇa warns him that this is not a good idea. In fact, Kṛṣṇa says it is even dangerous. Kṛṣṇa explains that it is better to perform one's own duty imperfectly than perform another's duty perfectly.

In particular, Kṛṣṇa is encouraging Arjuna to follow the codes of conduct set down for *kṣatriyas* – of which abandoning the battlefield for a warrior is not an option.

### VERSE 36

अर्जुन उवाच ।

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।  
अनिच्छन्नपि वार्ष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ ३६ ॥

*arjuna uvāca —  
atha kena prayukto'yam pāpam carati pūruṣah  
anicchann api vārṣṇeya balād iva niyojitaḥ*

Arjuna asked: O Kṛṣṇa, descendant of the Vṛṣnis, what is it that makes a man perform impious activities even against his will, as if by force?

VERSE 37  
श्रीभगवानुवाच ।  
काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।  
महाशनो महापापमा विद्धेनमिह वैरिणम् ॥३७॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —  
kāma esa krodha esa rajoguṇa-samudbhavaḥ  
mahā-śano mahā-pāpmā viddhy-enam iba vairiṇam*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: It is lust, which transforms into anger that is manifest from the mode of passion. Know this lust to be totally insatiable and extremely evil. It is the great enemy of this world.

VERSE 38  
धूमेनाव्रियते वहिर्यथादशौ मलेन च ।  
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥३८॥

*dhūmenāvriyate vahnir yathādarśo malena ca  
yatholbenāvṛto garbhas tathā tenedam āvṛtam*

As a fire is covered by smoke, as a mirror is covered by dust, and as the womb covers an embryo, similarly, lust covers the consciousness of the living being.

VERSE 39

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।  
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥

*āvṛtam jñānam etena jñānino nitya-vairinā  
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya duṣpūreṇānalena ca*

O Kaunteya, the discrimination of even a wise man can become covered by this eternal nemesis in the form of lust that is like an all-devouring fire.

VERSE 40

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।  
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्यदेहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

*indriyāṇi mano buddhir asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate  
etair vimohayaty eṣa jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*

It is said that the senses, mind and intelligence are the sitting places of this enemy. Covering one's knowledge, it bewilders the embodied living being.

VERSE 41

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।  
पाप्मानं प्रजहित्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

*tasmāt tvam indriyāny-ādau niyamya bharatarṣabha  
pāpmānaṁ prajabi hy-enam jñāna-vijñāna-nāśanam*

Therefore, O noblest amongst the Bharatas, you must first bring the senses under control and eliminate lust, which is the embodiment of all impiety and the destroyer of knowledge and realisation.

### VERSE 42

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।  
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥४२॥

*indriyāṇi parāṇy-ābur indriyebhyāḥ param manah  
manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ*

It is said by the wise that the senses are superior to the sense-objects, the mind is superior to the senses, and the intelligence is superior to the mind. Superior to the intelligence is the individual unit of consciousness.

### VERSE 43

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्धा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।  
जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥४३॥

*evaṁ buddheḥ param buddhvā sainstabhyātmānam ātmanā  
jahi śatruṁ mahā-bāho kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam*

O mighty armed Arjuna, knowing the individual unit of consciousness to be superior to the intelligence, steady the mind with the pure intellect of the self and conquer this indomitable enemy in the form of lust.

### Anuvṛtti

Herein, it is stated that the mind is superior to the senses and intelligence is superior to the mind, but above the intelligence is the consciousness or *ātmā*. The material body is comprised of the mind, senses and intelligence and they are therefore considered as material elements. In Chapter 7, verse 4 of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa lists the eight material elements as earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and false ego. Then, in the next verse, Kṛṣṇa describes a superior energy known as *jīva-bhūta*, the

units of individual consciousness. Kṛṣṇa says that this *jīva-bhūta*, also known as *ātmā*, is categorically different than the material elements. It is fully spiritual.

But when lust, the all-devouring enemy of self-realisation, covers the mind, senses and intelligence of the superior *jīva-bhūta*, then the knowledge and realisation of the *jīva-bhūta* are destroyed. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa says that first the *yogī* must conquer lust. If one does not pursue the cravings of lust and instead takes control of one's lower self with one's higher self, lust will eventually be vanquished. However, if one tries to satisfy his burning lust then it is like pouring fuel onto a fire.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
कर्मयोगो नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārate-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ  
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśupaniṣatsu  
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
karma-yogo nāma tṛtīyo'dhyāyah*

**OM TAT SAT** – Thus ends Chapter Three entitled *Karma Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.





अथ चतुर्थोऽध्यायः  
ज्ञानयोगः

CHAPTER 4  
JÑĀNA YOGA

*The Yoga of Knowledge*



VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।  
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥१॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —*

*imam vivasvate yogam proktavān aham avyayam  
vivasvān manave prāha manur ikṣvākave'bravīt*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: I disclosed this imperishable knowledge of *yoga* unto Vivasyān, the sun-god. He then taught it to Vaivasvata Manu, who then instructed the same knowledge to Ikṣvāku.

VERSE 2

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।  
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥२॥

*evam paramparā prāptam imam rājarsayo viduḥ  
sa kāleneha mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

In this way, O conqueror of the enemy, the pious rulers understood this path of knowledge through the disciplic succession. However, this knowledge of *yoga* has been lost due to the influence of time.

VERSE 3

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।  
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥३॥

*sa evāyam mayā te'dya yogah proktah purātanah  
bhakto'si me sakha ceti rabasyam by-etad uttamam*

I am again teaching this ancient science of *yoga* to you. Because you are My dear friend and devotee you can understand the transcendental mystery of which I speak.

VERSE 4

अर्जुन उवाच ।

अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।  
कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥४॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*aparam bhavato janma param janma vivasvataḥ  
katham etad vijānīyām tvam ādau proktavān iti*

Arjuna said: You were born only recently and the sun-god appeared long ago. So how am I to understand that in ancient times You had taught him the science of *yoga*?

**Anuvṛtti**

According to the above statement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is a very ancient text. Kṛṣṇa says that previously He had spoken this knowledge of *yoga* to Vivasvān, the predominating deity of the sun planet, and in turn Vivasvān passed on this knowledge to other universal leaders and great kings. This flow of knowledge from one to another is called *paramparā* or disciplic succession. But in time, the knowledge of *yoga* was lost and therefore Kṛṣṇa was again speaking *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna.

The qualifications to properly understand *Bhagavad-gītā* are stated here. One should be a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and one should understand that Kṛṣṇa is *subṛdam-sarva-bhūtānām*, the friend of all living beings. In *bhakti-yoga* one does not fear God because Kṛṣṇa is not a wrathful God. Kṛṣṇa is our dear-most friend and our ever well-wisher. Kṛṣṇa is the

highest subject of love, adoration and affection. Kṛṣṇa also has deep feelings of love for His devotees.

From these verses we can also understand that the knowledge of *yoga* is not simply meant for studio lessons. The knowledge of *yoga* is actually the most important branch of knowledge in the world and as such, it should be studied by every discerning person – from the heads of government to the individual citizen. Everyone should have the opportunity to study and practice *yoga*, by which one easily approaches the perfection of life.

The question naturally arises in Arjuna's mind that how could Kṛṣṇa have spoken *Bhagavad-gītā* to Vivasvān when Vivasvān appeared in the universe millions of years ago and Kṛṣṇa only appeared recently?

#### VERSE 5

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।  
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परंतप ॥५॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca –*

*bahūni me vyatītāni janmāni tava cārjuna  
tāny-ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi na tvarī veththa parantapa*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O conqueror of the enemy, both you and I have passed through many births. I know all of them but you do not.

#### VERSE 6

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।  
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायथा ॥६॥

*ajo'pi sannavyayātmā bhūtānām-īśvaro'pi san  
prakṛtiṁ svām-adhiṣṭhāya sambhavāmy-ātmamāyayā*

Though I am unborn and My form is imperishable, and though I am the Controller of all things, I still remain in control of My material energy and manifest through My own potency.

### VERSE 7

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।  
अयुत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

*yadā yadā bi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata  
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānām srjāmyaham*

O descendant of Bharata, whenever there is a decline in *dharma* and a rise of *adharma*, I personally appear.

### VERSE 8

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।  
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥८॥

*paritṛāṇāya sādhūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām  
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya saṁbhavāmi yuge yuge*

To protect the pious living beings and to put an end to malevolence, I appear in every age to establish *dharma*.

### VERSE 9

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।  
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥९॥

*janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tattvataḥ  
tyaktvā deham punar-janma naiti māmeti so’rjuna*

One who understands My divine appearance and activities never takes birth again after giving up this material body. He comes to Me, O Arjuna.

### Anuvṛtti

To understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa's appearance and activities is indeed to become situated beyond the cycle of birth and death. In material life all living beings are in a perpetual state of transmigration from one birth to the next. Only when one attains pure spiritual consciousness does *samsāra*, or transmigration, cease. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that both of them have passed through many births that Arjuna has forgotten, but Kṛṣṇa remembers them all.

Because the living beings change bodies at the time of death, they also forget their previous lives. Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth and thus He does not change His body or transmigrate to another body at any time. Because He does not undergo a change of body He does not forget. Kṛṣṇa is non-different from His body, whereas living beings in material life are units of consciousness that are embodied by material elements. The bodies of all living beings in the material world are made of the basic elements of earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and false ego. Kṛṣṇa is *sac-cid-ānanda* – eternity, knowledge and bliss. Kṛṣṇa's body is also *sac-cid-ānanda*, thus Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's body are non-different. They are transcendental, spiritual substances.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa not only remembers all His previous births, but He remembers all of Arjuna's previous births also. This is the characteristic of the Absolute Truth who is fully omniscient.

The knowledge of *yoga* being lost naturally results in a decline in *dharma* and a rise of *adharma* (false *dharma*). Malevolence arises out of *adharma*. When this occurs, Kṛṣṇa says that He appears in the world to re-establish the principles of *dharma*. *Dharma* is understood as duties, activities and practices that will sustain the living beings in a state of prosperity and enable them to realise their constitutional position as conscious parts and parcels of the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa. As such, *dharma* should not be confused with the mundane religions of this world.

In verse 8 Kṛṣṇa says that He appears in every age (*yuge yuge*) to establish the *yuga-dharma*. In Satya-yuga, Kṛṣṇa appeared as Hainsa, Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha and Narasimha *avatāras*. In Treta-yuga, He appeared as Vāmana, Paraśurāma and Rāmacandra *avatāras*. In Dvāpara-yuga, He appeared as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and in Kali-yuga, He has appeared as Buddha and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. There is one more *avatāra* yet to appear at the end of Kali-yuga, some 427,000 years from now, and that is Kalki.

When Kṛṣṇa was speaking *Bhagavad-gītā*, it was at the end of Dvāpara-yuga – an age of considerable piety where open degradation such as establishments for the consumption of alcohol, illicit sex, political corruption, drug abuse and the organised slaughter of animals were completely unheard of. Now, five thousand years on, we are in the midst of the age known as Kali-yuga where the unheard of vices in Dvāpara-yuga are the norm of the day.

Similarly, as Kṛṣṇa had appeared at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, He again appeared after the first 4,576 years of Kali-yuga had passed as the *avatāra*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is also known as

the Kali-yuga *avatāra*, or the *yugāvatāra*. As the *yugāvatāra*, Kṛṣṇa taught the *dharma* of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* as not only the most important process of self-realisation, but as the *only* recommended process of self-realisation in Kali-yuga. Conclusively, the *Bṛhan-Nāradīya Purāṇa* (38.126) says:

*harer-nāma harer-nāma harer-nāma eva kevalam  
kalau nāsty-eva nāsty-eva nāsty-eva gatir anyathā*

In the age of Kali there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way except for the chanting of the names of Kṛṣṇa.

When the *mahā-mantra* is chanted congregationally in a loud tone, it is called *kīrtana* or *saṅkīrtana*. When the *mahā-mantra* is chanted softly and the repetition is counted on a string of one hundred-and-eight beads, it is called *japa*.

Since the advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the *saṅkīrtana* movement, many great and learned scholars, philosophers and *yogīs* such as Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī have put aside other systems of *yoga*, *Vedānta* and philosophy in favour of becoming fully absorbed in the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. According to great self-realised personalities, the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* is the surest path to spiritual perfection in this age. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* states as follows:

*kaler doṣa nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇah  
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgah param vrajet*

Although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults where people are short-lived, slow and always disturbed,

still there is one great quality about this age – simply by chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa, one can be delivered from material bondage and attain the supreme destination. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 12.3.51)

*kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum tretāyāṁ yajato makhaiḥ  
dvāpare paricaryāyāṁ kalau taddhari-kīrtanāt*

Whatever results were gained in Satya-yuga by meditating upon Viṣṇu, in Treta-yuga by performing elaborate sacrifices and in Dvāpara-yuga by Deity worship can be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 12.3.52)

The chanting of the *mahā-mantra* advances one in self-realisation because it purifies the heart of material influences and eliminates the false conceptions of life, thus terminating the cycle of birth and death. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has composed a verse wherein the benefits of *sāṅkīrtana*, chanting the *mahā-mantra*, have been described as follows:

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanāṁ bhava mahā-dāvagni nirvāpaṇāṁ  
śreyah -kairava-candrikā-vitaranāṁ vidyā-vadbū-jīvanam  
ānandāmbudhi-vardhanāṁ prati-padaṁ pūrṇāmr̥tāsvādanāṁ  
sarvātmā-snapanāṁ param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa-sāṅkīrtanam*

The holy name of Kṛṣṇa cleanses the mirror of the heart and extinguishes the fire of misery in the forest of birth and death. Just as the evening lotus blooms in the moon's cooling rays, the heart begins to blossom in the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's name. And at last the

*ātmā* awakens to its real inner treasure – a life of love with Kṛṣṇa. Again and again tasting nectar, the *ātmā* dives and surfaces in the ever-increasing ocean of ecstatic joy. All phases of the self of which we may conceive are fully satisfied and purified, and at last conquered by the all-auspicious influence of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. (*Śikṣāṣṭaka I*)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and a complete system of philosophy known as *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* that has encompassed all the great philosophical systems of India that preceded Him, such as Ādi Śaṅkara's *advaita*, Viśṇu Svāmī's *śuddhādvaita*, Nimbārka's *dvaitādvaita*, Rāmānuja's *viśiṣṭādvaita* and Madhva's *dvaita*. The *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva* philosophy is essentially the philosophy of simultaneous oneness and difference in the Absolute Truth, culminating in *prema-bhakti* or divine love. As such, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has revealed the greatest philosophy of spiritual perfection in this world.

To accompany the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* the process of Deity worship that was prominent in Dvāpara-yuga is still in vogue today. The Deity is the *arca-vigraha* representation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa that is manifest before the aspirant so that one can perform *arcana* (worship) and fix the mind and senses on the form of the Supreme Person. When the authorised *arca-vigraha* is present, such worship should not be confused with the worship of lifeless and unauthorised idols. Current in the communities of *bhakti-yoga* are the worship of the *arca-vigrahas* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa such as Jagannātha, Pañca-tattva, Gaura-Nitāi, Gau-ra-Gadādhara, Śrī Narasimha and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

VERSE 10

वीतरागभयकोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।  
बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ १० ॥

*vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhā man-mayā mām-upāśritāḥ  
bahavo jñāna-tapasā pūtā mad-bhāvam āgatāḥ*

Freed from mundane attachment, fear and anger, and absorbed in thinking of Me, many people have taken refuge in Me and become purified by the knowledge of austerity and attained love for Me.

VERSE II

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।  
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थसर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥

*ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs-tathaiva bhajāmy-abam  
mama vartmānuvartante manusyāḥ pārtha sarvaśāḥ*

In whatever way people surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. O Pārtha, all men follow My path.

VERSE 12

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।  
क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ १२ ॥

*kāṅkṣantah karmanām siddhim yajanta iha devatāḥ  
kṣipram hi mānuṣe loke siddhir bhavati karmajā*

In this world, those that desire material success worship the demigods, since in human society success from such activities is quick to manifest.

VERSE 13

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।  
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्धकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

*cāturu-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśah  
tasya kartāram api mām viddhy-akartāram avyayam*

I have created the four social divisions that are determined by the influence of the modes of material nature and their parallel activities. Although I have created this arrangement, know that in reality I am the non-doer and that I am unchangeable.

VERSE 14

न मां कर्माणि लिप्मन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।  
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न सबद्यते ॥ १४ ॥

*na mām karmāṇi limpanti na me karma-phale spr̥hā  
iti mām yo'bhijānāti karmabhir na sa badhyate*

There is no activity that affects Me, neither do I desire the results of material activities. One who understands this is never bound by *karma*.

VERSE 15

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।  
कुरु कर्मेव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥

*evam jñātvā kṛtam karma pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ  
kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvam pūrvaiḥ pūrvataram kṛtam*

Knowing this, in ancient times, those that desired liberation also performed action. Thus, you should also adopt the path of action as they did in the past.

## Anuvṛtti

In verse 10 Śrī Kṛṣṇa alludes to the topmost stage of self-realisation by the use of the word *bhāva*. *Bhāva* is the stage of deep affection just before one reaches the stage of purest love, *prema*. Rūpa Gosvāmī, the foremost disciple of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, explains this in great detail in his book, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (I.4.15-16).

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādbu-saṅgo‘tha bhajana-kriyā  
 tato‘nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruciḥ tataḥ  
 athāsaktis tato bhāvas-tataḥ premābhyañcati,  
 sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramāḥ

The development of transcendental love begins with *śraddhā* or faith. *Śraddhā* leads one to associate with spiritually advanced persons, *sādbu-saṅga*. In the association of *sādbus* one receives *śikṣa*, or instructions on how to approach the Absolute Truth, and gradually one is initiated into this process. This is called *bhajana-kriyā*. When the heart is cleared of contamination, one reaches the stage of being pure-hearted (*anartha-nivṛtti*). By the cultivation of spiritual practices after achieving *anartha-nivṛtti*, one becomes steady (*niṣṭha*), and achieves the state of *ruci*, wherein one begins to taste the pure sweetness of realisation in the Absolute Truth. This *ruci* develops further to become *āsakti*, or great attachment for the Absolute. Great attachment for the Absolute gradually manifests as great feelings of affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is called *bhāva*. And the mature stage of those feelings of affection are known as *prema*, or the sentiments of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa.

It is interesting to note that Kṛṣṇa hints at this ultimate perfection early on in *Bhagavad-gītā*, not too overtly but slightly covertly – for love, after all, is the greatest of all secrets.

In subsequent verses, Kṛṣṇa continues to encourage Arjuna not to adopt the path of inaction. Kṛṣṇa assures Arjuna that He is transcendental to all types of *karma* and that those who take refuge in Him also become liberated from the reactions of material activities.

Kṛṣṇa wants Arjuna to follow the example of previously liberated persons – to follow in their footsteps, *mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*. In ancient times there were many great personalities known as *mahājanas* and they all achieved liberation from birth and death by taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa wants Arjuna to follow these *mahājanas*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is awarding all living beings accordingly as they approach Him. Knowingly or unknowingly everyone is searching for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of pleasure and the primeval cause of everything. In *Brabma-saṁhitā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is described as *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, the cause of all causes. Kṛṣṇa is also known as Govinda, or one who gives pleasure to the senses. But due to being under the illusion of bodily consciousness, the living beings are not aware of what is actually in their best interest, therefore they do not approach Kṛṣṇa directly. Instead, the bewildered living beings worship demigods for the fulfilment of their desires, or as in modern society, they simply work hard to earn money and purchase whatever they want.

In material existence, the living beings are wandering throughout the universe in different species of life, experiencing happiness and distress according to their *karma*.

*brahmāṇḍa bṛramite kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

Out of millions of wandering living beings, one who is most fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a liberated person (guru) by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and the guru, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of *bhakti*. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 19.151)

The world is old – much older than many of us realise and many things have changed over the ages. Yet the basic principles of spiritual advancement and putting an end to the problems of birth, death, old age and disease remain the same. The advancement of modern civilisation has actually done very little to solve the real problems of life. We are given so-called higher education and better standards of living, yet the basic problems remain – birth, death, old age and disease. Now the real solution is at hand and Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants Arjuna to accept it.

To facilitate social harmony, efficiency and advancement in spiritual life, Kṛṣṇa has created the four social orders in society called *varṇas*. According to one's *sukṛti*, or spiritual merits derived from previous lifetimes, one comes to the human form of life with certain innate qualities. This is a natural system of order in the universe and it is perceivable in all civilised societies. These human tendencies are grouped into four basic classifications: the intellectual, martial, mercantile and labourer classes. The Vedic terms for these are *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*. According to Śrī Kṛṣṇa these *varṇas* are determined by one's qualities and actions (*guṇa-karma*) and not simply

by birth. One may be born in the family of workmen but show extraordinary intellectual prowess and so forth. As such, one is to be heartily welcomed into the intellectual community. Similarly, one may be born to a wealthy mercantile family but show great promise as a military leader. Thus one is encouraged to follow that line of work.

When one performs the work prescribed to him according to his qualities, and devotes that work to please the Supreme Person Kṛṣṇa, then such a person achieves the highest perfection. This is confirmed as follows:

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśah  
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya saṁsiddhir hari-toṣṇam*

It is concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging one's occupational duties according to the *varṇa* and *āśrama* orders of life is to please Kṛṣṇa. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* I.2.I3)

Unfortunately, in modern times some persons have given a wrong interpretation to the eligibility of the *varṇas* by placing all emphasis on one's birth in a particular family. This has been invented to create a sense of social superiority wherein elite members of Vedic society who are born as *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* are given special privileges, while others who are born as *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are not. This system has created havoc in India for more than one thousand years and is known as the caste system. The caste system however is a total misrepresentation of the system of *varṇas* created by Kṛṣṇa.

VERSE 16

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।  
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥ १६ ॥

*kim karma kim akarmeti kavayo'pyatra mohitāḥ  
tat te karma pravakṣyāmi yaj-jñātvā mokṣyase'subhāt*

What is action? What is inaction? – this subject bewilders even wise men. Therefore, I shall explain to you what is action, knowing which you will become liberated and attain all auspiciousness.

VERSE 17

कर्मणो ह्यापि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।  
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७ ॥

*karmaṇo by-api boddhavyam boddhavyam ca vikarmaṇah  
akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyam gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*

One should understand what is prescribed action (*karma*), what is forbidden action (*vikarma*) and what is the renunciation of action (*akarma*). The path of action is most difficult to comprehend.

VERSE 18

कर्मण्य कर्मयः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।  
सबुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु सयुक्तः कृत्स्कर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

*karmaṇy-akarma yaḥ paśyed akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ  
sa buddhimān manusyeṣu sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*

One who can see inaction in action and action within inaction is certainly wise amongst men. Indeed, he is a *yogī* and a performer of all actions.

VERSE 19

यस्य सर्वे समारस्मा: कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।  
ज्ञानाभिदग्धकर्मणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥ १९ ॥

*yasya sarve samārambhāḥ kāma-saṅkalpa-varjitāḥ  
jñānāgnī-dagdha-karmāṇam tam ābhūḥ paṇḍitām budhāḥ*

One whose every action is free from selfish desires and who burns all his actions in the fire of knowledge is described by the learned as a wise man.

VERSE 20

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।  
कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किंचित्करोति सः ॥ २० ॥

*tyaktvā karma-phalasaṅgam nitya-trpto nirāśrayaḥ  
karmaṇy-abhipravṛtto’pi naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ*

A person who has rejected the desire to enjoy the results of his actions, who does not depend upon others and who is always content, even while engaged in action, does nothing at all.

VERSE 21

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।  
शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ २१ ॥

*nirāśīr yata cittātmā tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ  
śārīram kevalam karma kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

Having no desires, controlling the mind and body, having no sense of possessiveness, such a person does not incur any wrongdoing although they may perform actions in order to maintain the body.

### VERSE 22

यद्यच्छालाभसंतुष्टो द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।  
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥२२॥

*yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭo dvandvātīto vimatsarah  
samah siddhāv-asiddhau ca kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate*

One who is content with those things that come of their own accord, who is beyond duality, devoid of enviousness, and equal in success and failure – such a person is not bound by *karma*, although he may perform actions.

### VERSE 23

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।  
यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥२३॥

*gata-saṅgasya muktasya jñānāvasthita-cetasah  
yajñāyācharataḥ karma samagram pravilīyate*

All *karma* is completely dissolved for one who is detached, liberated, situated in knowledge and performs action only in sacrifice.

### Anuvṛtti

We have already discussed previously the different types of action such as *karma* (prescribed duties), *vikarma* (forbidden actions) and *akarma* (spiritual activities). Nonetheless it is sometimes difficult to understand the different types of action, and especially to see inaction in action and action within inaction. Indeed, this seems quite contradictory. In contemporary society, especially in various *yoga* communities, *karma* is often spoken of without a clear understanding of what it actually is or how it is incurred.

The point Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants to make clear is that actions performed for His satisfaction do not have any reaction in the sphere of *karma* or *vikarma*. Actions performed for Kṛṣṇa are in the category of *akarma*, producing only spiritual benefit – no good or bad material effect. Good and bad *karma* are both material and as such they must be shaken off before one can become spiritually liberated.

Generally we want good *karma*, but good *karma* means we will have to take birth again and enjoy its good effects. Bad *karma*, of course, is commonly understood as something undesirable or to be avoided because it causes suffering, pain and distress. This is certainly true, but bad *karma* is simply the flip side of good *karma* and vice versa. This is called the *karmic* entanglement of material life – sometimes enjoying and sometimes suffering.

*Akarma* leads to liberation from all material entanglement and takes one to the plane of eternal blissful life in full knowledge of everything. While engaging in *yoga*, a serious student should, as far as possible, lead a simple life beyond duality by minimizing material hankerings, controlling the mind and body and giving up possessiveness. Being content with that which comes of its own accord, one should remain steadfast in the practice of *yoga*.

#### VERSE 24

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्महविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।  
ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥२४॥

*brahmārpaṇam brahma havir brabmāgnau brahmaṇā butam  
brahmaiva tena gantavyaiḥ brahma-karma-samādbinā*

The utensils used for sacrifice are the Absolute, the sacred fire is the Absolute and the offering made is the Absolute. One whose consciousness is always absorbed in thoughts of the Absolute attains the Absolute.

VERSE 25

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।  
ब्रह्माभावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञैनैवोपजुह्वति ॥२५॥

*daivam evāpare yajñam yoginah paryupāsate  
brahmāgnāv-apare yajñam yajñenaivopajuhvati*

Some *yogīs* perform sacrifices to the demigods. Others offer themselves into the fire of the Absolute.

VERSE 26

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति।  
शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषुजुह्वति ॥२६॥

*śrotrādīnīndriyāṇy-anye samyamāgniṣu jubvati  
śabdādīn viṣayān anya indriyāgniṣu jubvati*

Some offer the senses of hearing, seeing, touching, smelling and tasting into the fire of self-control. Others offer the sense-objects – sound, form, taste, touch and smell – into the fire of the senses.

VERSE 27

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्मणि प्राणकर्मणि चापरे ।  
आत्मसंयमयोगात्मौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥२७॥

*sarvāṇīndriya-karmāṇi prāṇa-karmāṇi cāpare  
ātma-samiyama-yogaṅnau juhvati jñāna-dīpite*

Some offer all the functions of the senses and the functions of the life-airs into the fire of self-purification, which is ignited by knowledge.

VERSE 28

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।  
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितब्रताः ॥२८॥

*dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā yoga-yajñās tathāpare  
svādhyāya jñāna-yajñāś ca yatayāḥ saṁśita-vratāḥ*

Some *yogīs* sacrifice their possessions through penances or through the practice of *yoga*. Some undertake severe vows and strictly sacrifice through knowledge by studying the *Vedas*.

VERSE 29

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।  
प्राणापानगती रुद्धा प्राणायामपरायणाः  
अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्नाणेषु जुह्वति ॥२९॥

*apāne jubvati prāṇam prāṇe'pānam tathāpare  
prāṇāpāna-gatī ruddhvā prāṇāyāma-parāyanāḥ  
apare niyatāhārāḥ prāṇān prāṇeṣu jubvati*

Others practice control of the life-airs by offering the in-going breath into the out-going breath and out-going breath into the in-going breath, and thus restrain both. Others offer their life-airs by controlling the intake of food.

VERSE 30-31

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ।  
यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥३०॥  
नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम् ॥३१॥

*sarve'py-ete yajña-vido yajña-kṣapita-kalmaśāḥ  
 yajña-śiṣṭāmrta-bhujo yānti brahma sanātanam  
 nāyam loko'sty-ayajñasya kuto'nyah kuru-sattama*

All of them are conversant with the principles of sacrifice. They have purged themselves of impiety by their performance of sacrifice. They are satisfied with the remnants of sacrifice and thus they attain the eternal Absolute Truth. O best of the Kuru Dynasty, for one that never performs sacrifice, even the pleasures of this world are denied – then what to say of the next life?

#### VERSE 32

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।  
 कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानेवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥३२॥

*evam babu-vidbhā yajñā vitatā brahmaṇo mukhe  
 karma-jān-viddhi tān sarvān evam jñātvā vimokṣyase*

In this way, many varieties of sacrifices have been explained in the *Vedas*. You should understand that all of them are born of action. Knowing this, you shall be liberated.

#### Anuvṛtti

The above verses principally deal with sacrifice and sacrifices of different types. However, it should be mentioned at the outset that Śrī Krṣṇa does not recommend animal sacrifices. The very word ‘sacrifice’ conjures up images of bloodshed – and rightfully so. In the history of religions throughout the world, from antiquity to modernity, the sacrifice of both animals and humans has been a common practice. Most progressive thinkers however now view

human and animal sacrifice as totally repugnant and certainly Śrī Kṛṣṇa would be in complete agreement.

The sacrifices mentioned here by Kṛṣṇa mainly concern the performance of austerities, breath control, study of the *Vedas*, purification of knowledge, renunciation, observing vows etc. The purpose of all such sacrifices is to advance in realisation of the Absolute Truth.

It is often said that, “God is one” or that, “It is all one”. This is true, but there is a need to qualify such statements. God is the Absolute Truth, one without a second, but this does not mean that all living beings are God. The *Bhagavad-gītā* is straightforward on the point that all living beings are eternally individual and never become God at any time. Similarly, God is always the Absolute Truth and nothing less.

It is said in verse 24 that the utensils of sacrifice are Absolute, the sacred fire is Absolute, the priest or performer of sacrifice is Absolute and one who is always absorbed in thoughts of the Absolute attains the Absolute. This is not to say that the individuality of any of these is lost in the Absolute. Everything that comes in contact with the Absolute Truth acquires the qualities of the Absolute by association, but the individuality of each is maintained.

The point is also made that practically everything in life depends on sacrifice, even worldly pleasures. Without sacrifice one cannot enjoy in this life or in the next. The knowledge of performing sacrifice is essential for the students of *yoga*. Knowing this one becomes liberated.

VERSE 33

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्वाज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।  
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थं ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

*śreyān dravyamayād yajñāj jñāna-yajñah parantapa  
sarvam karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate*

O conqueror of the enemy, the sacrifice involving knowledge is higher than the sacrifice of material ingredients. All actions culminate in knowledge, O Pārtha.

VERSE 34

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।  
उपदेक्षन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४ ॥

*tad viddhi pranipātēna paripraśnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

Just try to understand this knowledge by approaching a self-realised person who has seen the truth. Make submissive inquiry and render service unto him. The *tattva-darśī*, the seer of the truth, will instruct you and give you initiation into this sacred path.

VERSE 35

यज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।  
येन भूतान्यशेषाणि द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ ३५ ॥

*yaj-jñātvā na punar moham evam yāsyasi pāṇḍava  
yena bhūtāny-aśeṣāṇi drakṣyasya-ātmany-atho mayi*

O son of Pāṇḍu, understanding this knowledge you will never be subject to illusion again. Through this knowledge you will see the spiritual nature of all living beings and that they are all situated within Me.

VERSE 36

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः।  
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥ ३६ ॥

*api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpa-kṛttamah  
sarvam jñāna-plavenaiva vṛjinam santariṣyasi*

Even if you are most impious, you can cross over the ocean of all vices by boarding the boat of wisdom.

VERSE 37

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।  
ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥ ३७ ॥

*yathaidhāṁsi samiddho'gnir bhasmasāt kurute'rjuna  
jñānāgnih sarva-karmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute tathā*

As a blazing fire turns wood into ashes, similarly the fire of wisdom renders all *karma* to cinders, O Arjuna.

VERSE 38

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।  
तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥ ३८ ॥

*na hi jñānena sadṛśam pavitram iba vidyate  
tat svayam yoga-saṁsiddhaḥ kālenātmani vindati*

There is nothing as pure as knowledge in this world. In due course, one who is perfect in *yoga* realises this.

Anuvṛtti

As per the understanding of advanced students and masters of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's instruction in verse 34 is that one should try to understand the truth by approaching a *tattva-darśī*, one who has seen the truth, with an attitude

of submissive inquiry (*paripraśna*) and service (*sevā*). Being satisfied by such submissive inquiry and service, the *tattva-darśī* will instruct and initiate the disciple in the sacred science of *yoga*. In other words, Kṛṣṇa is telling Arjuna that to know the truth he must approach a spiritual master (guru) and become his disciple.

*guru-pādāśrayas-tasmāt kṛṣṇa-dikṣādi-śikṣāṇam  
viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā sādbhu-vartmānu-vartanam*

Firstly one must surrender at the feet of the guru, receive training from him by accepting spiritual initiation and instructions regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa, serve the guru with affection and follow in the footsteps of the *sādbhus*. (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* I.2.74)

As the representative of Kṛṣṇa, the instruction of the guru, or *ācārya*, should be heeded. The genuine guru is a representative of Kṛṣṇa (Paramātmā) and is of two types – *dikṣā* and *śikṣā*. The *dikṣā-guru* gives initiation and accepts the student or disciple as a member of the *paramparā*. Such initiations are not secret and are held in plain view of the public, but at the initiation ceremony the disciple receives the *mahā-mantra* and *gāyatrī-mantras* for meditation. The *śikṣā-guru* is one who imparts practical instructions to the disciple for the progressive advancement in self-realisation. The function of *dikṣā* and *śikṣā* may be performed by the same guru, or by different gurus, but in any case both the *dikṣā* and *śikṣā* gurus must be representatives of Kṛṣṇa. Thus, one should see the guru as non-different from Kṛṣṇa and should offer him all respect. Kṛṣṇa confirms this in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as follows:

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit  
na martya-buddhyāśūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

One should consider the *ācārya* (guru) as non-different from Myself and never show any disrespect towards him. One should not envy him, nor consider him to be an ordinary person as he is the representative of all the demigods. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27)

This is the guru-disciple relationship that has been accepted since time immemorial. However, the question arises as to who is a guru? What are the qualifications of a guru? It is clear that the disciple's mood should be one of eagerness to know the truth accompanied by submissive inquiry and service. But what of the guru – what are his qualifications?

The *Bhagavad-gītā* says that the guru must be one who has seen the truth (a *tattva-darśī*) and who knows the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This presupposes that the guru is himself a disciple of the previous guru. This is known as the *guru-paramparā* or the guru-disciple succession. *Bhagavad-gītā* sets the standards to acquire entrance into knowledge of the Absolute Truth and what that Truth is. Kṛṣṇa is the principle speaker of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and therefore the guru must necessarily be in the *paramparā* of Kṛṣṇa.

The first qualification of the guru is that he must be in an authentic *paramparā* and he must teach his disciple the principles and conclusions of *Bhagavad-gītā*. There are four *paramparās* and one should learn the philosophy of

*Bhagavad-gītā* from one of those *paramparās*. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has mentioned these four *paramparās* in his book *Prameya-ratnāvalī*:

*sampradāya vibinā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ  
 atāḥ kalau bhaviṣyanti catvāraḥ sampradāyināḥ  
 śrī brahma rudra sanakāḥ vaiṣṇavāḥ kṣiti-pāvanāḥ  
 catvāras te kalau bhāvyāḥ hy-utkale puruṣottamāt  
 rāmānujaṁ śrīḥ svīcakre madhvācāryaṁ catur-mukhaḥ  
 śrī viṣṇu-svāminam rudro nimbādityaṁ catuhṣanāḥ*

That *mantra* that is not received in a disciplic succession does not produce any result. Thus, in Kali-yuga there are four *sampradāyas* (*paramparās*). They are the Śrī, Brahmā, Rudra and Sanaka *sampradāyas*. Rāmānuja is the *ācārya* of the Śrī *sampradāya*, Madhva is the *ācārya* of the Brahmā *sampradāya*, Viṣṇu Svāmī is the *ācārya* of the Rudra *sampradāya* and Nimbāditya is the *ācārya* of the Sanaka *sampradāya*. (*Prameya-ratnāvalī* I.5-7)

The *Vedas* conclude that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth and all living beings are His parts and parcels. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* states:

*nityo’nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānāṁ  
 eko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān*

He is the Prime Eternal amongst all eternals. He is the Supreme Conscious Being amongst conscious beings, and He alone is maintaining all life. (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13)

However, despite this, unscrupulous persons still attempt to make a trade with Kṛṣṇa's words in *Bhagavad-gītā* and instead of declaring Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Conscious Being, they put themselves forward as being Kṛṣṇa or God incarnate. Such so-called gurus are actually not gurus, but cheaters. This is explained by Śiva in *Padma Purāṇa*:

*guravo bahavaḥ santi śisya-vittāpa hārakāḥ  
durlabhaḥ sad-gurur devī śisya-santāpa hārakaḥ*

There are many gurus who will take the wealth of their disciples, but it is rare to find a true guru who will remove the ignorance and miseries of a disciple.

The cheaters make a big show of spiritual advancement but in reality they are spiritually bankrupt. Only a genuine representative of Kṛṣṇa can be guru or a teacher of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This is the conclusion of all *tattva-darśīs*.

#### VERSE 39

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।  
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमन्तिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

*śraddhāvāl labhate jñānam tat-parah samyatendriyah  
jñānam labdhvā parām sāntim acireñādbigacchati*

Those imbued with faith and who are devoted to controlling their senses attain this knowledge very swiftly. Thus they attain supreme peace.

VERSE 40

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।  
नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥४०॥

*ajñāś cāśraddadhbānaś ca saṁśayātma vinaśyati  
nāyam loko'sti na paro na sukham samśayātmanah*

Those who are deluded, without faith and full of doubt are ruined. Such faithless people find no happiness in this world or the next.

VERSE 41

योगसंन्यस्तकर्मणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।  
आत्मवन्तं न कर्मणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ॥४१॥

*yoga-sannyasta-karmāṇām jñāna-sañchinna-saṁśayam  
ātma-vantaṁ na karmāṇī nibadbhnanti dhanañjaya*

O Dhanañjaya, *karma* cannot bind one who has renounced action through the process of *yoga*. His doubts are overcome by knowledge and he has thus realised the nature of the self.

VERSE 42

तस्मादज्ञानसंभूतं हृतस्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।  
छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिषेक्तिष्ठ भारत ॥४२॥

*tasmād ajñāna sambhūtaṁ hṛt-sthaṁ jñānāsinātmanah  
chittvainām saṁśayām yogam ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha bhārata*

Therefore, O Bhārata, with the sword of knowledge slash these doubts of yours that have arisen out of ignorance within your heart. Taking shelter of the process of *yoga*, stand and fight!

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
 ज्ञानयोगो नाम चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ  
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu  
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-samivāde  
 jñāna-yogo nāma caturtho'dhyāyah*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Four entitled *Jñāna Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.





अथ पञ्चमोऽध्यायः  
कर्मसंन्यासयोगः

CHAPTER 5  
KARMA-SANNYĀSA YOGA

*The Yoga of the Renunciation of Action*



VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।  
यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥१॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*sannyāsaṁ karmaṇām kṛṣṇa punar yogam ca śāṁsasi  
yacchreya etayor ekam tan me brūhi suniśchitam*

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, You talk of the renunciation of action (*sannyāsa*) but then again, You also speak of *karma-yoga* (the way of selfless action). Please tell me clearly, which of the two is best?

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।  
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥२॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —*

*sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca niḥśreyasa karāv-ubhau  
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt karma-yogo viśisyate*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: Both renunciation of action (*sannyāsa*) and the performance of selfless action (*karma-yoga*) give the highest benefit. Yet, of the two, the path of selfless action is higher than the renunciation of action.

VERSE 3

ज्ञेयः सनित्यसंन्यासी यो नद्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।  
निर्द्वंद्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥

*jñeyah sa nitya-sannyāsī yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati  
nirdvandvo hi mahā-bāho sukham bandhāt pramucyate*

O mighty-armed one, you should understand that one who is free of hatred and material desires is a true renunciate (*sannyāsi*). He is beyond duality and is easily liberated from material bondage.

#### VERSE 4

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बाला: प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।

एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यगुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥४॥

*sāṅkhyya-yogau pṛthag bālāḥ pravadanti na paṇḍitāḥ  
ekam apy-āsthitaḥ samyag ubhayor vindate phalam*

Those who are immature and devoid of knowledge state that the path of renunciation and the path of *karma-yoga* are different. However, one who follows either of these paths perfectly achieves the results of both.

#### VERSE 5

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥५॥

*yat sāṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam tad yogair api gamyate  
ekam sāṅkhyam ca yogam ca yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

That state which is achieved by renunciation is also attained by *karma-yoga*. One who sees these two systems as one and the same actually sees things as they are.

#### Anuvṛtti

The Vedic system recommends four spiritual orders of life called *āśrāmas*. These are *brāhmaṇa*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. *Brāhmaṇas* are the celibate students. *Grhasthas* are the family units, *vānaprasthas* are the retired members of society and *sannyāsīs* are the completely

renounced persons who live a life of sacrifice, austerity and cultivation of knowledge. *Sannyāsīs* are considered to be at the crest of all social and spiritual orders of life.

Vedic scholars sometimes debate whether *sannyāsa-yoga* (complete renunciation of activities) or *karma-yoga* (actions performed selflessly) is better. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* that both *sannyāsa-yoga* and *karma-yoga* are favourable for liberation. Both paths ultimately lead to the same goal, but of the two, the path of *karma-yoga* is preferable. This subject is controversial among some scholars because, according to their understanding, *karma-yoga* is the performance of philanthropic works that are beneficial to the downtrodden section of society such as the poor and the hungry. Such welfare work is indeed noble, but one should understand that when Kṛṣṇa speaks of *karma-yoga* in the *Gītā*, He is specifically speaking about activities that are performed for His satisfaction and pleasure. Such activities are also known as *karma-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga* because the result of action is offered to Kṛṣṇa. In other words, noble philanthropic activities are ‘good *karma*’ but not *karma-yoga*, unless they are offered to Kṛṣṇa and performed on His behalf.

When *karma-yoga* is established as *bhakti-yoga* then its superior advantage over *sannyāsa-yoga* is immediately understood. *Sannyāsa-yoga* is very, very difficult to execute. One has to strictly control the senses and renounce even the simplest comforts of life such as a warm bath, comfortable sleeping place etc. One has to live in the forest, fast regularly and observe other austerities such as sexual abstinence. For most people, this is very difficult, if not impossible.

*Karma-yoga (bhakti-yoga)* on the other hand, is easily adoptable by anyone at any stage and leads quickly to the ultimate goal of life. In *karma-yoga* one performs devotional activities and follows basic principles of purity such as no intoxication, no illicit sex, no gambling and no eating of meat, fish or eggs. These principles can be easily adopted by anyone. Similarly, the devotional activity of chanting the *mahā-mantra* (*bare kṛṣṇa bare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bare bare, bare rāma bare rāma rāma rāma bare bare*) is also easily taken up along with meditation on the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Mantra* meditation is the recommended process of worshipping Kṛṣṇa in Kali-yuga. Therefore *karma-yoga* is given first preference in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

However, when *sannyāsa-yoga* is dovetailed with *karma-yoga* and the *sannyāsī* performs any and all sacrifices, austerities and shares the knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* with others, according to the desires of Kṛṣṇa, then such a *sannyāsī* becomes most perfect and is naturally accepted as the guru or teacher of both paths.

#### VERSE 6

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमासुमयोगतः ।  
योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥६॥

*sannyāsas tu mahā-bāho duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ  
yoga-yukto munir brahma na cireñādhigacchati*

O mighty-armed one, without *karma-yoga*, renunciation is a cause for misery. However, that wise man that performs *karma-yoga* quickly attains the Absolute Truth.

VERSE 7

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।  
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि नलिप्यते ॥७॥

*yoga-yukto viśuddhātmā vijitātmā jitendriyah  
sarva-bhūtātmabbhūtātmā kurvann-api na lipyate*

One who is pure engages in *karma-yoga* and controls the mind and senses. Although he engages in action, he is never contaminated and he is filled with love for all living beings.

VERSE 8-9

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।  
पश्यजश्चणवन्पृशं जिग्रन्नश्चनाच्छन्त्वपन्धसन् ॥८॥  
प्रलपन्विसृजन्नृहन्त्रुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥९॥

*naiva kiñcit karomīti  
yukto manyeta tattva-vit  
paśyañ śṛṇvan sprāñ jighrann  
aśnan gacchan svapan śvasan  
pralapan visṛjan grbhann  
unmiṣan nimiṣann api  
indriyāñindriyārtheṣu  
vartanta iti dhārayan*

One who is a knower of the truth, although he is engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing, talking, evacuating, accepting objects and blinking the eyes, realises that all his sense-functions are interacting with the respective sense-objects. Therefore, he thinks, "I am not doing anything."

VERSE 10

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।  
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाभसा ॥ १० ॥

*brahmaṇy-ādhāya karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā karoti yaḥ  
lipyate na sa pāpena padma-patram ivāmbhasā*

One who gives up all attachments and acts by offering all his actions unto the Supreme is never contaminated by any impiety, just as a lotus leaf is never touched by water.

VERSE 11

कायेन मनसा बुद्धा केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।  
योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ ११ ॥

*kāyena manasā buddhyā kevalair indriyair api  
yoginah karma kurvanti saṅgam tyaktvātma śuddhaye*

By giving up all attachments, the *karma-yogi* performs actions through the medium of the body, mind, intelligence and senses simply for the purpose of self-purification.

VERSE 12

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।  
अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२ ॥

*yuktah karma-phalam tyaktvā śāntim āpnoti naiṣṭhikīm  
ayuktah kāma-kāreṇa phale sakto nibadhyate*

The *karma-yogi*, giving up the results of his actions, attains everlasting peace. However, the selfish worker being attached, desires the results of his actions and therefore becomes ensnared.

VERSE 13

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।  
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ १३ ॥

*sarva-karmāṇi manasā sannyasyāste sukhāṁ vaśī  
nava-dvāre pure dehī naiva kurvan na kārayan*

By mentally renouncing all actions, a sense-controlled living being can happily reside within the material body, neither acting nor causing others to act.

VERSE 14

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।  
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ १४ ॥

*na kartṛtvam na karmāṇi lokasya srjati prabhuh  
na karma-phala-saṁyogam svabbāvas tu pravartate*

The Absolute Truth does not create anyone's sense of proprietorship, one's actions or the result of those actions. All this is enacted by the modes of material nature.

VERSE 15

नादत्ते कस्य चित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।  
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुद्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ १५ ॥

*nādatte kasyacit pāparām na caiva sukṛtam vibhuḥ  
ajñānenāvṛtaṁ jñānam tena muḍyanti jantavah*

The Super Consciousness does not accept anyone's pious deeds or their impious deeds. Living beings are bewildered because their knowledge is covered by ignorance.

VERSE 16

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।  
तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६ ॥

*jñānena tu tad ajñānam yeṣām nāśitam ātmanah  
teṣām ādityavaj jñānam prakāśayati tat param*

Yet for those whose ignorance has been destroyed by knowledge of the self, their knowledge, like the rising sun, reveals the Supreme Truth.

VERSE 17

तद्बुद्ध्यस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणः ।  
गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृतिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्पषाः ॥ १७ ॥

*tad buddhayas tad-ātmānas tan-niṣṭhās tat-parāyaṇāḥ  
gacchantly-apunar-āvṛttiṁ jñāna-nirdhūta-kalmaṣāḥ*

Those whose ignorance has been removed by knowledge, whose intelligence is absorbed in the Supreme, who contemplate the Supreme, who are fixed in Him alone and who sing His glories, never take birth again.

VERSE 18

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।  
शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८ ॥

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini  
śuni caiva śvapāke ca paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśināḥ*

A wise man sees a learned and humble *brāhmaṇa*, a cow, an elephant, a dog, a lowborn person and all other living beings as equal.

VERSE 19

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।  
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्मतस्मा द्विद्वयिते स्थिताः ॥ १९ ॥

*ihaiva tair jitab sargo yeṣām sāmye sthitam manah  
nirdoṣam hi samam brahma tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitab*

The cycle of birth and death has been conquered by those whose minds are fixed in meditating on the Absolute Truth, even while living in this world. Being faultless and possessing divine equanimity, they are situated in the Supreme.

VERSE 20

न प्रहृष्टेत्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्याप्य चाप्रियम् ।  
स्थिरबुद्धिरसम्मूढो ब्रह्मविद्वद्वयिणि स्थितः ॥ २० ॥

*na prahr̥syet priyam prāpya nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam  
sthira-buddhir asammūḍho brahma-vid brahmaṇi sthitab*

Being situated in the Absolute Truth, having fixed intelligence and being devoid of ignorance, one who knows the Supreme never rejoices when he attains pleasant things, nor laments upon obtaining unpleasant things.

Anuvṛtti

In verse 15 the word *vibhu* has been translated as Supreme Spirit. *Vibhu* literally means ‘omnipresent’ and this refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Conscious Being. When consciousness is omnipresent the conclusion is that it is omniscient also. Omniscience and omnipresence denote Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna however, and other living beings of his status, are called *anu* or finite. Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, is infinite and the living beings are finite.

It is sometimes thought that God, somehow or other, dies for the sins of the world. This is not a very intelligent idea, nor is it consistent with the spiritual science found in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa says that He does not cause anyone to perform pious or impious activities nor does he accept the reaction of anyone's actions. The idea that God dies for our sins is rejected. God is eternal; therefore He cannot and does not die. The living beings are also eternal, but because they are under the bodily concept of life, when the body dies they also experience death – although they actually do not die. Both the Absolute Truth and His parts and parcels are eternal, beyond death.

In verse 18 the relative vision of equality is expressed for one who is situated in transcendental knowledge. The wise man (*pandita*) sees all living beings equally, as units of eternal consciousness. The distinction between various bodies is only an apparent difference between living beings. According to the *Bṛhad-Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, there are 8,400,000 different species of material bodies:

*jalajā nava-lakṣāṇi sthāvarā lakṣa-vimśatib  
kṛmayo rudra-saṅkhyakāḥ pakṣinām daśa-lakṣakam  
triṁśal-lakṣāṇi paśavaś-catur-lakṣāṇi mānuṣāḥ*

There are 900,000 aquatic species and 2,000,000 non-moving species such as trees and plants. There are 1,100,000 species of insects and reptiles and 1,000,000 species of birds. There are 3,000,000 varieties of quadrupeds and 400,000 species of human beings.

The unit of individual consciousness, the *ātmā*, transmigrates through these various species from one to the other

until it eventually reaches the human form of life. This process is known as transmigration, or reincarnation. It is similar to the theory of evolution, but distinctly different at the same time. In the Vedic concept the species of life are not evolving one into the other (though change within species is accepted), rather it is the *ātmā* that is evolving in consciousness while transmigrating from one species to the next. In the human form of life, consciousness reaches its completeness through the process of *yoga*.

Therefore, a wise man does not discriminate between one person and another based on bodily differences. The wise see the *ātmā* present in all forms of life and not just in human life.

#### VERSE 21

बाह्यस्पर्शसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।  
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्चुते ॥२१॥

*bāhya-sparśev-asaktātmā vindaty-ātmani yat sukham  
sa brahma-yoga-yuktātmā sukham akṣayam aśnute*

One whose mind is detached from external pleasures experiences the happiness found in the self. Connecting himself with the Absolute, he attains unlimited bliss.

#### VERSE 22

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।  
आद्यन्तवन्तःकौन्तेय नतेषु रमते बुधः ॥२२॥

*ye hi samsparśajā bhogā duḥkha-yonaya eva te  
ādy-antavantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhaḥ*

Those pleasures that are born in connection with the sense-objects give rise to misery. They have a beginning and an end. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, a wise man finds no satisfaction in the senses and sense-objects.

### VERSE 23

शक्तोतीहैव यः सोदुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।  
कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखीनरः ॥२३॥

*śaknotihaiva yaḥ sodbum prāk śarīra-vimokṣaṇāt  
kāma-krodhodbhavam vegam sa yuktah sa sukhi narah*

Before giving up this present body, if one is able to control the senses and the impulses that arise from lust and anger, one becomes self-satisfied. Such a person is a true *yogī*.

### VERSE 24

योऽन्तः सुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।  
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥२४॥

*yo'ntah-sukho'ntarārāmas tathāntar jyotireva yaḥ  
sa yogī brahma-nirvāṇam brahma-bhūto'dhigacchati*

One who finds happiness and bliss within and who is enlightened within is a perfect *yogī*. He attains the transcendental platform and achieves liberation.

### VERSE 25

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।  
छिन्नद्वैधायतात्मानः सर्वभूतहितेरताः ॥२५॥

*labhante brahma-nirvāṇam ṛṣayah kṣīṇa-kalmaṣāḥ  
chinna-dvaidhā yatātmānāḥ sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ*

*Yogīs* who are free from vice, self-controlled, whose doubts have been removed and who are engaged in welfare work for all living beings, attain liberation in the Supreme.

VERSE 26

कामकोधिमुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।  
अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥२६॥

*kāma-krodha-vimuktānām yatīnām yata-cetasām  
abhitō brahma-nirvāṇam vartate vidiṭatmanām*

Those *sannyāsīs* who constantly endeavour for perfection, who have controlled their minds, who are self-realised and who are free from lust and anger, soon achieve liberation in the Supreme.

VERSE 27-28

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्कृश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।  
प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥  
यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिमोक्षपरायणः ।  
विगतेच्छाभयकोघो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥२८॥

*sparsān kṛtvā babir bābyāṁś cakṣus caivāntare bhruvoh  
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyanṭara-cāriṇau  
yatendriya-mano-buddhir munir mokṣa-parāyaṇah  
vigatechā-bhaya-kroḍho yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ*

The *yogī* who shuts out the external sense-objects and fixes his concentration between the eyebrows, stabilising the inward and outward breaths that flow through the nostrils and thus controls the senses, the mind and intelligence, is dedicated to the attainment of liberation. He is never bound by desires stemming from lust, fear and anger and is certainly always liberated.

VERSE 29

भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।  
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥ २९ ॥

*bhoktāram yajña-tapasām sarva-loka-maheśvaram  
suḥṛdam sarva-bhūtānām jñātvā mām śāntim ṛcchati*

One attains peace by knowing Me to be the original enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Controller of all the planets, and the benefactor and friend of all living beings.

**Anuvṛtti**

In the last verse of this chapter Śrī Kṛṣṇa declares that He is *bhoktāram yajña-tapasām*, the ultimate enjoyer and receiver of all sacrifice and austerities. Kṛṣṇa then says that He is *sarva-loka-maheśvaram*, the Controller of all planets.

Some modern systems of *yoga* recommend that one meditate by thinking of oneself to be controlling and moving the planets. This is completely absurd. When one is unable to control the affairs of the world that surrounds him, how then is he able to control the movements of the planets? This is not actually meditation – it is self-deception.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa concludes by saying that He is *suḥṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*, the true friend of all living beings. By far, the Kṛṣṇa conception of the Absolute Truth is the broadest, most complete, in-depth and convincing idea of God known to human society. There are many conceptions of the ultimate source of life being the all-powerful creator and controller of the universe, but the Kṛṣṇa conception is the only concept of ultimate reality that embraces a love affair with God as a dear-most friend. This is exclusive

to the Kṛṣṇa conception, therefore it is considered as the topmost theology, or topmost *yoga* system.

Kṛṣṇa says, *jñātvā mām sāntim ṛcchati* — knowing this, one attains peace. If ever there were something that was elusive in this world then certainly it is peace. Peace is talked about everywhere but it is rare, if not impossible to find. *Bhagavad-gītā* gives us a key to peace. Peace is not found in becoming rich and famous, in being saved or even liberated from birth and death — real peace comes from knowing that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is our dear-most friend. This is the message of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
कर्मसंन्यासयोगो नाम पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ  
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu  
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
karma-sannyāsa-yogo nāma pañcamo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT — Thus ends Chapter Five entitled *Karma-Sannyāsa Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.





अथ षष्ठोऽध्यायः

ध्यानयोगः

CHAPTER 6  
DHYĀNA YOGA

*The Yoga of Meditation*



VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यकर्मकरोतियः ।  
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥१॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —  
anāśritah karma-phalaṁ kāryan karma karoti yaḥ  
sa sannyāśī ca yogī ca na niragnir na cākriyah*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: One who performs his prescribed duties and renounces the results of those actions is a *yogī* and a *sannyāśī*. One does not become a *sannyāśī* simply by rejecting the performance of sacrifice and performing no activities.

VERSE 2

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।  
न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥२॥

*yaṁ sannyāsam iti prāhur yogam tam viddhi pāñdava  
na hy-asannyasta-saṅkalpo yogī bhavati kaścana*

O son of Pāṇḍu, that which is known as *sannyāsa* is the same as *yoga*. One can never become a *yogī* without renouncing the desire to satisfy the senses.

VERSE 3

आरुरुक्षोमुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।  
योगारुद्धस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥३॥

*ārurukṣor muner yogam karma kāraṇam ucyate  
yogaṛūḍhasya tasyaiva śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate*

For one who is a beginner on the path of *yoga*, action is the means. For one who is already practiced in *yoga*, the renunciation of action is the means.

VERSE 4

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुष्जते ।  
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥४॥

*yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu na karmasv-anuṣajjate  
sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsī yogārūḍhas tadocyatē*

When one is neither attached to the sense-objects nor to the activities that lead to their enjoyment, at that time one is said to have attained *yoga*.

VERSE 5

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।  
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥५॥

*uddhared ātmanātmaṇāṁ nātmānam avasādayet  
ātmaiva by-ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanah*

Living beings must elevate themselves by the mind – they must not degrade themselves. Certainly, the mind is the friend of the living beings as well as their worst enemy.

VERSE 6

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।  
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥६॥

*bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmaivātmanā jitah  
anātmanastu śatrutve vartetātmaiva śatruvat*

For one who has subdued the mind, the mind is a friend. However, for one who has not controlled the mind, the mind is the greatest enemy.

VERSE 7

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।  
शीतोष्णासुख दुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥७॥

*jitātmanah prasāntasya paramātmā samāhitah  
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu tathā mānāpamānayoh*

Those who have subdued the mind and are calm, attain realisation of Paramātmā (Super Consciousness). For such persons heat and cold, happiness and distress and honour and dishonour are all the same.

Anuvṛtti

Many commentators on *Bhagavad-gītā* have mentioned that the method of meditation spoken of in the Sixth Chapter is derived from the eightfold process of *yoga* known as *astāṅga-yoga*. The famous compiler of the *Yoga-sūtras*, Patañjali has explained the sequential order of the *astāṅga-yoga* system as follows:

First, one should practice *yama* that consists of observances such as rising from bed before sunrise, taking bath, study of the *Vedas* and performing *pūjā* (rituals).

*Niyama* consists of controlling the senses by following regulative principles such as no intoxication, no illicit sex, no gambling and no eating of meat, fish or eggs.

Next one begins the practice of *āsana* by physically conditioning the body through systematic bodily exercises and postures aimed at toning and bringing into balance one's entire physical organism.

Then one advances to the performance of *prāṇāyāma*, controlling the inward and outward breath by systematic breathing exercises performed in conjunction with various *āsanas*. When *āsanas* and *prāṇāyāma* are performed or taught just for the sake of health, this is sometimes called *haṭha-yoga*.

After *prāṇāyāma* follows *pratyāhāra*, or withdrawing the senses from the sense-objects and training the mind to become introspective and intuitively orientated. Then one is able to concentrate the mind on a single point without being disturbed. This is known as *dhāraṇā*, or attaining concentration.

Once having acquired the ability to concentrate the mind without distractions from external sources, one can begin actual meditation, or *dhyāna*. There are many forms of meditation in the *yoga* system, however none of them recommend concentrating on nothingness. The three principle objects of meditation in *yoga* are Brahman (transcendental light), Paramātmā (localised Super Consciousness) and Bhagavān (Śrī Kṛṣṇa).

*Samādhi* is the final stage of *astāṅga-yoga* wherein the *yogī*, at the time of quitting the material body, attains the object of his desired perfection. The *yogīs* who desire Brahman or Paramātmā realisation enter the *brahma-jyoti* after giving up their body and the *yogī* who desires Bhagavān realisation enters into the Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa known as Vaikunṭha or Goloka Vṛndāvana to associate with and participate in transcendental pastimes with Kṛṣṇa.

According to many masters of *yoga*, only Bhagavān realisation is eternal. Even after attaining Brahman or Paramātmā realisations and merging into the Supreme Brahman,

a *yogī* will once again have to come back to the material world and begin again the cycle of birth and death. This is said to be due to the intrinsic nature of all living beings to perform activities. Although in the *brahma-jyoti* there is a sense of bliss that is many thousands of times greater than material happiness, still the desire to act remains. But because the Brahman realised *yogī* and the Paramātmā realised *yogī* are not qualified to perform devotional activities in the association of Kṛṣṇa, they cannot enter the spiritual planets and must therefore come down to take birth again in the material world.

VERSE 8

ज्ञानविज्ञानतुसात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।  
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाब्धनः ॥८॥

*jñāna-vijñāna-trptātmā kūṭastho vijitendriyah  
yukta ityucyate yogī sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanah*

The *yogī* who is self-satisfied due to his knowledge and realisation, fixed in his spiritual nature and in control of his senses, sees dirt, stones and gold equally.

VERSE 9

सुहन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।  
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥९॥

*subṛn-mitrāry-udāśina-madhyastha-dvesya-bandhuṣu  
sādhuṣ-vapi ca pāpeṣu sama-buddhir viśisyate*

Such a *yogī* of impartial intelligence sees an honest well-wisher, an affectionate benefactor, an enemy, neutral persons, a mediator, the envious, a relative, the pious and the impious with equal vision.

VERSE 10

योगी युज्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।  
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ १० ॥

*yogī yuñjīta satatam ātmānāṁ rahaśi sthitāḥ  
ekākī yata-cittātmā nirāśir aparigrahaḥ*

A *yogī* should live in a solitary place with his mind and body fully controlled. He should be without desire, without a sense of possessiveness and must constantly fix his mind on the *ātmā*, the self within.

VERSE II-12

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।  
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११ ॥  
तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।  
उपविश्यासने युज्ञायोगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

*śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthiram āsanam ātmanāḥ  
nāty-ucchritam nātinīcaṁ cailajina-kuśottaram  
tatraikāgram manāḥ kṛtvā yata-cittendriya-kriyāḥ  
upaviśyāsane yuñjyād yogam ātma-viśuddhaye*

Establishing a seat in a clean environment that is not too high or too low, a *yogī* should cover his sitting place with *kuśa* grass, a deerskin and a cloth. Sitting on that seat, fixing his mind on one point and controlling all the activities of the mind and senses, he should practice *yoga* to purify himself.

VERSE 13-14

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।  
संप्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥  
प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।  
मनः संयम्य मच्छित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥ १४ ॥

*samaṁ kāya-śiro-grīvam dbārayann acalaṁ sthiraḥ  
sampreksya nāsikāgram svam diśāś cānavalokayan  
praśāntātmā vigata-bbīr brahmačāri-vrate sthitab  
manab samyamya mac-citto yukta āsita mat-parab*

Holding the body, head and neck straight, he should remain still and steady, gazing at the tip of the nose without casting his glance in other directions. Undisturbed, fearless and observing a vow of celibacy, he should sit and control his mind by thinking of Me as his highest goal.

VERSE 15

युज्ज्ञेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।  
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

*yuñjann evam sadātmānam yogī niyata-mānasab  
śāntim nirvāṇa-paramām matsamsthām adhigacchat*

In this way, the *yogī* controls his mind, withdrawing it from material desires. He then achieves supreme peace and liberation from material existence and attains My abode.

VERSE 16

नात्यश्वतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्वतः ।  
न चातिस्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ १६ ॥

*nātyaśnata stu yogo'sti na caikāntam anaśnataḥ  
na cāti svapna-śilasya jāgrato naiva cārjuna*

One cannot practice *yoga* by eating too much or too little, nor sleeping too much or too little, O Arjuna.

VERSE 17

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।  
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

*yuktāhāra-vibārasya yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu  
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā*

*Yoga* destroys the suffering of one who is moderate in eating and sleeping, who performs all activities in a regulated manner and is well balanced in sleeping and waking.

**Anuvṛtti**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa again informs Arjuna in verse 15 that the final goal of *yoga* is to attain His Supreme Abode (Vaikuṇṭha or Goloka Vṛndāvana). This is indeed the ultimate goal of the *yoga* system.

One cannot be a *yogī* if one eats too much or not enough. Eating too much also means eating things like non-vegetarian foodstuff to maintain the body. This is not actually required. Nor can one be a *yogī* if one does not eat enough. This also means that one should not abstain from eating milk products by considering it as non-vegetarian. Milk is the most complete food possible. Milk products help to develop a strong bodily constitution and nourish our brain cells and thus our thinking capacity. *Yoga* is something that has been practiced in India for thousands of years and from then until now, *yogīs* have recommended taking milk and milk products like yogurt and cheese etc. Only in recent times have some people thought it bad to

take milk products, but the masters of *yoga* have never recommended such abnegation.

Proper sitting posture, control of the senses and observing celibacy are also recommended in the above verses because without such practices no one can actually be a *yogī*. Gazing at the tip of the nose without casting one's glance in other directions means being perfectly concentrated, as in *dhāraṇā*, and performing *dhyāna*, or meditation on Kṛṣṇa as the highest goal.

As far as possible, a *yogī* should try to live in a holy place to practice *yoga*. In India *yogīs* are fond of residing on the banks of the Ganges at Haridvāra, Hṛṣīkeśa, Benares, or Māyāpura, or on the banks of another sacred river like the Yamunā, Kāverī or Godāvarī. Some *yogīs* prefer the sanctuary of the Himālayas, others prefer residence in the *cāra-dhāma* (Dvārakā, Badarīnātha, Jagannātha Purī and Rāmeśvaram). In any case, the *yogī* must choose the proper place to practice *yoga*.

If one is unable to live in a holy place or on the banks of a sacred river, then one should try to live in an *āśrama* or *yoga* community. If one is unable to live in a *yoga* community then one should sanctify one's home by creating a place where Kṛṣṇa can be worshipped and *mantra* meditation can be performed. The home should have an atmosphere conducive for contemplation, study and controlling the senses. Such a home should be peaceful and free from acts of violence, animal killing, intoxication etc.

In this modern age (Kali-yuga) animal killing, intoxication and so many other unfavourable activities are to be found everywhere. Subsequently, it is very difficult to find the appropriate place for *yoga* practice, especially for the

practice of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, *rāja-yoga*, *haṭha-yoga* and so on. Therefore, in Kali-yuga the recommended process is *bhakti-yoga* and meditation is performed through the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

The chanting of the *mahā-mantra* is so powerful and purifying that, wherever it is chanted, it makes that place purified. Thus the *bhakti-yoga* process can be practiced everywhere and anywhere. *Bhakti-yoga* is actually the only recommended process of *yoga* in Kali-yuga.

The *yogī* must always strive for self-satisfaction, knowledge and realisation. Such a *yogī* will always see everything in this world with equal vision and therefore will not become attached to anything of a temporary nature. Kṛṣṇa says that the *yogī* sees gold and mere stones as the same. This is not to say that the *yogī* cannot distinguish the brilliance of gold from that of ordinary objects; this means that the *yogī* is not attracted to finding satisfaction in the accumulation of wealth.

It has been said that the desire for wealth is what makes the world go round. This may be true in the sense that the desire for wealth is what drives most people to act. Sadly we also see clearly where greed for wealth is taking the world today – political unrest culminating in war, death and destruction, economic instability and collapse as well as extreme instability in the environment. This results in natural disasters and the extinction of many species of life.

VERSE 18

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।  
निस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

*yadā viniyataṁ cittam ātmany-evāvatiṣṭhate  
nispr̥haḥ sarva-kāmebhyo yukta ity-ucbyate tadā*

When the steady mind is fixed exclusively upon the self, then one becomes free from all material desires — such a person is said to be situated in *yoga*.

VERSE 19

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।  
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युज्ञतो योगमात्मनः ॥ १९ ॥

*yathā dipo nivātastho neṅgate sopamā smṛtā  
yogino yata-cittasya yuñjato yogam ātmanaḥ*

Just as a flame does not flicker in a windless place, similarly the mind of a *yogi* never wavers in its concentration on the self.

VERSE 20-23

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।  
यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥  
सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।  
वेत्ति यत्र न चैवार्यं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥  
यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।  
यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥ २२ ॥  
तं विद्यादुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।  
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥

*yatroparamate cittam niruddham yoga-sevayā  
yatra caivātmanātmānam paśyann ātmani tuṣyati*

*sukham ātyantikam yat tad buddhi-grāhyam atīndriyam  
 vetti yatra na caivāyam sthitāś calati tattvataḥ  
 yaṁ labdbvā cāparam lābhām manyate nādhikam tataḥ  
 yasmin sthito na duḥkhenā gurुṇāpi vicālyate  
 tam vidyād duḥkha-samiyoga-viyogam yoga saṁjñitam  
 sa niścayena yoktavyo yogo'nirviṇṇa-cetasā*

When the mind is restrained and peaceful by the practice of *yoga*, it becomes detached from material desires. Thus one can perceive the self and attain happiness. Being situated in this plane of eternal bliss, which is beyond the scope of the mundane senses and obtained through intelligence, one never deviates from reality. Upon gaining this position, one considers that there is nothing superior to this and does not become disturbed even in the midst of the greatest calamities. You should know that this state of being, wherein all miseries are destroyed, is known as *yoga*.

#### VERSE 24

संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।  
 मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥२४॥

*saṅkalpa-prabhavān kāmāṁs tyaktvā sarvān aśeṣataḥ  
 manasaivendriya-grāmaṁ viniyamya samantataḥ*

One should practice *yoga* with determination and an unwavering mind. In order to practice *yoga*, one must reject all thoughts that create material desires and withdraw the senses from the sense-objects using the mind.

VERSE 25

शनैः शनैरपरमेद्बुद्धा धृतिगृहीतया ।  
आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किंचिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥ २५ ॥

*śanaiḥ śanair uparamed buddhyā dhṛti-grhitayā  
ātma-saṁsthām manah kṛtvā na kiñcid api cintayet*

Gradually, one should still the mind by means of the intelligence, focusing it on the self and nothing else.

VERSE 26

यतो यतो निश्चलति मनश्चलमस्थिरम् ।  
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ २६ ॥

*yato yato niścalati manaś cañcalam asthiram  
tatas tato niyamyaitad ātmany-eva vaśam nayet*

The nature of the mind is flickering and unsteady. However, one should always endeavour to control the mind from its wanderings and bring it back under the control of the higher self (*ātmā*).

VERSE 27

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।  
उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्पषम् ॥ २७ ॥

*praśānta-manasam hy-enam yoginam sukham uttamam  
upaiti śānta-rajasam brahma-bhūtam akalmaṣam*

Supreme bliss comes to a *yogi* who subdues his passions, whose mind is calm, who is free of vice and who is always situated on the spiritual plane.

VERSE 28

युज्ज्वरेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्पः ।  
सुखेनब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्चुते ॥ २८ ॥

*yuñjann evam sadātmānam yogī vigata-kalmaśab  
sukhena brahma-saṁsparśam atyantam sukham aśnute*

In this way, through the constant practice of *yoga*, a *yogī* who is devoid of material contamination can attain eternal bliss through contact with the Absolute.

**Anuvṛtti**

Control of the mind is quintessential for the practice of *yoga*. The problem arises due to the very nature of the mind itself. The nature of the mind is flickering and unsteady; it wants to wander here and there from one sense-object to the next. Even in sleep the wandering mind is active. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that the *yogī* must always endeavour to bring the mind under control of his higher conscious self. This is indeed the foremost challenge that a *yogī* faces.

In some western philosophical systems the mind is conceived of as the self, but this does not hold true in *yoga*. In *yoga*, the mind is called ‘the sense within’. The senses of the body like sight, sound, touch, smell and taste are engaged with external objects and the mind acts as the faculty that ultimately makes sense of sensual experiences – the sense within. But in *yoga* the self is conceived of as a transcendental substance that exists independent of the mind and body. Therefore, according to the knowledge of *yoga*, the self survives the death of the body and mind. It is something completely different.

There are many external practices within the *yoga* system such as fasting and living in a secluded place that help to

control the mind. But owing to the nature of the mind being like the wind, these external methods frequently fall short of the mark. However, in the *bhakti-yoga* system it is recommended to control the mind by *mantra*. The word *mantra* originates from two Sanskrit words – *mana* (the mind) and *trāyate* (to control). By engaging the mind in the process of hearing and chanting *mantras* – and especially the *mahā-mantra*, the great *mantra* for delivering the mind – the wandering mind becomes steady in the self.

The *mahā-mantra* is a direct sound representation of the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As such, the *mahā-mantra* is both all-powerful and all-attractive. The power of the *mahā-mantra* removes the ignorance that covers the real identity of the living being and the all-attractive nature of the *mahā-mantra* fills the heart of the chanter with inconceivable *ānanda*, supreme spiritual bliss. Chanting of the *mahā-mantra* to control and steady the mind has been highly recommended for these reasons.

#### VERSE 29

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।  
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥२९॥

*sarva-bhūta-stham ātmānam sarva-bhūtāni cātmani  
īkṣate yoga-yuktātmā sarvatra sama-darśanah*

One who is connected to the Supreme sees all things equally and perceives the Supreme in all living beings and all beings within the Supreme.

#### VERSE 30

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।  
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥३०॥

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra sarvam ca mayi paśyati  
tasyāham na prāṇaśyāmi sa ca me na prāṇaśyati*

For one who sees Me in all things and sees everything within Me, I am never lost and they are never lost to Me.

VERSE 31

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।  
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥३१॥

*sarva-bhūta-sthitam yo mām bhajaty-ekatvam āsthitaḥ  
sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogī mayi vartate*

That *yogī* who venerates Me, with the knowledge that I am situated in all living beings (as the Super Consciousness), abides in Me in all circumstances.

VERSE 32

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।  
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥

*ātmaupamyaena sarvatra samam paśyati yo'rjuna  
sukham vā yadi vā duḥkham sa yogī paramo mataḥ*

O Arjuna, one who regards the happiness and distress of all others equally, as if it were their own, is considered the best of *yogīs*.

VERSE 33

अर्जुन उवाच ।  
योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।  
एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्प्रिणि स्थिराम् ॥३३॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*yo'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktah sāmyena madhusūdana  
etasyāham na paśyāmi cañcalatvāt sthitim sthirām*

Arjuna said: O Madhusūdana, I cannot conceive of this system of *yoga* that You have described because by nature the mind is very unsteady.

VERSE 34

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्धम् ।  
तस्याहं नियहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥३४॥

*cañcalam bi manah kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham  
tasyāham nigraham manye vāyor iva suduṣkaram*

The mind is erratic, disturbed, very powerful and stubborn. O Kṛṣṇa, I think that to control it is as difficult as trying to control the wind.

VERSE 35

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।  
असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।  
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्णते ॥३५॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —  
asamśayaṁ mahā-bāho mano durnigrahām calam  
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gṛhyate*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: O mighty-armed one, indeed the mind is unsteady and very difficult to control. However, it is possible to control the mind by practice and detachment, O son of Kuntī.

### VERSE 36

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।  
वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवासुमुपायतः ॥ ३६ ॥

*asamīyatātmanā yogo duṣprāpa iti me matiḥ  
vaśyātmanā tu yatata śakyo'vāptum upāyataḥ*

My conclusion is that *yoga* is difficult to attain if one's mind is uncontrolled. But one who endeavours to control the mind by the proper practice can be successful.

### Anuvṛtti

There are five primary subject matters explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, namely *ātmā* (individual consciousness), *prakṛti* (material nature), *karma* (action), *kāla* (time) and *Īśvara* (the Supreme Controller). The culmination of knowledge is to understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the underlying principle of everything. Yet some commentators on *Bhagavad-gītā* have tried to explain the *Gītā* minus Kṛṣṇa. That is to say, they have said such things as, "Kṛṣṇa was a temporary manifestation of the Supreme Brahman," "Kṛṣṇa has no eternal existence as a person" or that when Kṛṣṇa says things like, "One attains My abode," Kṛṣṇa actually means that one attains something else of an impersonal nature. However, true masters of *yoga* and scholars of Vedic literature reject all these ideas.

*Bhagavad-gītā*, although surely mystical in that it delineates in great detail the Absolute Truth and how to attain that Truth, is not an allegorical or speculative treatise on the subject of perfection. *Bhagavad-gītā* is to be taken literally as a conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His dear friend and devotee, Arjuna. Therein lies the open secret to

understanding *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa says what He means and means what He says – therefore an abstract commentary on *Bhagavad-gītā* is not necessary.

That Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, in all things and within the hearts of all living beings is confirmed by the above verses. Kṛṣṇa says that He is in all living beings as the Paramātmā and all living beings are in Him as His parts and parcels. Kṛṣṇa is in all things and all things are in Kṛṣṇa. One who endeavours to see in this way becomes enlightened – indeed such a vision is enlightenment.

Arjuna, being a self-realised *yogī* and an eternal associate of Kṛṣṇa, does not argue with Kṛṣṇa over such conclusions. However, Arjuna does object to the rigours of *yoga* required to attain such perfection. Arjuna was a family man with many responsibilities, so how was he to practice *yoga*? Arjuna pleads his case in favour of day to day people in that the *yoga* system of rigorous mind control described so far by Kṛṣṇa is too difficult. It is simply impractical.

Kṛṣṇa's assurance to Arjuna is that if one perseveres then one will certainly be successful. But understanding Arjuna's point, Kṛṣṇa will indeed bring the attainment of the Absolute Truth into the reach of everyone as the *Bhagavad-gītā* discourse continues.

### VERSE 37

अर्जुन उवाच ।

अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्णा गच्छति ॥ ३७ ॥

*arjuna uvāca –*

*ayatiḥ śraddhayopeto yogāc calita-mānasah  
aprapya yoga-saṁsiddhim kām gatim kṛṣṇa gacchati*

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the destination of a person who has faith but cannot control his mind by the process of *yoga* and does not attain perfection?

VERSE 38

कच्चिन्नोभयविप्रष्टश्चिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।  
अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमृढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥३८॥

*kaccin nobhaya-vibbraṣṭaś chhinnābhram iva naśyati  
apratiṣṭho mahā-bāho vimūḍho brahmaṇaḥ pathi*

O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa, does such a person, being both confused on the spiritual path and having no shelter, become lost like a scattered cloud?

VERSE 39

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।  
त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥३९॥

*etan me saṁśayaiḥ kṛṣṇa chettum arbasy-aśeṣataḥ  
tvad-anyah saṁśayasyāsyā chettā na hy-upapadyate*

O Kṛṣṇa, only You can completely remove these doubts of mine and no one else.

VERSE 40

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।  
पर्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।  
न हि कल्याणकृत्क्षिर्द्विर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥४०॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —  
pārtha naïveha nāmutra vināśas tasya vidyate  
na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid durgatim tāta gacchati*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: O Pārtha, such a person does not meet with destruction, either in this world or the next. One who performs acts of virtue never suffers misfortune.

VERSE 41

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।  
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥४१॥

*prāpya puṇya-kṛtāṁ lokān uśitvā śāśvatīḥ samāḥ  
śucinām śrīmatām gehe yoga-bhraṣṭo’bhijāyate*

One who falls from the practice of *yoga* attains the celestial planets of the pious and dwells there for many years. Thereafter, they take birth amongst humans in a noble and prosperous family.

VERSE 42

अथ वा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।  
एतद्विदुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥४२॥

*athavā yoginām eva kule bhavati dhīmatām  
etaddhi durlabhataram loke janma yad idṛśam*

Otherwise they may be born into a learned family of *yogīs*. Certainly such a birth is rarely achieved in this world.

VERSE 43

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदेहिकम् ।  
यतते च ततोभ्युः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥४३॥

*tatra tam buddhi-samyogam labbate paurva-dehikam  
yatate ca tato bhūyah saṁsiddhau kuru-nandana*

O descendant of Kuru, regaining their knowledge of *yoga* from previous births, they again endeavour to attain success.

VERSE 44

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव हियते ह्रवशोऽपिसः।  
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥४४॥

*pūrvābhyaśena tenaiva briyate hy-avaśo'pi saḥ  
jijñāsur api yogasya śabda-brahmātivartate*

Due to the practices of their previous life, they are automatically attracted to the *yoga* process. Simply by inquiring about this system of *yoga*, one transcends the rituals of the *Vedas*.

VERSE 45

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः।  
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥४५॥

*prayatnād yatamānas tu yogī saṁsuddha-kilbiṣaḥ  
aneka-janma-saṁsiddhas tato yāti parām gatim*

By sincere endeavour, the *yogī* is then purified of all contamination and achieves perfection after many lifetimes – he attains the Supreme Destination.

VERSE 46

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः।  
कर्मिभ्यश्वाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥४६॥

*tapasvibhyo'dhiko yogī jñānibhyo'pi mato'dhikāḥ  
karmibhyoś cādhiko yogī tasmād yogī bhavārjuna*

Such a *yogī* is superior to the *tapasvī* (one who performs severe penances), the *jñānī* (one who tries to achieve the Absolute by intellectual pursuits) and the *karmī* (one who tries to attain salvation by performing Vedic rituals). This is My conclusion, O Arjuna – therefore become a *yogī*!

VERSE 47

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्रतेनान्तरात्मना ।  
श्रद्धावान्भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥४७॥

*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ mad gatenāntarātmanā  
śraddhbāvān bhajate yo māṁ sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

I consider the best of all *yogīs* to be the *bhakti-yogī* who abides in Me, who meditates upon Me and who worships Me with firm faith.

**Anuvṛtti**

Arjuna's questions in verses 37 and 38 are very critical for our understanding. Arjuna wants to know what happens to one who practices *yoga* for sometime, but for some reason or another, does not become completely self-realised and gives up the body at death without having attained perfection. What is the destination of such a person in the next life?

The first thing to note here is that Arjuna is aware or completely convinced that this one life is not the all-in-all. As Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said previously, we have had many lives in the past and we will have many in the future. Therefore Arjuna wants to know of his fate or that of anyone who practices *yoga* but does not reach perfection. What will be the fate of such a person in the next life?

Kṛṣṇa's reply is that of the all-knowing, omniscient Supreme Being. Kṛṣṇa says that for the *yogī* there is never any loss. If one does not achieve perfection in this life then in the next life one will be born in favourable circumstances and begin the process anew. In the next life, one will again become attracted to the practice of *yoga* and continue on the path. Even if it takes many lifetimes,

the *yogī*, with perseverance and determination, attains the supreme destination. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, in all circumstances, be a *yogī*.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
 ध्यानयोगो नाम षष्ठोऽध्यायः ॥

*oṁ tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ  
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu  
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
 dhyāna-yogo nāma ṣaṣṭho'dhyāyāḥ*

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Six entitled *Dhyāna Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ सप्तमोऽध्यायः  
ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगः

CHAPTER 7  
JÑĀNA-VIJÑĀNA YOGA

*The Yoga of Knowledge and Realisation*



VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

मव्यासक्तमनाः पार्थं योगं युज्ञन्मदाश्रयः ।  
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ १ ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —*

*mayy-āsakta-manāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan mad-āśrayah  
asamśayam samagram mām yathā jñāsyasi tac chṛṇu*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O Pārtha, please listen – when the mind is attached to Me and one practices *yoga* and takes full shelter of Me, then you will certainly be able to know Me.

VERSE 2

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।  
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

*jñānam te'ham sa-vijñānam idam vakṣyāmy-aśeṣataḥ  
yaj-jñātvā neha bhūyo'nyaj jñātavyam avaśisyate*

I will explain to you this knowledge and its realisation. Once you understand this, there is nothing else in this world that remains to be known.

VERSE 3

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।  
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ ३ ॥

*manusyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu kaścid yatati siddhaye  
yatataṁ api siddhānāṁ kaścin mām vetti tattvataḥ*

Amongst thousands of men, one may try to achieve perfection. Amongst those rare persons that endeavour for perfection, one may actually know Me.

## Anuvṛtti

This chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* is entitled *Jñāna-Vijñāna Yoga*. *Jñāna* means knowledge of self as distinguished from non-self, or knowledge that the self is not the body. *Vijñāna* means realised knowledge or realisation of one's intrinsic relationship with Kṛṣṇa. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* also mentions *jñāna* and *vijñāna* as follows:

*jñānam parama gubyam me yad vijñāna-samanvitam  
sa-rabasyam tad aṅgam ca grbhāna gaditarū mayā*

Knowledge (*jñāna*) about Kṛṣṇa as described in the Vedic literatures is very confidential, and it has to be realised (*vijñāna*) in conjunction with the secrets of devotion. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 2.9.31)

When we speak of knowledge, modern man immediately thinks of scientific knowledge which he deems to be most perfect. However, *jñāna* in *Bhagavad-gītā* refers to that knowledge of the self as distinguished from the knowledge of matter or scientific knowledge. Knowledge of matter is called *aparā-vidyā* and it is quite distinct from the knowledge of the self in that it never leads to self-realisation.

Since the beginning of the Rationalist movement, some five centuries ago, science has completely rejected the idea of consciousness as independent of matter. Many scientific theories have been presented to explain the origin of the universe and the origin of life such as the 'Big Bang' and Darwinian Evolution, but these explanations remain mere theories, lacking conclusive evidence.

For centuries, scientific and theistic communities have been at odds with each other, but recently it appears that the two may finally be drawing closer. Leading persons in the scientific community are willing to accept consciousness as a scientific fact. Indeed, biologist and stem-cell therapist, Dr. Robert Lanza has of late rocked the scientific world with his book, *Biocentrism – How Life Creates the Universe*, in which he postulates that consciousness has evolved matter and not that matter has evolved consciousness. If this current trend continues then indeed science may very well be on the path of *jñāna*.

The understanding of consciousness being the origin of matter has taken a long time to manifest. But as Kṛṣṇa says in verse 3, those who endeavour for perfection are very rare, and rarer still are those who actually understand Kṛṣṇa. To this end, all learned and educated people in the world should take lessons from *Bhagavad-gītā*.

#### VERSE 4

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।  
अहङ्कार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥४॥

*bhūmir āpo’nalo vāyuh khāñ mano buddhireva ca  
ahaṅkāra itīyam me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhbā*

Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and false ego – these are the eight different elements that constitute My material nature.

#### VERSE 5

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।  
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥५॥

*apareyam itas tvanyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām  
jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho yayedaṁ dhāryate jagat*

However, you should know that there is another nature, superior to this inferior nature. It is a conscious potency that consists of the living beings and maintains the universe.

#### VERSE 6

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।  
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥६॥

*etad yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇīty-upadhāraya  
abām kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā*

Try to understand that all beings are manifest from these two sources and that I am the cause of the creation and annihilation of the entire universe.

#### Anuvṛtti

The basic material elements that comprise the universe have been mentioned here. Earth (*bbūmi*), water (*āpa*), fire (*anala*) and air (*vāyu*) are, for the most part, easy to comprehend – whereas *khaṁ*, the invisible element, is rather more difficult. *Khaṁ* is defined as accommodating space for existence. For a long time, modern science has rejected the *Bhagavad-gītā*'s concept of space as an element. However, once again the scientific community finds itself facing serious problems wherein an elusive element must be present in the universe in order for them to explain how the universe works. This element, physicists say, may comprise up to 80% or more of the universe, but is unknown to them and is thus far undetectable. They have called this 'Dark Matter'.

The first person to provide evidence and infer the existence of the phenomenon of Dark Matter was the Swiss astrophysicist Fritz Zwicky, of the California Institute of Technology in 1933. Zwicky applied the viral theorem to the Coma cluster of galaxies and obtained evidence of unseen mass. Zwicky estimated the cluster's total mass based on the motions of galaxies near its edge and compared that estimate to one based on the number of galaxies and total brightness of the cluster. He found that there was about four-hundred times more estimated mass than was visually observable. The gravity of the visible galaxies in the cluster would be far too small for such fast orbits, so something extra was required. This is known as the 'Missing Mass Problem'. Based on these conclusions, Zwicky inferred that there must be some non-visible form of matter that would provide enough of the mass and gravity to hold the cluster together. That was the beginning of the search for Dark Matter.

Seventy-eight years later, science is still looking for Dark Matter. They know it is literally everywhere, but it escapes detection and thus they are unable to observe it. Millions in taxpayers' money is spent every year by western scientists in the search for Dark Matter. Nothing has yet been discovered.

However, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* identifies a material element that among its other qualities is, for the most part, elusive. It is all-pervading, but simultaneously it is undetectable. That element according to *Bhāgavatam* is called *nabhas*, or as mentioned here in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *khaṁ*.

The activities, qualities and characteristics of the *khaṁ* element can be observed as accommodating space/room

for existence. Space itself, both internal and external, is the element *kham*. This then, if taken notice of by physicists, may very well fit nicely into the ‘Missing Mass Problem’. *Kham*, being a material element, could theoretically be assigned a numerical code – then they might find what they are looking for.

In the Vedic way of thinking, a physical element is secondary to its qualities – when the qualities of a particular thing are understood, it is as good as or better than having the gross object at hand. In that sense, modern science has already discovered Dark Matter, because they have understood something of its qualities – they just haven’t realised it yet. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* we find the following verse:

*bbūtānāṁ chidra-dātrtvāṁ bahir antaram eva ca  
prāṇendriyātma-dhiṣṇyatvāṁ nabhaso vṛtti-lakṣaṇam*

The activities and characteristics of *nabhas* can be observed as accommodation for external and internal existences of all living beings, namely the field of activities of the vital air, the senses and the mind.  
(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 3.26.34)

This verse is the potential basis for great scientific research work. It explains how subtle forms are generated from *nabhas*, what their characteristics and actions are, and how the tangible elements, namely air, fire, water and earth, are manifested from the subtle form.

*Bhāgavatam* does not simply list the basic material elements, but explains quite scientifically how those elements evolve from the most subtle plane of existence up to the

divisions of the universe – this is quite elaborate and scientific indeed. Yet for science to take full advantage of this understanding of matter and to discover how the universe came into being, they will have to do more than just add *kham* to their table of elements – they will have to add *ahaṅkāra* (false ego), *mana* (the mind) and *buddhi* (intelligence). For indeed, *Bhagavad-gītā* lists these as material elements. Furthermore, these elements, *ahaṅkāra*, *mana* and *buddhi* are categorised as even more subtle than *kham*, because they are closer in character to consciousness (*ātmā*).

Beyond the gross and subtle material elements being added to the scientific table, *Bhagavad-gītā* says that a complete understanding of existence and reality is not possible without adding two transcendental, anti-material concepts – namely *ātmā* and *Paramātmā* (consciousness and Super Consciousness). This, it seems, science struggles with even more than Dark Matter. We have dubbed these ‘Light Matter’.

Mind and intelligence should not be confused with the self or *ātmā*. Mind and intelligence have not arisen out of matter as some philosophers or scientists have suggested. Last in the list is *ahaṅkāra* or false ego. All these are material elements which manifest from the *aparā-prakṛti* or the inferior energy of Kṛṣṇa. These gross and subtle elements make up the material body and cover the self within.

Those conditioned by material elements consider the body as the self. But Kṛṣṇa says that there is another energy of His – a superior energy, which is a conscious potency and consists of all living beings.

*Bhagavad-gītā* clearly explains both the gross and subtle material elements as well as consciousness and Super Con-

sciousness. Any theory that does not include all of these elements is surely inadequate.

### VERSE 7

मत्तः परतरं नान्यात्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।  
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥७॥

*mattaḥ parataraṁ nānyat kiñcid asti dhanañjaya  
mayi sarvam idaṁ protam sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva*

Dhanañjaya, there is nothing superior to Me. All things rest upon Me, just like jewels strung upon a thread.

### VERSE 8

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।  
प्रणवःसर्ववदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥८॥

*raso'ham apsu kaunteya prabhāsmi śasi-sūryayoh  
praṇavah sarva-vedeṣu śabdaḥ khe pauruṣam nr̥ṣu*

I am the taste of water and the light of the sun and the moon, O son of Kuntī. I am the syllable ‘*om*’ found in all the *Vedas*, I am the sound in space and I am the masculinity in man.

### VERSE 9

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।  
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥९॥

*punyo gandhaḥ pr̥thivyām ca tejaś cāsmi vibhāvasau  
jīvanam sarva-bhūteṣu tapaś cāsmi tapasviṣu*

I am the original scent of the earth, I am the lustre of fire. I am the life of all creatures and the penances of the performers of austerities.

VERSE 10

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।  
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ १० ॥

*bījam mām sarva-bhūtānām viddhi pārtha sanātanam  
buddhir buddhimatām asmi tejas tejasvinām abham*

O Pārtha, know that I am the original cause of all living beings. I am the wisdom of the wise and I am the power of the powerful.

VERSE 11

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।  
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ ११ ॥

*balam balavatām cāham kāma-rāga-vivarjitaṁ  
dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo’smi bharatarṣabha*

I am the might of the mighty which is devoid of passion and attachment. I am the desire to procreate which does not violate the principles of *dharma*.

VERSE 12

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्र ये ।  
मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ १२ ॥

*ye caiva sāttvikā bhāvā rājasās tāmasāś ca ye  
matta eveti tān viddhi na tvaham teṣu te mayi*

Also, know that all things generated by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance originate from Me alone. However, I am not in them but they are in Me.

### VERSE 13

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैभवेत्तरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।  
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥१३॥

*tribhir guṇamayaḥ bhāvaiḥ ebhiḥ sarvam idam jagat  
mohitam nābhijānāti mām ebhyāḥ param-avyayam*

The whole world is bewildered by these three modes of nature. Thus, no one can understand Me because I am superior to these modes and unchanging.

### Anuvṛtti

Since the most ancient times we find the same fundamental questions in the search for knowledge and meaning – Who are we? Where did we come from? Why are we here? How should we conduct ourselves? Is there life after death? These were questions in the minds of our ancestors and we still ask the same questions today. The search for answers to these questions leads an intelligent person to conclude that consciousness is superior to matter and that there must be one absolute source from which everything in the universe and beyond emanates.

Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He is the singular cause of everything and that nothing is superior to Him. He is the sum total of the universe and of all living creatures, but He Himself remains separate from everything as the Supreme Individual.

Throughout the *yoga* systems we find that the chanting of *mantras* is highly recommended and possibly no *mantra* is chanted more than *oṁ*, or *oṁkāra*. This *oṁkāra* is described as the supreme combination of letters (*a*, *u* and *m*) and is thus the primary Vedic *mantra*. Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa

says that He is the *oṁ* found in Vedic *mantras* and as such, it is Kṛṣṇa that is to be meditated on while chanting *oṁ*. In support of this the *Rg Veda* states as follows:

*oṁ ity etad brahmaṇo nedīṣṭam  
 nāma yasmād uccāryamāna  
 eva saṁsāra-bhayāt tārayati  
 tasmād-ucyate tāra iti  
 oṁ āsyā jānanto nāma cid-viviktan mahaste viṣṇo  
 sumatiṁ bhajāmahe oṁ tat sat  
 tato ‘bhūt trivṛḍ-oṁkāro yo ‘vyakta prabhavaḥ svarāṭ  
 yat tal-liṅgam bhagavato brahmaṇaḥ paramātmānaḥ*

One who chants *oṁ*, which is the closest form of Brahman, approaches Brahman. This liberates one from the fear of the material world; therefore, it is known as *tāraka-brahman*. O Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa, Your self-manifested name, *oṁ*, is the eternal form of cognisance. Even if my knowledge about the glories of reciting this name is incomplete, still, by the practice of reciting this name, I will achieve perfect knowledge. He who has unmanifested potencies and is fully independent manifests the vibration *oṁkāra*, which indicates Himself. Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān are the three forms He manifests. (*Dhṛta Rg Veda* I.I56.3)

Now the question may arise that if *oṁ* is non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, what then is the necessity to chant the *mahā-mantra*? Great *ācāryas* such as Jīva Gosvāmī, Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Bhaktivinoda, Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Svāmī B.R. Śridhara, Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda and

others are all in agreement that *om* helps us up to the stage of liberation from material bondage. But the benefits of chanting the *mahā-mantra* continue even after liberation, helping us to develop spontaneous affection for Kṛṣṇa and thus cultivate our eternal relationship with Him.

In the ontology of *mantras* it is said that *om* emanates from the flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; it then manifests as *gāyatrī-mantra*, then as the *Vedas*, *Vedānta* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. The last verse of *Bhāgavatam* recommends the chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

*nāma-saṅkirtanam yasya sarva-pāpa-praṇāśanam  
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas tāṁ namāmi hariṁ param*

The chanting of the *mahā-mantra* can relieve us from all undesirable habits, all filthy characteristics and all miseries. Chant the *mahā-mantra*! Nothing else is necessary. Take this! Chant the *mahā-mantra* and begin your real life in this dark age of Kali-yuga with the most broad and wide theistic conception. Let us all bow down to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 12.13.23)

One may chant *om* and certainly everyone should chant the *mahā-mantra*. Those who do this under the guidance of the spiritual master will certainly taste the fruits of self-realisation.

#### VERSE 14

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।  
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ १४ ॥

*daivī hy-eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā  
māmeva ye prapadyante māyāṁ etāṁ taranti te*

This divine potency of Mine which consists of the three modes of material nature is extremely difficult to defeat. Yet those that take shelter of Me can cross beyond it.

#### VERSE 15

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।  
माययापहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ १५ ॥

*na māṁ duṣkṛtino mūḍhbāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ  
māyayāpahṛta jñānā āsuram bhāvam āśritāḥ*

The foolish, the lowest of men, those whose knowledge is covered by illusion and those who take shelter of impious activities – such unrighteous persons never surrender to Me.

#### VERSE 16

चतुर्विंधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।  
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ १६ ॥

*catur-vidbā bhajante māṁ janāḥ sukṛtino’rjuna  
ārto jijñāsur arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha*

O descendant of Bharata, there are four kinds of persons who are fortunate enough to worship Me – those who are in distress, the inquisitive, those that seek wealth and those that desire self-realisation.

#### VERSE 17

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।  
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

*teṣāṁ jñānī nitya-yukta eka-bhaktir viśisyate  
priyo hi jñānino'tyartham abhim sa ca mama priyah*

Of these, one who desires self-realisation is superior. He is always absorbed in thoughts of Me and engaged in *bhakti-yoga*. I am very dear to him and he is very dear to Me.

### VERSE 18

उदारः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।  
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८ ॥

*udārāḥ sarva evaite jñānī tvātmaiva me matam  
āsthitah sa hi yuktātmā mām evānuttamāṁ gatim*

Certainly all of them are virtuous, yet I regard the self-realised devotee to be as My own Self because his mind is fully fixed upon Me as his ultimate goal.

### Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks here about His *māyā* potency, also known as *mabā-māyā*, to distinguish it from His internal potency known as *yoga-māyā*. *Mabā-māyā* is the potency of material energy and the modes of nature that condition all living beings in material existence, binding them to *samsāra*. These three modes of material nature will be discussed at length in Chapter 14 of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Kṛṣṇa says that to escape the modes of material nature is very difficult for the conditioned living being, but one who takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa in *bhakti-yoga* can easily cross beyond them. This is recommended as follows:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ  
tīvrenā bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣām param*

Whether one is without desire or full of desire or aspires for liberation – one should take shelter of the Supreme Person through *bhakti-yoga*. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 2.3.10).

Kṛṣṇa further explains that pious persons (the distressed, the inquisitive, those seeking wealth and those desiring self-realisation) take shelter of Him, but of these Kṛṣṇa says that those in search of knowledge and self-realisation are superior.

After taking shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for wealth, out of curiosity or out of distress, it is often seen that such persons again resume their normal course of material activities. Those who come to Kṛṣṇa for knowledge and self-realisation truly become liberated from material desires and enter into a plane of eternal bliss. Ultimately they attain Kṛṣṇa's Supreme Abode, never to return to the world of birth and death as will be explained in Chapter 15. Therefore, the seekers of self-realisation who take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and absorb all their thoughts and deeds in Kṛṣṇa are considered the best among virtuous persons.

#### VERSE 19

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।  
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥ १९ ॥

*bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate  
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*

After many births, one who possesses knowledge surrenders unto Me. He realises that Vāsudeva is the source of everything. Such a great personality is very rare.

### VERSE 20

कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।  
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥२०॥

*kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ prapadyante'nya-devatāḥ  
tam tam niyamam āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

Those whose intelligence has been lost to various material desires take shelter in other gods. Swayed by their natures they perform various rituals.

### VERSE 21

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्ध्यार्चितुमिच्छति ।  
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥२१॥

*yo yo yāṁ yāṁ tanum bhaktah śraddbayārchitum icchati  
tasya tasyācalāṁ śraddhāṁ tām eva vidadhāmy-abam*

Whatever form of the demigods a man desires to worship with faith, I make his faith strong in that particular form.

### VERSE 22

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।  
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान् ॥२२॥

*sa tayaśraddhayā yuktas tasyārādhanam ihatate  
labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vibitān hi tān*

One who worships that particular form with faith, only attains the fulfilment of his desires due to My sanction alone.

### VERSE 23

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्वत्यत्परेभसाम् ।  
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥२३॥

*antavat tu phalam teśāṁ tad bhavaty-alpa-medhasām  
devān deva-yajo yānti mad bhaktā yānti mām api*

However, the results achieved by such persons of little intelligence are temporary. Those who worship the demigods reach them, but My devotees attain Me.

### Anuvṛtti

Surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa may not be achieved in one lifetime. In fact Kṛṣṇa says that after many lifetimes of acquiring knowledge one ultimately surrenders unto Him knowing Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) to be the source of all that be. Indeed such persons are very rare — *sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*.

*Mahātmā* literally means a great personality or devotee of Kṛṣṇa, but one does not become a *mahātmā* simply by ‘rubber stamping’. There are required qualities and only those who manifest such qualities should be respected as a *mahātmā*. These qualities are mentioned in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* as follows:

*kṛpālu, akṛta-droha, satya-sāra sama  
nidoṣa, vadānya, mṛdu, śuci, akiñcana  
sarvopakāraka, śānta, kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa  
akāma, anīha, sthira, vijita-ṣad-guṇa  
mita-bhuk, apramatta, mānada, amānī  
gambhīra, karuṇa, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, maunī*

Devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are always merciful, humble, truthful, and equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and without desire. They are indifferent to material acquisitions

and are fixed in devotion to Kṛṣṇa. They completely control the six bad qualities – lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not intoxicated with false ego. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 22. 78-80)

The popularity of the *bhakti* movement in contemporary times has also come to include the worship of many demigods and demigoddesses such as Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī etc. However, according to *Bhagavad-gītā*, the worship of various demigods is not on the same level as worshipping Kṛṣṇa and thus does not help one advance in self-realisation. *Bhakti-yoga* is solely meant for Kṛṣṇa. *Bhakti* is the reciprocal exchange between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees and thus *bhakti* is incompatible with the worship of the demigods.

It is not that the demigods are ‘false gods,’ but they simply cannot free one from material bondage. Kṛṣṇa knows what is necessary for the ultimate good of all living creatures and therefore He says that worship of demigods is less intelligent.

It can also be said that those who worship the demigods worship Kṛṣṇa indirectly, because the demigods are the representatives of Kṛṣṇa for the management of universal affairs. In that way the worship of demigods is also the worship of Kṛṣṇa, save and except for the fruits of liberation. Only Kṛṣṇa is known as *mukti-pada*, the giver of liberation, or Mukunda. Speaking in *Padma Purāṇa*, Śiva says:

*mukti-pradātā sarveśām viṣṇur eva na saṁśayah*

Undoubtedly, Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) is the only deliverer of liberation for all. (*Padma Purāṇa* 6.253.176)

When surrender to Kṛṣṇa is the only shelter from the cycle of birth and death, then it stands to reason that one should take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and forego the worship of various demigods.

#### VERSE 24

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।  
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥२४॥

*avyaktam vyaktim āpannam manyante mām abuddbayah  
param bhāvam ajānanto mamāvyayam anuttamam*

My nature is eternal, supreme and imperishable. Yet less intelligent persons cannot comprehend this and consider Me to be the impersonal that has now accepted a material form.

#### VERSE 25

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।  
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥२५॥

*nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yoga-māyā-samāvṛtaḥ  
mūḍho'yaṁ nābhijānāti loko mām ajam avyayam*

I do not manifest Myself to everyone. I am hidden by My *yoga-māyā* potency and thus the foolish cannot recognise Me as eternal and unborn.

#### Anuvṛtti

Herein Śrī Kṛṣṇa states His position quite unequivocally. He is eternal, without birth, supreme and imperish-

able. To this He adds that those who are foolish (*mūḍha*), consider His appearance in this world to be a temporary appearance of the impersonal Brahman in material form. Such misguided philosophers consider that Kṛṣṇa's body is material and that Kṛṣṇa, like other living beings, is a manifestation from the *brahma-jyoti*. In Chapter 14 of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa will explain that He is the very source of the *brahma-jyoti* and that all living beings emanate from Him. Kṛṣṇa does not manifest or reveal Himself to everyone – particularly to those who are envious or jealous of Him. To the envious Kṛṣṇa is covered by His own spiritual potency, *yoga-māyā* and at the same time the envious are covered by *mahā-māyā* in the cycle of birth and death.

### VERSE 26

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।  
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ २६ ॥

*vedāham samatītāni vartamānāni cārjuna  
bhavisyāni ca bhūtāni mām tu veda na kaścana*

O Arjuna, I know past, present and future. I know all living beings, but they do not know Me.

### VERSE 27

इच्छाद्वेषसमुथेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।  
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परंतप ॥ २७ ॥

*icchā-dveṣa samutthena dvandva-mohena bhārata  
sarva-bhūtāni saṁmohāḥ sarge yānti parantapa*

O conqueror of the enemy, at the beginning of creation, all living beings are born bewildered by the dualities of desire and hatred.

VERSE 28

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।  
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुका भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥ २८ ॥

*yeshām tvanta-gataṁ pāpaṁ janānām puṇya-karmanām  
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

Yet those that perform pious activities become purified of all reactions – they become free from the illusion of duality and worship Me with dedication.

VERSE 29

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।  
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥ २९ ॥

*jarā-marana-mokṣāya mām āśritya yatanti ye  
te brahma tad viduḥ kṛtsnam adhyātmaṁ karma cākhilam*

Those that strive to become free from old age and death by taking shelter of Me know the Absolute Truth, the individual self and the laws of action and reaction.

VERSE 30

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।  
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ ३० ॥

*sādhibhūtādhidaivam mām sādhiyajñam ca ye viduḥ  
prayāṇa-kāle'pi ca mām te vidur yukta-cetasāḥ*

Those who know Me to be the Controller of matter, the Controller of the demigods and the recipient of all sacrifices – with their minds concentrated upon Me, they will know Me at the time of death.

## Anuvṛtti

The knowledge in *Bhagavad-gītā* cannot be found outside Vedic literature. No literary source in the world compares with the *Gītā*. The divinity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is stated with such clarity and boldness that no doubt can remain in the mind of a serious student of *yoga*. Kṛṣṇa has made it very clear that He is eternal, without birth, supreme and imperishable. He knows past, present and future; He knows all living beings and those who fix their minds in meditation on Kṛṣṇa, knowing Him to be the Controller of everything, will not have to take birth again in this material world.

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अ॒ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
 ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥

om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-sāhasryām̄ samhitāyām̄  
 vaiyāsikyām̄ bhīṣma-parvāni  
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu  
 brahma-vidyāyām̄ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
 jñāna-vijñāna yogo nāma saptamo'dhyāyah̄

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Seven entitled *Jñāna-Vijñāna Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ अष्टमोऽध्यायः  
तारकब्रह्मयोगः

CHAPTER 8  
TĀRAKA-BRAHMA YOGA

*The Yoga of the Supreme*



VERSE I-2

अर्जुन उवाच ।

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।  
 अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ १ ॥  
 अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।  
 प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ २ ॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*kiṁ tad-brhma kiṁ adbyātmāṁ kiṁ karma puruṣottama  
 adhibhūtaṁ ca kiṁ proktam adhidaivam kiṁ ucyate  
 adhiyajñāḥ kathām ko'tra dehe'smin madhusūdana  
 prayāṇa-kāle ca kathām jñeyo'si niyatātmabhiḥ*

Arjuna inquired: O Puruṣottama (Supreme Person), what is Brahman? What is the self? What is *karma*? What is action? What is this material manifestation? Who are the demigods? Who is the object of sacrifice and how does He dwell within the body? O Madhusūdana, how can You be known by those who are self-controlled at the time of death?

Anuvṛtti

For the serious student of *yoga* and, for that matter, anyone desiring the perfection of life, Arjuna asks Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his dearest friend and well-wisher, a series of very important questions. *Vedānta-sūtra*, one of the most scholarly literatures ever written on the thesis of transcendence, begins with the statement, *om athāto brhma-jijñāsā* — ‘Now in this human form of life, one should inquire into Brahman’. The human form of life is actually meant for inquiry into such matters as Arjuna has put forward, and the Supreme Master of *yoga*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, will now answer

them most concisely. The purpose of the human form of life is also explained in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as follows:

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir lābho jīveta yāvatā  
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*

Life's desires should never be aimed towards gratifying the senses. One should desire a healthy life only because human life is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's activities. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* I.2.10)

### VERSE 3

श्रीभगवानवाच ।

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।  
भूतभावोऽद्वकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ ३ ॥

*sṛi bhagavān uvāca —  
akṣaram brahma paramam svabhāvo'dhyātmam ucyate  
bhūta-bhāvodbhava karo visargah karma-samjñitah*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: It is said that Brahman is the imperishable Supreme, and the *ātmā* is the original spiritual nature of the living being. *Karma* is that which produces birth, duration of life and death.

### VERSE 4

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।  
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभूतां वर ॥ ४ ॥

*adhibhūtam kṣaro bhāvah puruṣas cādhidaivatam  
adhiyajño'ham evātra dehe deha-bhṛtām vara*

This material manifestation is defined as constantly changing and this material universe is the cosmic form

of the Supreme Person. I am the object of all sacrifices, situated in all living beings.

VERSE 5

अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।  
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥५॥

*anta-kāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yah prayāti sa mad-bhāvam yāti nāsty-atra samśayah*

At the time of death, one who leaves the body specifically remembering Me attains My nature – of this there is no doubt.

VERSE 6

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।  
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥६॥

*yam Yam vāpi smaran bhāvam tyajaty-ante kalevaram  
tam tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitah*

O son of Kuntī, whatever state of being one remembers at the time of death, one certainly attains to that nature.

VERSE 7

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्यत् ।  
मर्यार्पितमनोबुद्धिर्मर्मवैष्यस्यसंशयः ॥७॥

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca  
mayy-arpita-mano buddhir mām evaisyasy-asamśayah*

Therefore, always remember Me and fight! Surrender your mind and intelligence to Me and you will surely attain Me.

## Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's answers to Arjuna are to the point and if one accepts Kṛṣṇa as the ultimate authority in *yoga*, as indeed He is, then one quickly attains the most valuable knowledge. To acquire perfect knowledge by speculation or by the process of trial and error simply wastes valuable time. In fact, so much time is wasted in speculation and experimentation that even after centuries such processes have failed to deliver perfect knowledge of the meaning of life. Everyone is dying, and for the most part dying without answers to life's most basic questions. However, since time immemorial, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has had the answers and they are presented here in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Kṛṣṇa says that all living beings are Brahman – part and parcel of the spiritual energy of the Absolute Truth – eternal, individual, imperishable and immutable. However, in this material world death of the body comes to everyone. There are no exceptions. But for those whose mind and intelligence are fixed on Kṛṣṇa, they do not take birth again in the material world, but attain Kṛṣṇa's own divine nature. Kṛṣṇa is by nature *sac-cid-ānanda* – eternal, complete in knowledge and full of bliss. Remembering Kṛṣṇa at the time of death, one attains that nature and is immediately transferred to the abode of Kṛṣṇa, far beyond the material sky and the planets of birth and death. As Kṛṣṇa will explain in Chapter 15, one who attains His Supreme Abode does not return to this material world.

When we speak of *saṁsāra*, we are indeed talking about reincarnation. Although reincarnation is becoming a popular belief in many communities, it is for the most part misunderstood. To many, reincarnation means being born

as a human being life after life, but this is not a fact. The human form of life is only rarely achieved. It is not something that comes in rapid succession. Above and below the human species there are hundreds and thousands of other life forms. According to one's activities performed in this life and one's final consciousness and state of mind at the time of death, one's next birth is determined.

In the species below the human being, namely animal, aquatic, insect and plant life, there is great ignorance and suffering. Above the human plane there are higher planets full of celestial beings and celestial pleasures. Yet higher or lower, all stations of life in the material world are temporary. There is no place of eternal damnation and no place of eternal happiness in the material universe. Nothing in this world is everlasting. Only the abode of Kṛṣṇa is beyond the dualities of pleasure and suffering.

Kṛṣṇa says above in verse 5, *anta-kāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram* – one who remembers Him at the time of death attains His transcendental nature. To remember Kṛṣṇa at the end of life is indeed perfection, and to forget Him is the greatest aberration. The *Viṣṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa* states:

*sā hānis tan mahac-chidram sa mohaḥ sa ca vibhramah  
yan muhūrtam kṣaṇam vāpi vāsudevo na cintayet*

If even for a moment remembrance of Kṛṣṇa is missed, that is the greatest loss, the greatest illusion and the greatest anomaly. (*Viṣṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa* I.16)

However, it is our experience of the world that death is often accompanied by great pain, confusion and bewilderment of memory. Therefore, it would seem that to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death is no easy task. Death may come swiftly at any time, without a moments notice or even during sleep, thus impeding one's remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. In this regard Kulaśekhara Ālvār writes in *Mukunda-mālā Stotram* as follows:

*kṛṣṇa tvadiya-pada-paṅkaja-pañjarāntam  
 adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rāja-hamsaḥ  
 prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kapha-vāta-pittaiḥ  
 kaṇṭhāvarodhana-vidhau smaraṇaiḥ kutas te*

O Kṛṣṇa, please help me die quickly so the swan of my mind may become encircled by the stem of Your lotus feet. Otherwise at the time of my final breath, when my throat is choked up, how will it be possible for me to think of You? (*Mukunda-mālā Stotram* 33)

For the *bhakti-yogī* Kṛṣṇa takes all his many endeavours, practices and services into consideration. Even if the *bhakti-yogī* is unable to remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death, Kṛṣṇa will certainly remember him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is never forgetful under any circumstance and thus He swiftly delivers His devotee from the clutches of death. Kṛṣṇa Himself confirms this in the *Varāha Purāṇa* as follows:

*yadi vitādi-doṣena mad bhakto māṁ ca na smaret  
 abāṁ smarāmi mad bhaktaḥ nayāmi paramāṁ gatim*

If My devotee is unable to remember Me at the time of death because of the great disturbances felt within the body, at that time I shall remember My devotee and take him to the spiritual world.

VERSE 8

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥८॥

*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena cetasā nānya-gāminā  
paramām puruṣam divyam yāti pārbhānucintayan*

O Pārtha, one who practices *yoga* and focuses his mind, without straying from the path, and meditates upon the Divine Supreme Person, certainly achieves Him.

VERSE 9

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारम् अणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।  
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥९॥

*kavim purāṇam anuśāsitāram  
anor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yah  
sarvasya dhātāram acintya-rūpam  
āditya-varṇam tamasah parastāt*

One should meditate upon the Supreme Person who is all-knowing, without beginning, the Supreme Controller, who is smaller than the atomic particle, yet who is the support of all things in the universe, whose form is inconceivable, who is radiant like the sun, and who is beyond material nature.

VERSE 10

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।  
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्यसम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥१०॥

*prayāṇa-kāle manasā'calena  
 bhaktyā yukto yoga-balena caiva  
 bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak  
 sa tam param puruṣam upaiti divyam*

At the time of death, one who remembers Him with a steady mind by drawing the life-airs between the eyebrows by dint of yogic power certainly reaches the Divine Supreme Person.

### Anuvṛtti

*Yoga* and meditation are described herein. However, they are not impersonal or self-centred processes. Meditation is to be performed on the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa – not on abstract ideas that we ourselves are the sum total of reality, that we are all-knowing or that we are the supreme controller etc. Such processes are not meditation, but self-deception and never lead to liberation or eternal bliss.

In verse 10, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that in yogic meditations (*aṣṭāṅga* and *kunḍalinī-yoga*) one should draw one's life-airs to the area of the eyebrows. This indicates the location of the *ājñā-cakra*. There are seven *cakras* located in the body that are the primary seats of human consciousness. Consciousness pervades the entire body, but is said to be centred in one of the seven *cakras* – *mūlādhāra-cakra* (located at the base of the genital), *svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra* (located at the base of the spinal cord), *maṇipūra-cakra* (located in the navel area), *anāhata-cakra* (located in the heart), *viśuddha-cakra* (located in the throat), *ājñā-cakra* (located in between the eyebrows) and the *sahasrāra-cakra* (located at the top of the head).

When consciousness is situated in the lower three *cakras* one is found to be preoccupied with the animal tendencies of eating, sleeping, mating and defending. When consciousness is situated in the upper *cakras* there is progress in the finer sentiments of spiritual culture and ultimately liberation. Consciousness is raised in meditation from one *cakra* to another through the subtle passage in the body known as the *suṣumṇā-nādī*.

Kṛṣṇa says that the *yogī* should bring his consciousness to be seated in the *ājñā-cakra*, sometimes known as the ‘third eye’. Here the *yogī* makes his or her final preparation and at last raises the consciousness through the *suṣumṇā-nādī* to the *sahasrāra-cakra* and from there the *yogī* quits the material body. If the *aṣṭāṅga-yogī* or *kundalinī-yogī* makes Śrī Kṛṣṇa the object of his meditation while concentrating on the *ājñā-cakra*, then after passing the *sahasrāra-cakra*, the *yogī* achieves Kṛṣṇa’s Supreme Abode. However, if the said *yogī* does not make Śrī Kṛṣṇa the object of his meditation, then he may enter the *brahma-jyoti* for sometime, but eventually he returns to this material world.

The aforementioned processes of *yoga* take superhuman endeavour and for the most part are not possible for the average person to achieve in this age. *Aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and *kundalinī-yoga* must be practiced in absolute seclusion from society, observing complete celibacy and fasting for long periods. In ancient times such *yogīs* went to the mountain caves of the Himālayas or to the deserts. Today’s *yogīs* in modern *yoga* studios and societies are unable to raise their consciousness through the *cakras* to the *sahasrāra-cakra* because they lack the solitude and severe determination required. Therefore, *Bhagavad-gītā* conclusively

recommends the process of *bhakti-yoga* that can be practiced by everyone, everywhere, by fixing the mind on Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus attaining perfection.

One may question that since Śrī Kṛṣṇa is speaking here in the third person that He is not referring to Himself as the object of meditation and therefore it does not mean that we should meditate on Kṛṣṇa. However, according to Svāmī B. R. Śrīdhara Mahārāja, a great *ācārya* of *bhakti-yoga*, when Kṛṣṇa speaks in the third person, He is referring to the object of meditation as His expansion as Paramātmā (Super Consciousness). As already explained in the Second Chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Paramātmā, present in the hearts of all living beings. Therefore, meditation on the Paramātmā means meditation on Kṛṣṇa.

Those who cannot comprehend the Absolute Truth as personal, due to *anarthas* (misgivings of the heart), can meditate on Kṛṣṇa's impersonal aspect as Brahman. But this process is tedious and the results are limited since even the Brahman-realised *yogī* must once again return to the world of birth and death.

#### VERSE II

यदक्षरं वेद विदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।  
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥ ११ ॥

*yad akṣaram veda-vido vadanti  
 viśanti yad yatayo vīta-rāgāḥ  
 yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti  
 tat te padam saṅgrahena pravakṣye*

Great sages in the renounced order of life and scholars of the *Vedas* accept the vow of celibacy and utter *om* to enter into Brahman. I shall now explain this process to you.

VERSE 12

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुच्य च ।  
मूर्ध्याधायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ १२ ॥

*sarva-dvārāṇi saṁyamya mano hṛdi-nirudhya ca  
mūrdhny-ādhāyātmanah prāṇam āsthito yoga-dhāraṇām*

One should control all the senses and concentrate the mind within the heart, fixing the life-airs between the eyebrows and fully absorbing oneself in *yoga*.

VERSE 13

ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।  
यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ १३ ॥

*om ity-ekākṣaram brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran  
yah prayāti tyajan dehaṁ sa yāti paramām gatim*

Thus, by chanting the great monosyllable *om* and remembering Me, when one leaves the material body, he will attain the Supreme Abode.

VERSE 14

अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।  
तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ १४ ॥

*ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ yo mām smarati nityaśah  
tasyāhaṁ sulabbaḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yoginah*

O Pārtha, that *yogi* who is without deviation and constantly remembers Me alone, easily attains Me for he is always connected to Me.

VERSE 15

मासुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।  
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ १५ ॥

*mām upetya punar janma duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam  
nāpnuvanti mahātmānāḥ saṁsiddhim paramām gatāḥ*

Those great personalities who have attained Me never take birth again in this temporary world of misery, for they have reached the highest destination.

**Anuvṛtti**

Modern systems of *yoga* focus more or less on achieving a healthy condition for the body, but this is actually not the aim of *yoga*. The process of *yoga* is intended for one goal and one goal alone – to transcend the world of birth and death. There is, of course, more than one system of *yoga*, but all schools of *yoga* aim at a singular goal – liberation.

As already explained in previous commentaries, the *mantra om* elevates one to the stage of liberation. However, it should be noted here that the divisions of *yoga*, such as sense-control and celibacy, must also be in place before the chanting of *mantras* can be effective. *Mantras* purify the mind and heart of material contamination which arises from sense enjoyment. If one endeavours for purification, but at the same time does not control the senses, then it is tantamount to starting a fire while simultaneously pouring water on it. Sense-control is therefore essential for those attempting to practice all forms of *yoga*.

VERSE 16

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।  
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म नविद्यते ॥ १६ ॥

*ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino’rjuna  
mām upetya tu kaunteya punar janma na vidyate*

O Arjuna, all planets up to the abode of Brahmā are places of birth and rebirth, but those who reach Me never take birth again.

VERSE 17

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्वह्णणो विदुः ।  
रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ १७ ॥

*sahasra-yuga-paryantam aharyad brahmaṇo viduḥ  
rātrīm yuga-sahasrāntām te’ho-rātra-vido janāḥ*

A day of Brahmā consists of one thousand *yugas* and his night also lasts for the same period.

VERSE 18

अव्यक्ताव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।  
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ १८ ॥

*avyaktād vyaktayah sarvāḥ prabhavanty-ahar-āgame  
rātry-āgame pralīyante tatraivāvyakta-saṁjñake*

At the beginning of Brahmā’s day, all things become manifest from the unmanifest state. When Brahmā’s night begins, again they all become unmanifest.

VERSE 19

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।  
रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थं प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ १९ ॥

*bbūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyam bhūtvā bhūtvā praliyate  
rātry-āgame'vaśah pārtha prabhavaty-ahar-āgame*

O Pārtha, all living beings repeatedly take birth again and again. When Brahmā's night approaches they are absorbed into Me once more and with the arrival of Brahmā's day they are born again.

### VERSE 20

परस्तस्मान्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।  
यः सर्वेषु भूतेषु न नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥२०॥

*paras tasmāt tu bhāvo'nyo'vyakto'vyaktāt sanātanaḥ  
yah sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati*

However, beyond this state is another unmanifest state that is eternal and cannot be destroyed when all other beings are annihilated.

### VERSE 21

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।  
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्वाम परमं मम ॥२१॥

*avyakto'kṣara ity-uktas tam ābhūḥ paramāṁ gatim  
yām prāpya na nivartante tad dbāma paramām mama*

It is said to be unmanifest and eternal and is declared to be the ultimate destination, upon attaining which, one never returns. This is My Supreme Abode.

### VERSE 22

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।  
यस्यान्तः स्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥२२॥

*puruṣah sa parah pārtha bhaktyā labhyas tv-ananyayā  
yasyāntah sthāni bhūtāni yena sarvam idam tatam*

O Pārtha, that Supreme Person, within whom all living beings are situated and who pervades the entire creation, can only be attained by *bhakti-yoga*.

### Anuvṛtti

The topmost planet in the material universe is known as Satya-loka, the abode of Brahmā. Life on that planet is very long – one day in Satya-loka is equal to 4,260,000,000 years on planet Earth. Nonetheless death occurs there also. Nowhere in the material universe is free from death.

At the end of each of Brahmā's days there is a partial annihilation in the universe and a total annihilation of the universe at the end of Brahmā's life. The partial annihilations are called *pralaya* and the final annihilation is called *mahā-pralaya*. Everything in the universe has a beginning and an end. All things come into being and eventually all things are destroyed. Creation, duration and annihilation are the three basic phases of the universe, yet *Bhagavad-gītā* does not subscribe to an apocalyptic world view or an 'end times' scenario in which we will all be judged.

The predominating Deities of creation, duration and annihilation are the three *guṇāvatāras*, Brahmā, Mahā-Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. Brahmā manifests the secondary creation, Mahā-Viṣṇu maintains the creation and Śiva, by producing a sound vibration from his *ḍamaru* drum, brings about the annihilation. These *guṇāvatāras* are portions of the plenary expansions of Kṛṣṇa, the *avatārī*, or origin of all *avatāras*. During the periods of annihilation, both partial and complete, the living beings rest in a state

of slumber within the body of Mahā-Viṣṇu and are again manifest at the arrival of Brahmā's day. This is repeated over and over again on a cosmic timescale until Brahmā reaches the end of his life, at which point the entire universe is again wound up in the body of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Everything necessary for the manifestation of the material universe, and indeed billions and trillions of universes, is provided by Mahā-Viṣṇu in the form of the *mahat-tattva* (the aggregate of material elements), and at the time of annihilation that energy is again absorbed into Mahā-Viṣṇu.

Energy is neither created or destroyed as it exists always as Kṛṣṇa's *aparā-prakṛti*, inferior material energy. That energy is endlessly mutable, manifest and unmanifest, but ultimately it is never destroyed. Kṛṣṇa and all His energies are eternal.

Once again, the same point is being reiterated by Kṛṣṇa, that His Supreme Abode is beyond material nature, eternally manifest, beyond birth and death and once going there one does not return to *samsāra*. That Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa is Goloka Vṛndāvana, and it is attainable only through the process of *bhakti-yoga*. This Supreme Abode is mentioned in *Bṛhad-bhāgavatātmṛta* as follows:

*goloka-nāmopari sarva-sīma-go  
 vaikuṇṭhato deśa-višeṣa-śekharah  
 sa ca tad vraja-lokānām śrīmat-premānuvartinā  
 kṛṣṇe śuddhatarenaiva bhāvenaikena labhyate*

Far from this material universe is the beautiful abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa that is known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, the topmost Vaikuṇṭha planet. Goloka is only

attained through *bhakti-yoga* by those who follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja who have pure love for Kṛṣṇa. (*Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.5.78-79)

VERSE 23

यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।  
प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वश्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ २३ ॥

*yatra kāle tv-anāvṛttim āvṛttim caiva yoginab  
prayātā yānti tam kālam vakṣyāmi bharatarṣabha*

O best of the descendants of Bharata, I shall now explain to you those times that the *yogīs* attain either liberation or rebirth at the moment of their departure.

VERSE 24

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।  
तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ २४ ॥

*agnir-jyotir abah śuklab ṣañ-māsā uttarāyanam  
tattra prayātā gacchanti brahma brahma-vido janāḥ*

Those who know Brahman pass from this world on the path of fire and light, during the time of the waxing moon or during the six months when the sun traverses the northern hemisphere.

VERSE 25

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।  
तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ २५ ॥

*dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇab ṣañ-māsā dakṣiṇāyanam  
tattra cāndramasam jyotir yogī prāpya nivartate*

Departing on the path of darkness, during the night, during the waning moon or during the six months when the sun makes its course across the southern hemisphere – that *yogī* attains the celestial lunar planet, but then returns.

### VERSE 26

शुक्रकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।  
एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्यावर्तते पुनः ॥२६॥

*śukla-kṛṣṇe gatī hy-ete jagataḥ śāśvate mate  
ekayā yāty-anāvṛttim anyayāvartate punah*

Both these paths of light and darkness are accepted as being permanent in this world. By one path, one does not return, by the other path, one returns.

### VERSE 27

नैते सृती पार्थं जानन्योगी मुहूर्ति कश्चन।  
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥२७॥

*naite sṛti pārtha jānan yogī mubyati kaścana  
tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu yoga-yukto bhavārjuna*

The *yogī* who knows these two paths is never bewildered. Therefore, O Arjuna, at all times be fixed in *yoga*.

### VERSE 28

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपः सु चैव दानेषु यत्पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।  
अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥२८॥

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva  
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalaṁ pradiṣṭam  
atyeti tat sarvam idam viditvā  
yogī param sthānam upaiti cādyam*

Knowing this, a *yogī* surpasses all kinds of pious results that are achieved through study of the *Vedas*, by offering oblations in sacrifice, by penances and by philanthropy. That *yogī* reaches the eternal abode.

### Anuvṛtti

To attain higher planets within the material universe one must study the *Vedas*, offer sacrifice, perform penances and acts of charity. One who has performed these activities is reborn on a higher planet and lives a long life, enjoying great luxury for tens of thousands of years.

However, the *bhakti-yogī* has no desire to enjoy in higher planets. He easily achieves all the benefits of sacrifice, penance etc. simply by surrendering to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *bhakti-yogī* does not have to choose an auspicious moment to leave the material body because he is under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa. Everything is auspiciously ordained for those who have surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, enabling them to reach Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode.

But the *yogī* who is not in *bhakti-yoga* does not achieve the Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa nor does he easily ascend to higher planets at the time of death. Factually speaking, the *yogī* has to choose the time of his death, so as to pass from the body at the most opportune time. He must choose wisely, otherwise he is born again on this Earth. Needless to say, this is a near impossibility – especially for ordinary people. Therefore, it is the *yogī* in *bhakti-yoga* that is most assured of success.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
तारकब्रह्मयोगो नामाष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥

*oṁ tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śāta-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ  
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśupaniṣatsu  
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
tāraka-brhma-yogo nāmāṣṭamo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Eight entitled *Tāraka-Brhma Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ नवमोऽध्यायः

राजगुह्ययोगः

CHAPTER 9  
RĀJA GUHYA YOGA

*The Yoga of the Greatest Secret*



VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।  
 इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।  
 ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षसेऽशुभात् ॥ १ ॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —  
 idam tu te guhyatamam pravakṣyāmy-anasūyave  
 jñānam vijñāna-sabitam yaj jñātvā mokṣyase'śubhāt*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Because you are not envious I shall now explain to you the greatest of all secrets. I shall explain this knowledge and it's realisation, knowing which you shall become free from all inauspiciousness.

VERSE 2

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।  
 प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ २ ॥

*rāja-vidyā rāja-gubyam pavitram idam uttamam  
 pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam susukham kartum avyayam*

This is the greatest of all knowledge (*rāja-vidyā*) and the greatest of all secrets (*rāja-gubyā*). It is most purifying and most excellent. This path of *dharma* is directly perceived; it is simple to practice and imperishable.

VERSE 3

अश्रद्धानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परंतप ।  
 अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्यु संसारवर्त्मनि ॥ ३ ॥

*aśraddadhbānāḥ puruṣā dharmasyāsyā parantapa  
 aprāpya mām nivartante mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani*

O vanquisher of the enemy, those that lack faith in this path of *dharma* can never attain Me and are forced to be reborn in the continuous cycle of birth and death.

### Anuvṛtti

Now Śrī Kṛṣṇa will emphasise to Arjuna what He considers to be the greatest secret, or *guhya*, of the *yoga* system, so that any remaining doubt that Arjuna may still harbour might be dispelled. This has already been mentioned in previous chapters, but now Kṛṣṇa will make it definitive. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, the Cause of creation, the origin of all living beings, the Controller, the object of knowledge, the *mantra om* and so forth. One who knows this in his heart of hearts and lives solely by such a creed will surely attain Kṛṣṇa. This is the positive incentive. The negative incentive is also explained by Kṛṣṇa that those who are not fixed in Him will be reborn in the cycle of birth and death.

In verse 3 Kṛṣṇa uses the word *aśraddadhānāḥ*. *Śraddhā* means ‘faith’ and *aśraddhā* means ‘without faith’. This describes those who do not have the resolute determination to perform *bhakti-yoga*. Of such persons Kṛṣṇa says that they will continue in the cycle of *samsāra*. That is not to say that they are damned to some eternal hell, but simply put, they cannot attain the platform of liberation.

First it is important to understand that *śraddhā* is not to be confused with the belief or mundane faith that is usually associated with a particular religion such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism. Christian faith, Muslim faith, Hindu faith etc. implies a belief in a particular set of moral ideals, myths, superstitions and dogmas, but *śraddhā* is something entirely different.

*Śrat dadhbāti iti śraddhbāḥ* – ‘That which leads to truth and self-realisation is known as *śraddhbā*.’ *Śraddhbā* is developed by association with saintly persons who are self-realised and free from the contamination of material nature. In such association the conviction develops that by surrender and taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa all other purposes are served. Without such *śraddhbā* and fixed determination, one cannot follow the path of *bhakti-yoga*.

VERSE 4

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।  
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥४॥

*mayā tatam idam sarvam jagad avyakta-mūrtinā  
mat-sthāni sarva-bbūtāni na cāham teṣv-avasthitah*

I pervade the entire cosmos through My unmanifest form. All living beings are supported by Me, but I am not supported by them.

VERSE 5

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।  
भूतभूत्त्वं च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥५॥

*na ca mat sthāni bbūtāni paśya me yogam aiśvaram  
bbūta-bbṛṇ na ca bbūta-stho mamātmā bbūta-bbāvanah*

Yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My divine powers! Although I am the origin of all living beings and I maintain them, I am not influenced by them nor by My material nature.

VERSE 6

यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।  
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥६॥

*yathākāśa-sthito nityam vāyuh sarvatra-go mahān  
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni mat-sthānīty-upadhāraya*

Try to understand that just as the mighty wind rests within the vast expanse of the sky, similarly all beings rest within Me.

VERSE 7

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।  
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसुजाम्यहम् ॥७॥

*sarva-bhūtāni kaunteya prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikām  
kalpa-kṣaye punas tāni kalpādau visṛjāmy-abam*

O son of Kuntī, at the end of a day of Brahmā, all living beings enter into Me. I manifest them again at the beginning of a new creation.

VERSE 8

प्रकृतिं स्वामवश्यं विसुजामि पुनः पुनः ।  
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥८॥

*prakṛtiṁ svām avastabhyā visṛjāmi punah punah  
bhūta-grāmam imam kṛtsnam avaśam prakṛter vaśat*

Because I control material nature, I continuously manifest the living beings that are helplessly manipulated by their natures.

VERSE 9

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ।  
उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥९॥

*na ca māṁ tāni karmāṇī nibadbnanti dbanañjaya  
udāśinavat āśinam asaktam teṣu karmasu*

O Dhanañjaya, such actions cannot bind Me. I am detached and indifferent to these activities.

### VERSE 10

मयाद्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सच्चराचरम् ।  
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ १० ॥

*mayādhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram  
hetunānena kaunteya jagad viparivartate*

Under My command, material nature produces the universe with all its moving and non-moving beings. O son of Kuntī, because of this the universe continually manifests.

### Anuvṛtti

Everyone acts in the material world and everyone is held responsible for their actions by the laws of material nature or the laws of *karma*. Newton's Third Law of Physics states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. At a glance this sounds like a good definition of *karma*, but *karma* is much more complicated than that. The saying, 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' also does not accurately define the laws of action and reaction. *Karma* is far more intricate and complicated than a simple one on one analogy can provide. Suffice to say that when one performs an action he is held responsible and thus liable for the reaction, whatever that may be. Material nature may therefore be considered superior to the energy of the living beings, in that the living beings have no control over material nature. People are expert in exploiting

nature, yet they cannot control the adverse reactions that result from it. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, on the other hand, does not incur *karma* or a reaction when He acts because material nature is always under His control – *iśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*.

### VERSE II

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।

परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ ११ ॥

*avajānanti mām mūḍhbā mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam  
param bhāvam ajānanto mama bhūta-maheśvaram*

Because they do not know My divine nature as the Supreme Controller of all living beings, those who are ignorant mock Me when I assume a human form.

### VERSE 12

मोघाशा मोघकर्मणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।

राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ १२ ॥

*moghāśā mogha-karmāṇo mogha-jñānā vicetasab  
rākṣasīm āsurīm caiva prakṛtim mohinīm śritāḥ*

All their aspirations, activities and knowledge are futile and senseless. Such persons adopt a contemptible, malicious nature and become bewildered.

### VERSE 13

महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थं दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।

भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

*mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ  
bhajanty-ananya-manaso jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam*

However, those great personalities who do take shelter of My divine nature, worship Me with a steady mind and know Me to be the imperishable origin of all beings.

VERSE 14

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।  
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ १४ ॥

*satatam kirtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ  
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā nitya-yuktā upāsate*

They are always glorifying Me, endeavouring with determination and firmly fixed in their vows. Offering their obeisance to Me with devotion, such *bhakti-yogīs* always worship me.

VERSE 15

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।  
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ १५ ॥

*jñāna-yajñena cāpy-anye yajanto mām upāsate  
ekatvena prthaktvena bahudhā viśvato-mukham*

Others worship Me with the sacrifice of knowledge, considering themselves to be non-different from Me. Others worship Me in many different forms, while others venerate Me as the universal form.

**Anuvṛtti**

Those that deride the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* are referred to as *mūḍhā* or having a foolish mentality. Intelligent persons, when confronted with the scope of knowledge in *Bhagavad-gītā*, will surely be in agreement, or at least charmed. For this reason *Bhagavad-gītā* is the most widely read literature on theistic science in the world.

Atheism is certainly not a new phenomena as there have always been such thinkers since ancient times. Yet atheism in modern times seems driven more as a reaction to fanatical religious dogma than by rational argument. Indeed, often times the arguments of the atheist are as irrational as those of religious fanatics. When presented with an intelligent proposal, a rationalist should be willing to accept it, regardless of where that proposal leads, even if it leads to undermine his atheistic world view. Such would be the mentality of a real seeker of truth or science.

For the most part, in the modern arena of debate between theists and atheists, the student of *Bhagavad-gītā* would not side with either because both are predominately ignorant of higher knowledge. Coming in contact with *Bhagavad-gītā*, both the atheists and religious fanatics are silenced because within the *Gītā* lies the most definitive knowledge of the Absolute Truth ever revealed to the world.

### VERSE I6

अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।  
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥१६॥

*aham kratur aham yajñah svadhāham aham auṣadham  
mantra’ham aham evājyam aham agnir aham hutam*

I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering, I am the sacred herbs, I am the *mantra* and I am the clarified butter, I am the sacred fire and I am the act of offering.

### VERSE I7

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।  
वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥१७॥

*pitāham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmabah  
vedyam̄ pavitram̄ omkāra rksāma yajureva ca*

I am both the father and the mother of the universe, I am the Maintainer, the Grandsire, the object of all knowledge, the purifier, the syllable *om̄* and I am the *Rg Veda*, *Sāma Veda* and the *Yajur Veda*.

VERSE 18

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।  
प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ १८ ॥

*gatir bhartā prabbuh sākṣī nivāsaḥ śaraṇam̄ subṛt  
prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānam̄ nidhānam̄ bijam avyayam*

I am the supreme objective, the sustainer, the master, the witness, the abode, the shelter, and the dear-most friend. I am creation, maintenance and destruction, I am the greatest wealth and the indestructible seed.

VERSE 19

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सुजामि च ।  
अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ १९ ॥

*tapāmy-abam abam̄ varṣam̄ nigṛbhñāmy-utsrjāmi ca  
amṛtam̄ caiva mr̄tyuś ca sad asac cāham arjuna*

I create heat and I bring forth the rain and also withdraw it. I am eternity and I am death. I am reality and I am illusion, O Arjuna.

Anuvṛtti

If someone were to ask, “Where is Kṛṣṇa?” one might respond with another question: “Where *isn’t* Kṛṣṇa?”

After turning over every stone and grain of sand in the universe, one would be hard-pressed to find something or somewhere that is *not* Kṛṣṇa. Ultimately Kṛṣṇa pervades everything in the entire universe and beyond. He is uniquely an individual, our dearest friend, our well-wisher and the speaker of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

It may be interesting to note that in the history of the world no literature other than *Bhagavad-gītā* so clearly and boldly proclaims the Absolute Truth. All other attempts pale in comparison. The Absolute Truth is directly speaking *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna.

#### VERSE 20

त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।  
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोकम् अश्वन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥ २० ॥

*trai-vidyā mām soma-pāḥ pūta-pāpā  
yajñair iṣṭvā svargatim prārthayante  
te puṇyam āśādya surendra-lokam  
aśnanti divyān divi deva-bhogān*

Those who are conversant with the three *Vedas* worship Me indirectly, and by drinking *soma* they become purified and attain the higher planets. By their pious activities they reach the abode of Indra where they enjoy the celestial pleasures of the demigods.

#### VERSE 21

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं विशन्ति ।  
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ २१ ॥

*te tam bhuktvā svarga-lokaṁ viśālam  
kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti*

*evam trayī-dharmam anuprapannā  
gatāgataṁ kāma-kāmā labhante*

After they have experienced the extensive pleasures of the higher planets, their pious credits become exhausted and they again enter the mortal plane. Therefore, the results of those who perform Vedic rituals to obtain material enjoyment are fleeting.

VERSE 22

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।  
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥२२॥

*ananyāś cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate  
teṣām nityābbhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemam vahāmy-abham*

But for those who are always absorbed in thoughts of Me, who worship Me and who are always associated with Me, I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.

VERSE 23

येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।  
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥२३॥

*ye'pyanya-devatā bhaktā yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ  
te'pi mām eva kaunteya yajanty-avidhi-pūrvakam*

O Kaunteya, those that worship other demigods with faith actually worship Me, but they do so improperly.

Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has mentioned those that drink *soma*. In ancient times, some 10,000 years ago, *soma* was a celestial elixir taken by the performers of certain Vedic rituals that was meant to elevate one to higher planets. *Soma* was not

simply an intoxicant, as some readers of the *Bhagavad-gītā* have surmised. Only those fully conversant in the three *Vedas* who were expert in performing Vedic rituals were allowed to drink *soma*. Due to the passage of time, we do not know exactly how *soma* was made, but we do know that it was an elixir and not simply an intoxicant like wine, whisky or *gañjā*.

Those who are conversant in the *Vedas* reach the higher planets and enjoy celestial pleasures. Kṛṣṇa says that when their pious credit is exhausted, they again enter the mortal plane of Earth. Therefore, the understanding is that all endeavours for material pleasure are temporary, even those experienced in higher planets.

But for the *bhakti-yogī* there is no need to perform complicated and costly Vedic rituals because all the purposes of such ceremonies are fulfilled by acts of devotion and surrender to Kṛṣṇa. The intimacy of the *bhakti-yogīs* with Kṛṣṇa is such that He proclaims that He carries what they lack and preserves what they have. This is the extension of Kṛṣṇa's shelter (*āśraya*), for those who surrender to Him. This theme is repeated throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

#### VERSE 24

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।  
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्यवन्ति ते ॥२४॥

*abam hi sarva-yajñānām bhoktā ca prabhureva ca  
na tu mām abhijānanti tattvenātaś cyavanti te*

It is I who am the enjoyer and object of all sacrifices. But those who are ignorant of My true nature fall down from the path of self-realisation.

VERSE 25

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितृन्यान्ति पितुव्रताः ।  
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ २५ ॥

*yānti deva-vratā devān pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ  
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā yānti mad yājino'pi mām*

The worshippers of the demigods attain the realm of the demigods. The worshippers of the ancestors reach the domain of the ancestors. The worshippers of ghosts and spirits go to the world of the ghosts and spirits. But those who worship Me come to Me.

VERSE 26

पत्रं पुष्टं फलं तोर्यं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।  
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥

*patram puṣṭam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati  
tad abam bhakty-upahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanah*

If one offers to Me with devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or some water, I will accept that offering from My pure-hearted devotee.

VERSE 27

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।  
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ २७ ॥

*yat karosi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam*

O Kaunteya, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give in charity, whatever penances you undertake, do that as an offering unto Me.

VERSE 28

शुभाशुभ फलैरेव मोक्षसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।  
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥२८॥

*śubhāśubha-phalair evam mokṣyase karma-bandhanaiḥ  
sannyāsa-yoga-yuktātmā vimukto mām upaisyasi*

By doing so, you will become free from the bondage of *karma* and it's auspicious and inauspicious effects. By renouncing the results of your actions and connecting yourself with Me, you will become liberated and attain Me.

**Anuvṛtti**

No one can live in this world without consuming something. There are some *yogīs* in India that try to avoid entanglement with this material world to the extreme. To this end they give up clothing, food and even water. But because they do not recognise Kṛṣṇa as the proprietor and enjoyer of all things, they eventually fall down from their position of false renunciation. We say 'false renunciation' because real renunciation means to renounce the idea of oneself being the proprietor and enjoyer and to recognise Kṛṣṇa as the proprietor and the enjoyer of everything.

In the stage of real renunciation, one offers everything first to Kṛṣṇa and accepts only the remnants of such offerings for his maintenance. The process of offering food to Kṛṣṇa by chanting appropriate *mantras* is to be learned from the guru. When food is offered to Kṛṣṇa by *mantra* the food becomes 'Kṛṣṇanised'. This is called *prasādam*, or Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that if one offers Him with devotion a leaf, flowers, fruits or some water He will accept that.

This means that non-vegetarian foodstuff such as meat, fish and eggs, as well as preparations containing such things are not offerable to Kṛṣṇa. Food offerable to Kṛṣṇa includes vegetables, fruits, nuts, grains and milk products. It should be noted that being Gopāla, the protector of the cows, Kṛṣṇa is very fond of milk products such as yogurt, butter etc. A diet of such food offered to Kṛṣṇa will make one healthy and fit for the practice of *yoga* as well as free from *karmic* reactions.

VERSE 29

समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।  
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥२९॥

*samo'ham sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo'sti na priyāḥ  
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy-abham*

I am equal to all living beings. I neither hate nor favour anyone. Yet whoever worships Me with devotion is with Me and I am certainly with them.

VERSE 30

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।  
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥३०॥

*api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk  
sādhubr eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

Even if one is impious and has committed abominable acts, if he worships Me with one-pointed devotion, such a person should be considered saintly because his determination is perfect.

VERSE 31

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्च्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।  
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ ३१ ॥

*kṣipraṁ bhavati dharmātmā śaśvac chāntim nigacchati  
kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇasyati*

He quickly becomes virtuous again and attains everlasting peace. O Kaunteya, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.

VERSE 32

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।  
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥ ३२ ॥

*māṁ hi pārtha vyapāśritya ye'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayaḥ  
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te'pi yānti parām gatim*

O Pārtha, even if persons of impious birth, women, merchants (*vaiśyas*) and labourers (*śūdras*) take shelter of Me, they will also reach the highest destination.

VERSE 33

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।  
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ ३३ ॥

*kim punar brāhmaṇāḥ puṇyā bhaktā rājarsayas tathā  
anityam asukham lokam imam prāpya bhajasva mām*

What to say of the pure *brāhmaṇas* and pious kings? Now, having come into this temporary world of misery, devote yourself to Me!

VERSE 34

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।  
मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥३४॥

*man-manā bhava mad bhakto mad yājī mām namaskuru  
mām evaisyasi yuktvaivam ātmānām mat-parāyaṇāḥ*

Always think of Me. Be My devotee. Worship Me. Offer your respects unto Me. In this way, by dedicating yourself to Me and surrendering to Me, you will come to Me.

Anuvṛtti

It is important to note here that Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He is equal to all living beings. That is to say that Kṛṣṇa has no ‘chosen people’. Everyone is equal in His eyes as His eternal parts and parcels. Kṛṣṇa does not arbitrarily cause one person to enjoy life and another to suffer. Enjoyment and suffering are the results of one’s own pious or impious activities in this life and in past lives.

When one approaches Kṛṣṇa, He reciprocates directly with that person. One does not have to be born in a particular country, family, religion, caste, gender or race to approach Kṛṣṇa. Nor is one first required to perform certain pious activities such as penances or charity before one can approach Him. The door is open to everyone and Kṛṣṇa reciprocates with each individual accordingly.

But there is also no doubt that those who are deeply devoted to Kṛṣṇa and have taken shelter of Him completely, are very dear to Him and at the end of life they will surely come to Kṛṣṇa in His Supreme Abode.

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 ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 राजगुह्ययोगो नाम नवमोऽध्यायः ॥

*oṁ tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 rāja-guhyā-yogo nāma navamo'dhyāyah*

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Nine entitled *Rāja-Guhyā Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ दशमोऽध्यायः
विभूतियोगः

CHAPTER 10
VIBHŪTI YOGA

The Yoga of Divine Splendor

VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
 भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
 यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥१॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —
 bhūya eva mahā-bāho śṛṇu me paramam vacaḥ
 yat te'ham prīyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi hita-kāmyayā*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Listen to these supreme teachings once more, O mighty-armed one. Because I desire your welfare, I shall speak them to you because you are very dear to Me.

VERSE 2

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।
 अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥२॥

*na me viduh sura-gaṇāḥ prabhavat na maharṣayaḥ
 aham ādir hi devānām maharṣīnām ca sarvaśah*

The demigods and great sages do not know My origin. Indeed, I am the origin of the demigods and the great sages.

VERSE 3

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।
 असम्मूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥३॥

*yo mām ajam anādīm ca vetti loka-maheśvaram
 asammūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate*

One who knows Me as the birthless, beginningless Supreme Controller of all worlds is not bewildered amongst mortals, and is free from all *karma*.

Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is unknown and unknowable. He is *adbokṣaja* – beyond the reach of the senses, beyond the comprehension of the mind and intelligence. No amount of ascending endeavours on the part of the living beings can reach Kṛṣṇa, but in an instant He can descend to reveal Himself. Though Kṛṣṇa is their origin, not even the demigods and the great sages such as Brahmā, Indra, Sanaka, Durvāsā, Marīci and others know Kṛṣṇa as He is. But one who is Kṛṣṇa's devotee, the *bhakti-yogī*, knows Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person situated in the core of his heart.

*sa vai puruṣāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adbokṣaje
abaituky-apratibatā yayātmā suprasidati*

The topmost *dharma* for mankind is that by which they can attain devotion unto the Supreme Person, who is *adbokṣaja* and who cannot be known by the material senses. Such *bhakti-yoga* must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to fully satisfy the self. (*Śrimad Bhāgavatam* I.2.6)

Kṛṣṇa gives birth to creation and to all things, but He Himself is without birth. Still, when Kṛṣṇa appears on Earth, as He did some 5,000 years ago to speak *Bhagavad-gītā*, He accepts His devotees Vasudeva and Devakī as His parents and appears as the sun seems to manifest from the ocean at the beginning of each day. Kṛṣṇa first revealed Himself in the heart of Vasudeva and then transferred Himself to the heart of Devakī. From there He appeared from her heart into the world. It is inconceivable, but Kṛṣṇa appears in the world without taking birth.

The great *Bhagavad-gītā* commentator Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī says that the power of Kṛṣṇa to be eternally unborn and at the same time take birth is due to Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable energy (*acintya-śakti*). If Kṛṣṇa were not inconceivable (*acintya*) then He would not be the Supreme Person. Viśvanātha confirms that one who understands this is never bewildered and is free from all *karma*.

VERSE 4-5

बुद्धिज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥४॥
अहिंसा समता तुष्टिपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विद्याः ॥५॥

*buddhir jñānam asaṁmohaḥ kṣamā satyam̄ damah̄ śamah̄
sukham̄ duḥkham̄ bhavo’bhāvo bhayam̄ cābhayam̄ eva ca
abhim̄samā samatā tuṣṭis tapo dānam̄ yaśo’yaśah̄
bhavanti bhāvā bhūtānām̄ matta eva pṛthag-vidhāḥ*

Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from delusion, tolerance, truthfulness, self-control, pleasure, misery, birth, death, fear and fearlessness, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy – all these various conditions of the living beings arise from Me alone.

VERSE 6

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥६॥

*mahaṛsayah̄ sapta pūrve catvāro manavas tathā
mad bhāvā mānasā jātā yeṣām̄ loka imāḥ prajāḥ*

The Seven Sages, the Four Kumāras and the Manus, from whom all the living beings of this world have descended, are all manifest from My mind.

VERSE 7

एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥७॥

*etām vibhūtim yogam ca mama yo vetti tattvataḥ
so'vikampena yogena yujyate nātra saṁśayāḥ*

One who knows the truth of My splendour and the process of *yoga* becomes resolutely united with Me. Of this there is no doubt.

Anuvṛtti

All things, good and bad, happiness and distress, fame and infamy etc. arise from Kṛṣṇa, but this is not to encourage a fatalistic approach to life. The *bhakti-yogī* is encouraged to use his intelligence to discriminate between favourable and unfavourable situations, accepting that which is favourable for *bhakti-yoga* and rejecting that which is unfavourable.

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpah prātikūlyasya varjanam

One should accept those things that are favourable for *bhakti* and reject those things that are unfavourable. (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* II.417)

The Seven Sages are Marīci, Bhṛgu, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha. The Four Kumāras are Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra. There are fourteen

Manus in one day of Brahmā. These Manus are progenitors of mankind that populate life throughout the universe. All these personalities manifest from the mind of Kṛṣṇa and appear in the material world as the sons of Brahmā.

These are all wonderful activities and cannot be understood by ordinary people. Only Kṛṣṇa's most confidential devotee can understand His true nature. Such a yogī is free from duality, is united with Kṛṣṇa and sees Him in all things as the Absolute Truth. Kṛṣṇa assures us that of this, there is no doubt.

VERSE 8

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥८॥

*aham sarvasya prabhavo mattah sarvam pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ*

I am the source of everything. All things emanate from Me. Understanding this, the wise who are endowed with love, worship Me with all their heart.

VERSE 9

मच्चित्ता मदूतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥९॥

*mac-cittā mad gata-prāṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

Those who are always thinking of Me, who have dedicated their lives to Me, enlighten each other and feel great satisfaction and joy by always speaking about Me.

VERSE 10

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ १० ॥

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogam tam yena mām upayānti te*

To those who are constantly devoted to Me and worship Me with love, I continue to bestow upon them devotional inspiration by which they may come to Me.

VERSE II

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ ११ ॥

*teṣām evānukampārtham aham ajñāna-jam tamah
nāśayāmy-ātma-bhāvastho jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā*

Out of compassion for them, I appear in their hearts and destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness that is born from ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Verses eight to eleven of this chapter are said to contain the ontological substance of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Herein, Śrī Kṛṣṇa establishes Himself as the source of the material and spiritual worlds, and the origin of Brahman and Paramātmā. By the use of the word *sarvasya*, meaning ‘everything’, He also establishes Himself as the origin of Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha (the Master of all potencies).

In the pantheon of demigods we find that Brahmā is master of Satya-loka, Śiva is the master of Śiva-loka, Indra the master of Indra-loka, but nowhere do we find

it said that anyone is master and origin of everyone and everything except Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The understanding that Kṛṣṇa is *sarvasya* compels the wise to worship Kṛṣṇa in love with all their hearts.

Kṛṣṇa says, *mac-cittā* – always think of Me and meditate on Me; *mad-gata-prāṇā* – dedicate your life to Me. In association with the wise engage in discussions about Me (*kathayanta*), enlivening and enlightening each other (*bodhayanta*). This is the proper way of meditation and engagement for the mind and senses.

Discussing about Kṛṣṇa is called *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, or *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* – hearing and chanting. This means to hear and chant *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other such literature and to perform *saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra*:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma bare bare*

This hearing and chanting of the name and activities of Kṛṣṇa constitutes the topmost system of *yoga*. Kṛṣṇa verifies in the *Padma Purāṇa* that He resides wherever His name is chanted:

*nāham tiṣṭhāmi vaikuṇṭhe yogināṁ hṛdayeṣu vā
tatra tiṣṭhāmi nārada yatra gāyanti mad bhaktāḥ*

I do not reside in Vaikuṇṭha, nor in the hearts of the lesser *yogīs*. I remain where My devotees engage in glorifying My activities and chanting My name.
(*Padma Purāṇa*)

Altogether, there are nine processes in *bhakti-yoga* to fully engage oneself in devotion to Kṛṣṇa. Of these, hearing and chanting are the first and foremost:

śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoh smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
 arcanam vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
 iti puṁśārpitā viṣṇau bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣanā

Hearing and chanting the *mahā-mantra* and the activities of Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa, remembering Him, serving His lotus feet, offering Him respectful worship, offering prayers to Him, becoming His servant, considering Him as one's dearest friend, and surrendering everything to Him. These nine processes are accepted as *bhakti-yoga*. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 7.5.23)

In verse 10 we find the word *prīti-pūrvakam*. *Prīti* means love, but this love should not be confused with the love and affections of this material world which are shared between conditioned living beings. *Prīti* is the state of pure affection wherein no expression of selfishness or mundane lust can be found. Such love is the requirement for worshipping Kṛṣṇa and such love is the key to an eternal bond with Him. Those who have attained such love for Kṛṣṇa by *bhakti-yoga* are continuously empowered by Him with the inspiration of pure devotion (*buddhi-yoga*), by which they may come to Him.

Kṛṣṇa dwells in the hearts of all living beings as the Paramātmā, the Super Consciousness, and directs the wanderings of everyone. When one desires to know Kṛṣṇa, to serve Kṛṣṇa and to enter into an eternal relationship with Him, then out of compassion for them, Kṛṣṇa personally

manifests in their hearts and destroys with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance. It is said that Kṛṣṇa is light and ignorance is darkness:

*kṛṣṇa-sūrya-sama māyā haya andhakāra
yāhān kṛṣṇa tāhān nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

Kṛṣṇa is compared to the sun and *māyā* (ignorance) is like the darkness. Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa there can never be any darkness. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.31)

Wherever light appears darkness is vanquished. Thus, when Kṛṣṇa personally appears in the heart of the *bhakti-yogi*, all darkness and despair vanish and one is supremely enlightened. This is the quintessence of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

VERSE 12-13

अर्जुन उवाच ।

परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥ १२ ॥
आहस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनारदस्तथा ।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ १३ ॥

arjuna uvāca —

*param brahma param dhāma pavitraṁ paramam bhavān
puruṣam śāśvataṁ divyam ādidevam ajam vibhum
ābus tvām ṛṣayah sarve devarṣir nāradas tathā
asito devalo vyāsaḥ svayam caiva braviṣi me*

Arjuna said: You are the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme refuge, and the most pure. You are the eternal Supreme Person, the most effulgent, the original divinity, unborn

and all-pervading. All the sages such as Nārada, Asita, Devala and Vyāsa have stated this, just as You have declared this unto me.

VERSE 14

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ १४ ॥

*sarvam etad ṛtam manye yan mām vadasi keśava
na hi te bhagavan vyaktim vidur devā na dānavāḥ*

O Keśava, everything You have told me I accept as truth. O Master of all splendour, neither Demigods nor *Dānavas* can fully understand Your personality.

VERSE 15

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ १६ ॥

*svayam evātmanātmaṇi vetha tvam puruṣottama
bhūta-bhāvana bhūteśa deva-deva jagat-pate*

O Supreme Person, O Creator of all creatures, O Controller of all living beings, O Master of the demigods, O Master of the universe – You alone truly know Yourself.

VERSE 16

वक्तुमहस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ १६ ॥

*vaktum arbasy-aśeṣena divyā hy-ātma-vibbūtayaḥ
yābbhir vibbūtibhir lokān imāṁs tvam vyāpya tiṣṭhasi*

Please describe to me completely Your divine powers by which You pervade all the worlds.

VERSE 17

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वा॒ं सदा॑ परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु॑ केषु॒ च भावेषु॑ चिन्त्योऽसि॒ भगवन्मया॑ ॥ १७ ॥

*katham̄ vidyām̄ aban̄ yogīn̄ tvām̄ sadā paricintayan
keṣu keṣu ca bhāveṣu cintyo’si bhagavan mayā*

How can I constantly be absorbed in thoughts of You, O Master of all mystic powers, How can I know You and how should I meditate upon You?

VERSE 18

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दनं ।
भूयः कथय तुसिर्हि॑ शृण्वतो नास्ति॑ मे॒ मृतम् ॥ १८ ॥

*vistareṇātmano yogam̄ vibhūtīn̄ ca janārdana
bhūyāḥ kathaya trptir hi śṛṇvato nāsti me’mr̄tam*

O Janārdana, kindly explain to me again in detail Your mystic powers and opulence. Hearing such nectar about You, I am never satiated.

Anuvṛtti

Arjuna accepts all that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said and says that only Kṛṣṇa actually knows Himself. The Absolute Truth is infinite and the living beings, like Arjuna, are finite and thus are inherently unable to fully comprehend the splendour of Kṛṣṇa. Yet for Arjuna to hear of such splendours is spiritual food for meditation.

Arjuna addresses Kṛṣṇa as *yogī*, the Master of mystic powers, and asks how he should meditate upon Him. In the remaining verses of this chapter Kṛṣṇa outlines how one should think of Him. But in the last verse He concludes by saying that there is no necessity of thinking of

Him in an indirect or abstract way, because with just a mere portion of His Self, He supports the entire universe. Thus Kṛṣṇa indicates to Arjuna that to meditate on His personal form is the ultimate meditation.

VERSE 19

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥१९॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*hanta te kathayiṣyāmi divyā hy-ātma-vibhūtayah
prādhānyataḥ kuru-śreṣṭha nāsty-anto vistarasya me*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Listen, O best of the Kuru Dynasty, there is no end to the extent of My powers, but I shall explain to you those divine opulences of Mine that are most prominent.

VERSE 20

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥२०॥

*abam ātmā guḍākeśa sarva-bhūtāśaya-sthitāḥ
abam ādiś ca madhyaiḥ ca bhūtānām anta eva ca*

O conqueror of sleep, I am the Super Consciousness that resides in all living beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all creatures.

VERSE 21

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुज्यौरिषां रविरञ्जुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥२१॥

*ādityānām abam viṣṇur jyotiṣām ravir amśumān
marīcir marutām asmi nakṣatrānām abam śasī*

Of the Ādityas I am Viṣṇu. Of lights I am the blazing sun. Of the Marutas I am Marīci. Of celestial bodies I am the moon.

VERSE 22

*वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ २२ ॥*

*vedānām sāma-vedo'smi devānām asmi vāsavah
indriyānām manaś cāsmi bhūtānām asmi cetanā*

Of the *Vedas* I am the *Sāma Veda*. Of the demigods I am Indra. Of the senses I am the mind. Of living beings I am consciousness.

VERSE 23

*रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥ २३ ॥*

*rudrānām śaṅkaraś cāsmi vitteśo yakṣa-rakṣasām
vasūnām pāvakaś cāsmi meruḥ śikharinām abam*

Of the Rudras I am Śaṅkara. Of the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas I am Kuvera. Of the Vasus I am Agni and of mountains I am Meru.

VERSE 24

*पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थं बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥ २४ ॥*

*purodhasām ca mukhyam mām viddhi pārtha bṛhaspatim
senānīnām abam skandah sarasām asmi sāgarah*

O Pārtha, know Me to be Bṛhaspati, the chief amongst priests. Of military generals I am Skanda. Of bodies of water I am the ocean.

VERSE 25

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥२५॥

*maharṣīṇāṁ bhṛgur abhaṁ girām asmy-ekam akṣaram
yajñānāṁ japa-yajño'smi sthāvarāṇāṁ himālayaḥ*

Of great sages I am Bhṛgu. Of sounds I am the monosyllabic *mantra om*. Of sacrifices I am *japa*. Of immovable things I am the Himālayas.

VERSE 26

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिले मुनिः ॥२६॥

*aśvatthah sarva-vṛkṣāṇāṁ devarṣīṇāṁ ca nāradah
gandharvāṇāṁ citrarathah siddhānāṁ kapilo munih*

Amongst all trees I am the banyan. Of celestial sages I am Nārada. Amongst Gandharvas I am Citraratha and amongst perfected beings I am Kapila Muni.

VERSE 27

उच्चैःश्रवसमधानां विद्धि माममृतोद्घवम् ।
ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥२७॥

*uccaiḥśravasam aśvānāṁ viddhi mām amṛtodbhavam
airāvataṁ gajendrāṇāṁ narāṇāṁ ca narādhipam*

Of horses I am known as Uccaiḥśrava, who was born from the ocean of nectar. I am Airāvata, the king of elephants and I am the monarch amongst men.

VERSE 28

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।
प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥२८॥

*āyudhānām abhiṁ vajraṁ dhenūnām asmi kāmadbhuk
prajanaś cāsmi kandarpaḥ sarpāṇām asmi vāsukiḥ*

Of weapons I am the thunderbolt. Of cows I am the Kāma-dhenu. Of progenitors I am Kāma, and of snakes I am Vāsuki.

VERSE 29

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥२९॥

*anantaś cāsmi nāgānāṁ varuṇo yādasām abham
pitṛṇām aryamā cāsmi yamaḥ saṁyamatām abham*

Amongst the celestial Nāga-snakes I am Ananta. Amongst the inhabitants of the water I am Varuṇa. Amongst the forefathers I am Aryamā. Of chastisers I am Yama.

VERSE 30

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।
मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥३०॥

*prahlādaś cāsmi daityānāṁ kālaḥ kalayatām abham
mr̥gāṇāṁ ca mr̥gendro'ham vainateyaś ca pakṣinām*

Amongst the *daityas* I am Prahlāda. Of constraints I am time. Of beasts I am the lion. Of birds I am Garuḍa.

VERSE 31

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।
झाषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ ३१ ॥

*pavanah pavatām asmi rāmāḥ śastra-bhṛtām aham
jhaṣāṇāṁ makaraś cāsmi srotasām asmi jāhnavī*

Of purifiers I am the wind. Of the wielders of weapons I am Rāmacandra. Amongst aquatics I am the *makara* and of rivers I am the *Gaṅgā*.

VERSE 32

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।
अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ ३२ ॥

*sargāṇām ādir antaś ca madhyāṁ caivāham arjuna
adhyātma-vidyā vidyānāṁ vādaḥ pravadatām aham*

O Arjuna, in creation I am the beginning, the middle and the end. Of wisdom I am knowledge of the self and I am the doctrine of philosophers.

VERSE 33

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ ३३ ॥

*akṣarāṇām akāro'smi dvandvah sāmāsikasya ca
aham evākṣayah kālo dhātāham viśvato-mukhah*

Of letters I am the letter *A*. Amongst compound words I am the dual. I alone am the eternal flow of the time factor and I am the Creator, who gazes in all directions.

VERSE 34

मृत्युः सर्वहरशाहमुद्भवश्च भविष्यताम् ।
कीर्तिः श्रीवाक्नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥ ३४ ॥

*mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham udbhavaś ca bhavisyatām
kīrtiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīṇām smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā*

I am death, the destroyer of all things. I am the manifestation of all things yet to be. Of women I am Kīrtī, Śrī, Vāk, Smṛti, Medhā, Dhṛti and Kṣamā.

VERSE 35

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥ ३५ ॥

*bṛhat-sāma tathā sāmnām gāyatrī chandasām abham
māsānām mārga-sīrṣo'ham rtūnām kusumākarah*

Of the songs of the *Sāma Veda* I am the *Bṛhat-Sāma*. Of Vedic rhythms I am the *Gāyatrī*. Of months I am Mārga-sīrṣa and amongst seasons I am the flower-bearing spring.

VERSE 36

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३६ ॥

*dyūtam chalayatām asmi tejas tejasvinām abham
jayo'smi vyavasāyo'smi sattvam sattvavatām abham*

I am the gambling of cheaters and of the splendid I am splendour. I am victory and determination. I am the might of the mighty.

VERSE 37

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ ३७ ॥

*vṛṣṇinām vāsudevo'smi pāṇḍavānām dhanañjayaḥ
muninām apy-abam vyāsaḥ kavīnām uśanā kavibḥ*

I am Vāsudeva amongst the Vṛṣṇi Dynasty. I am Arjuna amongst the Pāṇḍavas. Of philosophers I am Vyāsa and amongst scholars I am Uśanā.

VERSE 38

दण्डे दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ ३८ ॥

*daṇḍe damayatām asmi nītir asmi jigīṣatām
maunam caivāsmi gubyānām jñānam jñānavatām abam*

I am the punishment enforced by those who chastise. I am the conduct of those that desire victory. I am the silence of secrets and I am the knowledge of the wise.

VERSE 39

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तद्हमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ ३९ ॥

*yat cāpi sarva-bhūtānām bijam tad abam arjuna
na tad asti vinā yat syān mayā bhūtarū carācaram*

I am the seed of all living beings, O Arjuna. There is nothing moving or non-moving, that can exist without Me.

VERSE 40

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तृदेशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४० ॥

*nānto'sti mama divyānāṁ vibhūtīnāṁ parantapa
eṣa tūddeśataḥ prokto vibhūter vistaro mayā*

O conqueror of the enemy, My divine glories are unlimited. Only a fraction of their extent has been explained by Me.

VERSE 41

*यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमद्भूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोशसंभवम् ॥४१॥*

*yad yad vibhūtimat sattvam śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā
tat tad evāvagaccha tvam mama tejo'miśa sambhavam*

Whatever exists that is wonderful, beautiful or glorious, know that it has manifest from but a particle of My power.

VERSE 42

*अथ वा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्मेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥४२॥*

*athavā bahunaitena kim jñātena tavārjuna
viṣṭabhyāham idam kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat*

But what is the necessity of knowing all this, O Arjuna? I support the entire universe simply by a portion of Myself.

Anuvṛtti

In the above verses Śrī Kṛṣṇa has stated that all these great and wonderful things of the world represent Him. Kṛṣṇa states this so that we will understand that whatever is famous, beautiful and glorious in this world is manifest from Him alone. The splendour of Kṛṣṇa is unlimited, but ultimately Kṛṣṇa says that there is no necessity for Arjuna to perform indirect meditation when the Absolute Truth

is standing in front of him. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa suggests to Arjuna that he simply meditate on that form.

There is no form of Kṛṣṇa superior to that which was standing in front of Arjuna at Kurukṣetra, save and except for the form of Kṛṣṇa when He appeared as a youth in the forest of Vṛndāvana on the banks of the River Yamunā, casting sidelong glances, His flute in hand and His transcendental body bending in three places.

*smerāṁ bhaṅgi-traya-paricitāṁ sāci-vistīrṇa-dṛṣṭim
varṇī-nyastādhara-kiśalayām ujjvalāṁ candrakeṇa
govindākhyām hari-tanum itaḥ keśi-tirthopakanthe
mā prekṣiṣṭhās tava yadi sakhe bandbu-saṅge ‘sti raṅgah*

O friend, if you are attached to your companions in this world, then do not gaze on the enchanting smile of Govinda as He stands on the bank of the Yamunā at Keśi-ghāṭa. Casting sidelong glances, He places His flute to His lips, which are compared to newly blossomed buds. His divine body, bending in three places, appears most effulgent in the light of the moon. (*Bhakti-rasāmr̥ta-sindhu* I.2.239),

Kṛṣṇa, appeared in Vṛndāvana, India, 5,237 years ago and performed His pastimes of love with His devotees and with those who had reached perfection through *bhakti-yoga*. The pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana are recorded in the Tenth Canto of the *Śrimad Bhāgavatam* and have inspired the students of *bhakti-yoga* for the past fifty centuries.

In the final chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa will inform Arjuna that whoever surrenders unto Him will attain the Supreme Abode, Goloka Vṛndāvana.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 विभूतियोगो नाम दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryām saṁhitāyām
 vaiyāsikyām bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 vibhūti-yogo nāma daśamo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Ten entitled *Vibhūti Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ एकादशोऽध्यायः
विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः

CHAPTER 11
ViŚVARŪPA DARŚANA YOGA

The Yoga of the Universal Form

VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।
यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca —

*mad anugrahāya paramam gubyam adhyātma-samjñitam
yat tvayoktam vacas tena moho'yam vigato mama*

Arjuna said: By Your mercy, You have explained the greatest secret about Your supreme nature — thus my bewilderment is gone.

VERSE 2

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।
त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥२॥

*bbavāpyayau hi bhūtānām śrutau vistaraśo mayā
tvattah kamala-patrākṣa māhātmyam api cāvyayam*

O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, I have heard Your detailed description of the creation and destruction of all living beings, as well as Your eternal glories.

VERSE 3

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥३॥

*evam etad yathāttha tvam ātmānam paramēśvara
draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpam aiśvaram puruṣottama*

O Supreme Controller, what You have described about Yourself is true. O Supreme Person, I now desire to see Your form of great splendour.

VERSE 4

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥४॥

*manyase yadi tac chakyam mayā draṣṭum iti prabho
yogeśvara tato me tvam darśayātmanam avyayam*

O Master of all *yogīs*, if You think that it is possible, then kindly show that immortal form to me.

Anuvṛtti

By the end of Chapter Ten, Arjuna is completely convinced that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person and that all creation manifests from Him and remains in Him after annihilation. But in order that future generations may not mistake Kṛṣṇa for an ordinary man or simply a philosopher, Arjuna requests Kṛṣṇa to reveal His universal form (*viśvarūpa*) – the form of Kṛṣṇa wherein everything in the universe is contained. This form cannot be seen by any independent endeavour, but completely depends on the mercy of Kṛṣṇa for Arjuna to behold.

Arjuna also knows that in the future unscrupulous men will claim to be God and mislead ignorant people. Therefore, Arjuna wants Kṛṣṇa to show His universal form as the benchmark so that anyone claiming to be God should be able to show the universal form to confirm their position.

Indeed, Arjuna's foresight was accurate. Since the time of Kṛṣṇa, and especially in modern times, many so-called 'godmen' have stepped forward in society and claimed to be Kṛṣṇa or God incarnate. Unfortunately, the masses of people are so ignorant that they accept such impostors. The greatest misfortune befalls a person when he or she

claims to be God, or when a person accepts another human as God. This is without a doubt the darkest ignorance. The *Īśopaniṣad* warns of this as follows:

*andhaṁ tamah praviśanti ye'vidyām upāsate
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u vidyāyāṁ ratāḥ*

Those who engage in the worship of false things enter into the darkest region of ignorance. But those who have knowledge, yet do not correct others, enter into even darker regions. (*Īśopaniṣad* 9)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is addressed by Arjuna as the Supreme Person (Parameśvara), and the Master of all yogic powers (Yogeśvara) because Arjuna knows that Kṛṣṇa will be able to show him the universal form, thus distinguishing Kṛṣṇa once and for all as the Supreme Being.

VERSE 5

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥५॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —
paśya me pārtha rūpāṇi śataśo'tha sabasraśab
nānā-vidhāni divyāni nānā-varṇākṛtīni ca*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: Pārtha, behold My unlimited divine forms of various hues and shapes.

VERSE 6

पश्यादित्यान्वसूनुदानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्र्वर्याणि भारत ॥६॥

*paśyādityān vasūn rudrān aśvinau marutas tathā
babūny-adṛṣṭa-pūrvvāṇi paśyāścaryāṇi bhārata*

O descendant of Bharata, behold the Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, the Aśvinī-kumāras and the Marutas. Behold the multifarious amazing forms, never before seen.

VERSE 7

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद्वष्टुमिच्छसि ॥७॥

*ihaikastham jagat kṛtsnam paśyādya sa-carācaram
mama dehe guḍākeśa yac cānyad draṣṭum icchasi*

O conqueror of sleep, behold in this one place the entire cosmos, including all moving and non-moving beings, all within this form of Mine along with whatever else you desire to see.

VERSE 8

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥८॥

*na tu mām śakyase draṣṭum anenaiva sva-cakṣuṣā
divyam dadāmi te cakṣub paśya me yogam aiśvaram*

Yet you are unable to perceive this with your present eyes, therefore I will give you divine vision. Now behold My mystic splendour!

Anuvṛtti

If one gazes out into the universe with his eyes or even with a modern telescope one should not expect to see the universal form as was shown to Arjuna. The universal form

is not possible to perceive with the eyes of this material body. For such a vision as Arjuna was to receive, one needs divine eyes. In other words, Arjuna's vision of the universal form was subjective and could only be revealed by Kṛṣṇa.

Within that vision Arjuna was able to see in one place all that is, all that was, all that will ever be, everything moving and non-moving in an instant. As we will see in this chapter, after seeing the universal form of Kṛṣṇa which Arjuna describes as wonderful, astonishing, fiery, terrible and devastating, he becomes fearful and asks Kṛṣṇa to once again show him His charming and beautiful form as the Supreme Person.

VERSE 9

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥९॥

sañjaya uvāca —

*evam uktvā tato rājan mahā-yogeśvaro hariḥ
darśayāmāsa pārthāya paramam rūpam aiśvaram*

Sañjaya said: O Mahārāja Dhṛtarāṣṭra, having spoken thus to Pārtha, the Great Master of all mysticism, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, revealed the majesty of His universal form.

VERSE 10-II

अनेक वक्रनयनमनेकाद्भुत दर्शनम् ।
अनेक दिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ १० ॥
दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।
सर्वांश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ ११ ॥

*aneka-vaktra-nayanam anekādbhuta-darśanam
 aneka-divyābharanāṁ divyānekodyatāyudham
 divya-mālyāmbara-dharam divya-gandhānulepanam
 sarvāścaryamayāṁ devam anantāṁ viśvato-mukham*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed His form of infinite mouths and eyes, adorned with many divine ornaments and raising many celestial weapons. He was decorated with divine garlands and garments and anointed with heavenly fragrances. He was most wonderful, splendidous, unlimited and all-pervading.

VERSE 12

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपद्मुत्थिता ।
 यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्ग्रासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ १२ ॥

*divi sūrya-sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthitā
 yadi bhāḥ sadṛśī sā syād bhāsas tasya mahātmanah*

If an infinite number of suns were to appear in the sky simultaneously, such effulgence might possibly resemble the splendour of that Supreme Person.

VERSE 13

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
 अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ १३ ॥

*tatraika-stham jagat kṛtsnam pravibhaktamanekadhā
 apaśyat deva-devasya śarīre pāṇḍavas tada*

At that moment, Arjuna, the son of Pāṇḍu, saw the entire cosmos within the form of the Master of the demigods.

VERSE 14

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥ १४ ॥

*tataḥ sa vismayāviṣṭo hṛṣṭa-romā dhanañjayaḥ
praṇamya śirasā devam kṛtāñjalir abhāṣata*

Thus, being overwhelmed with astonishment, Arjuna's hair stood on end and placing his hands together in prayer, he offered his obeisance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and spoke.

VERSE 15

अर्जुन उवाच ।

पश्यामि देवांस्तत्र देव देहे सर्वांस्तथा भूतविशेष सङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थम् ऋषीश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥ १५ ॥

*arjuna uvāca —
paśyāmi devāṁs tava deva dehe
sarvāṁs tathā bhūta-viśeṣa-saṅghān
brahmāṇam iśāṁ kamalāsana stham
ṛṣīmś ca sarvān uragāṁś ca divyān*

Arjuna said: O Master, I see within Your body all the demigods and all other forms of life. I see the sages, the celestial serpents, as well as Brahmā and Śiva seated on a lotus.

VERSE 16

अनेक बाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥ १६ ॥

*aneka-bāhūdara-vaktra-netraṁ
paśyāmi tvāṁ sarvato'nanta-rūpam
nāntaṁ na madhyāṁ na punas tavādīm
paśyāmi viśveśvara viśva-rūpa*

O Master of the universe, I see Your unlimited form with innumerable arms, bellies, mouths and eyes. I see that there is no beginning, middle or end to this universal form of Yours.

VERSE 17

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्नीरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद् दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥ १७ ॥

*kirīṭinam gadinam cakriṇam ca
tejorāśīm sarvato dīptimantam
paśyāmi tvām durnirīkṣyām samantād
dīptānalārka-dyutim aprameyam*

I see You in all directions with crown, club and disc-weapon – a mass of radiance illuminating all around You like the brilliance of the sun, making You difficult to behold.

VERSE 18

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥ १८ ॥

*tvam akṣaram paramam veditavyam
tvamasya viśvasya param nidhānam
tvam avyayaḥ śāśvata-dharma-goptā
sanātanas tvām puruṣo mato me*

You are the eternal Absolute Truth known by the *Vedas*. You are the ultimate shelter of the universe. You are the imperishable protector of *dharma*. I understand You to be the eternal Supreme Person.

VERSE 19

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्यम् अनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्रं स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥ १९ ॥

*anādi-madhyāntam ananta-viryam
ananta-bāhum śaśi-sūrya-netram
paśyāmi tvām dīpta-butāśa-vaktram
sva-tejasā viśvam idam tapantam*

I see that You are without beginning, middle or end. You have unlimited power and innumerable arms. Your eyes are the sun and the moon. This entire universe is scorched by the rays emanating from Your mouth like blazing fire.

Anuvṛtti

The universal form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is one that invokes great awe, reverence and laudations from the beholder, but factually speaking, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa is not charmed by such a display. Awe and reverence borders on fear and as we shall see, Arjuna does indeed become fearful as he continues to behold Kṛṣṇa's universal form. Fear does not encourage a loving relationship with the Supreme. Therefore, the universal form of Kṛṣṇa is not very important for students of *bhakti-yoga*, only in as much as it proves to demonstrate that unless one can show the universal form, one should not be accepted as God.

Factually, there are different *avatāras* of Kṛṣṇa that appear in the universe at scheduled times and these have been mentioned by Jayadeva Gosvāmī as follows:

*vedān uddharate jaganti vahate bhū-golam udbibbrate
daityam dārayate balam chalayate kṣatra-kṣayam kurvate*

*paulastyam jayate balaṁ kalayate kāruṇyam ātanvate
mlecchān mūrchayate daśākṛti-kṛte kṛṣṇāya tubhyam namah*

O Kṛṣṇa, I offer my respects unto You, who appear in the forms of these ten *avatāras*. As Matsya You rescue the *Vedas*, and as Kūrma You carry the Mandara Mountain on Your back. As Varāha You lift up the Earth planet with Your tusks, and as Narasiṁha You tear open the chest of the *daitya*, Hiranyakāśipu. In the form of Vāmana You delude the *daitya* king Bali by requesting only three steps of land from him, and then You take the whole universe from him by expanding Your strides. As Paraśurāma You slay all the wicked warriors, and as Rāmacandra You fight the *rākṣasa* king Rāvaṇa. As Balarāma You carry a plough with which You subdue the wicked and You draw the River Yamunā towards You. As Buddha You show compassion towards all the living beings that are suffering in this world, and at the end of the Kali-yuga You appear as Kalki in order to bewilder the *mlecchas*. (*Gītā Govinda* I.12)

In reading the *Bhagavad-gītā* one sees repetition in many places. This however is not a flaw but an embellishment due to ecstasy. The *ācārya* Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa confirms this (*prasāde vismaye harṣe dvi-trīr-uktam na duṣyati*) as does the famous commentator on *Bhagavad-gītā* A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, who writes in his purport to verse nineteen as follows:

There is no limit to the extent of the six opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Here and in

many other places there is repetition, but according to the scriptures, repetition of the glories of Kṛṣṇa is not a literary weakness. It is said that at a time of bewilderment or wonder or of great ecstasy, statements are repeated over and over. That is not a flaw.

VERSE 20

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि व्यासं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।
दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमिदं तवोग्रं लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥ २० ॥

*dyāv-āpr̥thivyor idam antaram hi
vyāptam tvayaikena diśāś ca sarvāḥ
dṛṣṭvādbhutam rūpam idam tavogram
loka-trayam pravyathitam mahātman*

O Great One, You completely pervade all directions including the space between the higher planets and the Earth. Seeing this wonderful and terrifying form of Yours, the three worlds tremble with fear.

VERSE 21

अमी हि त्वा सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति केचिद्ग्रीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः स्तुवन्ति त्वा स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥ २१ ॥

*amī hi tvām sura-saṅghā viśanti
kecid bhītāḥ prāñjalayo gr̥ṇanti
svastīty-uktvā maharṣi-siddha-saṅghāḥ
stuvanti tvām stutibhiḥ puṣkalābbhiḥ*

The demigods enter into You and fearfully offer prayers to You with folded hands. The assembly of great sages and perfected beings offer choice prayers unto You exclaiming, “May there be auspiciousness!”

VERSE 22

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।
गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्गा वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥ २२ ॥

*rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā
viśve'śvinau marutaś coṣmapāś ca
gandharva-yakṣasura-siddha-saṅghā
vīkṣante tvāṁ vismitāś caiva sarve*

The Rudras, Ādityas, Vasus, Sādhyas, Viśvadevas, Aśvinī-
kumāras, Marutas, the forefathers, Gandharvas, Yakṣas,
Asuras and Siddhas behold You and are struck with awe.

VERSE 23

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्नेन्त्रं महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।
बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥ २३ ॥

*rūpaṁ mahat te babu-vaktra-netraṁ
mahā-bāho babu-bābūru-pādam
babūdaraṁ babu-dariṣṭrā-karālaṁ
dṛṣṭvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathāham*

Seeing this immense form of Yours with it's unlimited
mouths, eyes, arms, legs, feet and bellies, dreadful with it's
many teeth – all of mankind, and myself, are terrified.

VERSE 24

नभः स्पृशां दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो ॥ २४ ॥

*nabbaḥ sprśam̄ dīptam aneka-varṇam̄
vyāttānanam̄ dīpta-viśāla-netram
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātmā
dhṛtiṁ na vindāmi śamam̄ ca viṣṇo*

O Viṣṇu, upon seeing Your brilliant form of many colours touching the sky, with its huge open mouths and massive blazing eyes, I shudder within and can no longer maintain my mental equilibrium nor remain peaceful.

VERSE 25

दंष्ट्रकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वै कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लमे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥२५॥

*dariṣṭrā-karālāni ca te mukhāni
drṣṭvaiva kālānala-sannibhāni
diśo na jāne na labbe ca śarma
prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa*

Seeing Your many mouths with their terrifying teeth, fiery like the flames of the universal annihilation, I have lost all sense of direction and composure. Be kind upon me, O Master of the demigods, O supreme shelter of the universe.

VERSE 26-27

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्कैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥२६॥

वक्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दंष्ट्रकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु संदश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥२७॥

*amī ca tvām dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ
sarve sabaivāvanipāla saṅghaiḥ
bhīṣmo droṇaḥ sūta-putras tathāsau
saḥāsmadīyair api yodha-mukhyaiḥ

vaktrāṇi te tvaramāṇā viśanti
dariṣṭrā-karālāni bhayānakāni
kecid vilagnā daśanāntareṣu
sandṛṣyante cūrṇitair uttamāṅgaiḥ*

All the sons of Dhṛitarāṣṭra, their royal allies, as well as Bhīṣma, Drona, Karṇa and also the best fighters in our army, are all hurtling into Your terrible mouths with their frightening teeth. Some I see with their heads caught and pulverised between Your teeth.

VERSE 28

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्राण्यभिवज्वलन्ति ॥२८॥

*yathā nadinām babavo'mbu vegāḥ
samudram evābhimukhā dravanti
tathā tavāmī nara-loka-vīrā
viśanti vaktrāṇy-abhivijvalanti*

Just as rivers flow towards the ocean and finally enter it, similarly all these famous heroes enter into Your fiery mouths.

VERSE 29

यथा प्रदीपं ज्वलनं पतझा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास् तवापि वक्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥२९॥

*yathā pradīptaṁ jvalanam pataṅgā
viśanti nāśaya samṛddha-vegāḥ
tathaiva nāśaya viśanti lokas
tavāpi vaktrāṇi samṛddha-vegāḥ*

Just as moths rush to their deaths by entering fire, all the worlds rush into Your mouths to their destruction.

VERSE 30

लेलिह्वसे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल् लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्जर्वलद्धिः ।
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥३०॥

*lelibyase grasamānah samantāl
 lokān-samagrān-vadanair jvaladbhiḥ
 tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagram
 bhāsas tavogrāḥ pratapanti viṣṇo*

You repeatedly lick Your lips as You devour all around You with Your fiery mouths. O Viṣṇu, pervading the entire universe with Your brilliant rays, You incinerate it.

VERSE 31

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्रहपो नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।
 विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥३१॥

*ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugra-rūpo
 namo'stu te deva-vara prasīda
 vijnātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyam
 na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim*

With such a terrifying form, please tell me who You are. Of best of all divinities, be merciful unto me. O origin of all, I desire to know You, for I cannot fully understand Your activities.

Anuvṛtti

Seeing the universal form, Arjuna has now become anxious and is on the verge of forgetting who Śrī Kṛṣṇa actually is. Therefore, we can understand from Arjuna's situation that the great power, opulence, majesty, devastation and utter horror seen by him does not serve to draw us closer to the Absolute Truth.

Nature worship is not included in *bhakti-yoga*. The Truth is present in nature, but one must know what that Truth is beforehand. One cannot achieve self-realisation

simply by contemplation on, or simple appreciation of nature alone. Meditation on the Absolute Truth is not impersonal or abstract as previously mentioned. The personal form of Kṛṣṇa as a charming youth with a threefold bending form as Śyāmasundara, adorned with forest flowers, dressed in bright yellow garments, while playing His flute under a tree on the banks of the River Yamunā is the most cherished object of meditation for all great sages and yogīs. This is described in the following verses:

*sat-puṇḍarīka-nayanāṁ meghābhām vaidyutāmbaram
dvi-bhujāṁ jñāna-mudrādhyām vana-mālinam īśvaram*

I meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose beautiful eyes are like lotuses, whose hue is that of a new rain cloud, whose clothes are as bright as lightning, who possesses two arms, who is adorned by a beautiful forest garland, and whose hand shows the *jñāna-mudrā* indicating divine knowledge. (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 9)

*pītāmbaram ghana-śyāmaṁ dvi-bhujāṁ vana-mālinam
barhi-barhākṛtā-pīḍam śaśi-koṭi-nibhānanam
ghūrṇāyamāna-nayanām karnikārāvataṁsinam
abhitāś candanenātha madhye kumkuma-bindunā
racitām tilakām bhāle vibhrataṁ maṇḍalākṛtim
taruṇāditya-śaṅkāśām kuṇḍalābhyaṁ virājitam
gharmāmbu-kaṇikā-rājad-darpaṇābba-kapolakam
priyā-mukha-nyastāpāṅgam līlāyā yonnata-bhruvam
agra-bhāganyasta-muktā-sphurad-uccha-su-nāsikam
daśana-jyotsnayā rājat-pakva-bimba-phalādharam
keyūrāṅgada-sad-ratna-mudrikābbhir lasat-karam
vibhrataṁ muralīm vāme pānau-padma tathetare*

kāñci-dāma sphuran-madhyam nūpurābhyām lasat-padam
 rati-keli-rasāveśa-cāpalam capalekṣanam
 basantam priyayā sārdham hāsayantam ca tām muhuḥ
 ittham kalpa-taror mūle ratna-simhāsanopari
 vṛndāraṇye smaret kṛṣṇam samsthitam priyayā saha

I meditate on two-armed Kṛṣṇa, who is dark like a monsoon rain cloud, dressed in yellow garments, garlanded with forest flowers, crowned with a peacock feather and decorated with lotuses. His face is as splendid as millions of moons and His eyes move restlessly. His forehead is marked with *tilaka* made of sandalwood paste and musk. He is adorned with earrings that resemble two rising suns, and His perspiration-anointed cheeks are like two glistening mirrors. His eyes with raised eyebrows above them playfully glance at His beloved's face. The tip of His graceful raised nose is decorated with a glistening pearl. His lips are red like the *bimba* fruit and are splendid in the moonlight of His teeth. His hands are splendid with bracelets, armlets, and jewelled rings. He holds a flute in His left lotus hand, His waist is splendid with a graceful belt and His feet are splendid with beautiful anklets. His eyes are restless with the nectar of His divine activities and He jokes with His friends, making them laugh again and again. He sits on a jewelled throne under a desire tree in the forest of Vṛndāvana with His beloved. In this way one should meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (*Sanat-kumāra Samhitā* 54-62)

VERSE 32

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्वद्दो लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥३२॥

*sri bhagavān uvāca —
kālo'smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt pravṛddho
lokān samāhartum iba pravṛttāḥ
ṛte'pi tvāṁ na bhavisyanti sarve
ye'vasthitāḥ pratyanikeṣu yodhāḥ*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Time I am, the mighty destroyer of worlds, and I come to vanquish all living beings. Even without your participation, all the warriors on the opposite side of the battlefield will be killed.

VERSE 33

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून्भुज्ञ राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥३३॥

*tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha yaśo labhasva
jītvā śatrūn bhuṅkṣva rājyam samṛddham
mayaivaite nibatāḥ pūrvam eva
nimitta-mātrām bhava savyasācin*

Therefore, arise and achieve glory! Conquer your foes and enjoy a prosperous empire! O best amongst archers, all your enemies have already been killed by Me – you are but an instrument.

VERSE 34

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपलान् ॥३४॥

*dronāṁ ca bhīṣmaṁ ca jayadrathaṁ ca
 karṇāṁ tathānyān̄ api yodha-vīrān̄
 mayā hatāṁs tvāṁ jahi mā vyathīṣṭhā
 yudhyasva jetāsi rāṇe sapatnān̄*

Droṇa, Bhīṣma, Jayadratha, Karṇa and other heroic soldiers have already been killed by Me. Fear not – fight! You will certainly conquer your enemy in this battle.

Anuvṛtti

The fate of the world is ultimately sealed, but the opportunity for the conditioned living beings to attain enlightenment and transcend the world of birth and death is open to all. Śrī Kṛṣṇa say, *kālo’smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt* – “Time I am, the mighty destroyer of worlds.” This is the fate of the world. Time is the great enemy and it eventually devours all things. This insurmountable time is the energy of Kṛṣṇa.

*māsartu-darvī-parighaṭṭanena
 sūryāgninā rātri-divendhanena
 asmin mabā-mohamaye katāhe
 bhūtāni kālah pacatīti vārtā*

The twelve months and six seasons are like cooking spoons. The sun is the fire for cooking. Day and night are the fuel consumed by the sun. Ignorance is the cooking pot and the living beings are within that pot being cooked by time. That is the way of this world! (*Mahābhārata, Vana-parva 313.II8*)

In 1945 when the first atomic bomb was detonated at test facilities in New Mexico, atomic physicist Robert

Oppenheimer remembered verse 32 of this chapter as a just assessment of the moment. Years later, when asked about his feelings concerning the bomb, he made the following statement:

We knew the world would not be the same. A few people laughed, a few people cried, most people were silent. I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad-gītā. Viṣṇu is trying to persuade the Prince (Arjuna) that he should do his duty and to impress him takes on his multi-armed form and says, “Now I am Death, the destroyer of the worlds.”

Indeed, from then till now, the world seems to hang by a thread and our imminent destruction (seemingly at our own hands) could come at any moment. This, it appears, is the ultimate fate of the world – certain annihilation.

VERSE 35

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं सगद्ददं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥ ३५ ॥

sañjaya uvāca —
etac chrutvā vacanam keśavasya
kṛtāñjalir vepamānāḥ kirīṭī
namaskṛtvā bhūya evāha kṛṣṇam
sagadgadām bhīta-bhītaḥ praṇamya

Sañjaya said: Upon hearing Keśava's words, the trembling Arjuna offered his obeisance and, folding his hands in prayer, spoke to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a faltering voice.

VERSE 36

अर्जुन उवाच ।

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्टत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः ॥ ३६ ॥

*arjuna uvāca –
sthāne hrṣīkeśa tava prakīrtyā
jagat prabhṛṣyaty-anurajyate ca
rakṣāṁsi bhītāni diśo dravanti
sarve namasyanti ca siddha-saṅghāḥ*

Arjuna said: O Master of the senses, it is only fitting that the whole universe should blissfully praise You and become attracted to You. Struck with terror, the wicked flee in all directions and all perfected beings offer their respects unto You.

VERSE 37

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षरं सदसत्त्वरं यत् ॥ ३७ ॥

*kasmāc ca te na nameran mahātman
garīyase brahmaṇo'py-ādi-kartre
ananta deveśa jagannivāsa
tvam akṣaram sad-asat tat-param yat*

And, O Great One, why should they not bow down before You? You are even more exalted than Brahmā, the creator of this universe. O unlimited One, O Master of the demi-gods, O Supreme shelter of the universe – You are eternal, beyond that which is existent and non-existent.

VERSE 38

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस् त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥३८॥

*tvam ādidevaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇas
tvam asya viśvasya param nidhānam
vettāsi vedyam ca param ca dhāma
tvayā tataṁ viśvam-ananta-rūpa*

You are the Original Supreme Divinity, the Supreme Primeval Person, and the sole shelter of the whole universe. You are the knower and that which is knowable. You are the Supreme Refuge and Your infinite forms pervade the entire cosmos.

VERSE 39

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥३९॥

*vāyur yamo'gnir varuṇaḥ śaśāṅkāḥ
prajāpatis tvāṁ prapitāmahaś ca
namo namaste'stu sahasra-kṛtvah
punaś ca bhūyō'pi namo namaste*

You are the presiding deity of the air (Vāyu), You are the presiding deity of death (Yama), You are the presiding deity of fire (Agni), You are the presiding deity of water (Varuṇa), You are the creator and the grandfather of all living beings. I offer You my obeisance thousands of times, again and again.

VERSE 40

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
अनन्तवीर्यमितविकमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥४०॥

*namah purastād atha prṣṭhatas te
 namo'stu te sarvata eva sarva
 ananta-vīryāmita-vikramas tvāṁ
 sarvāṁ samāpnoṣi tato'si sarvah*

My obeisance unto You from the front and from behind.
 My obeisance unto You from all directions. O Almighty
 One of infinite strength, You pervade all things, therefore
 You are all things.

VERSE 41-42

सखेति मत्वा प्रसमं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
 अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ॥४१॥
 यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारशाय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
 एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥४२॥

*sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktam
 he kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti
 ajānatā mabimānam tavedam
 mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi
 yac cāvahāsārtham asatkṛto'si
 vihāra-śayyāsana-bhojaneṣu
 eko'tha vāpy-acyuta tat-samakṣam
 tat kṣāmaye tvām abham aprameyam*

I was unaware of Your greatness and due to familiarity I have ignorantly addressed You as a friend. For whatever I have said casually such as, ‘O Kṛṣṇa, O Yādava, O friend’ and for whatever disrespect I have shown to You even in jest or while playing, relaxing, sitting together or eating, alone or in the presence of others – O Infallible One, O Inconceivable One, I beg Your forgiveness.

VERSE 43

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥४३॥

*pitāsi lokasya carācarasya
tvam asya pūjyaś ca gurur gariyān
na tvat-samo'sty-abhyadhikah kuto'nyo
loka-traye'py-apratima-prabhāva*

You are the father of all moving and non-moving beings in the universe. You are the most venerable and most glorious teacher. You have no equal within all the three worlds. How can there be anyone greater than You, O Master of incomparable power?

VERSE 44

तस्मात्प्रणाम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियार्थसि देव सोङ्गम् ॥४४॥

*tasmāt pranāmya pranidhāya kāyam
prasādaye tvām abam iśam idyam
piteva putrasya sakheva sakbyuh
priyah priyārhasi deva soḍbum*

Therefore, O Master, I prostrate myself in front of You and beg You to be merciful unto me. O Kṛṣṇa, kindly forgive me, as a father, friend or lover would forgive a son, a friend or a beloved.

VERSE 45

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्टा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥४५॥

*adr̄ṣṭa-pūrvam̄ hr̄ṣito'smi dr̄ṣṭvā
 bhayena ca pravyathitam̄ mano me
 tad eva me darśaya deva rūpam̄
 prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa*

I am happy to have seen this universal form of Yours, which has never been seen before. Yet my mind is overcome by fear. Therefore, O Master of the demigods, kindly show me that form of Nārāyaṇa, the refuge of the universe.

VERSE 46

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तम् इच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
 तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥४५॥

*kiriṭinam̄ gadinam̄ cakra-hastam̄
 icchāmi tvām̄ draṣṭum̄ abām̄ tathaiva
 tenaiva rūpeṇa catur-bhujena
 sabasra-bāho bhava viśva-mūrte*

I wish to see that form of Yours wearing a crown and carrying the club and disc-weapon in Your hands. O one with a thousand arms, O universal form, now kindly reveal to me Your four-armed form.

Anuvṛtti

Arjuna has been showering praises upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa after seeing His universal form of great wonder, but then he regrets that in many instances he may have offended Kṛṣṇa by addressing Him as, “O Kṛṣṇa,” “O friend,” or by playing or relaxing with Kṛṣṇa. Thus Arjuna requests Kṛṣṇa’s forgiveness for any transgressions that he might have made and then earnestly requests Kṛṣṇa to show him His four-armed form as Nārāyaṇa.

Arjuna has an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in friendship, (*sakhya-rasa*), and as such he is only momentarily forgetful of that. Similarly, all living beings have an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa either as a friend, servant, parent or lover and this relationship can be thus discovered through the process of *bhakti-yoga*. That the living being's relationship with Kṛṣṇa is eternal is confirmed as follows:

sa nityo 'nitya-sambandhabḥ prakṛtiś ca paraiva sā

The living being is eternal and has an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa from beginningless and endless time. (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.21)

VERSE 47

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

मया प्रसन्नेन तवाजुदं रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥४७॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca –
mayā prasannena tavārjunedam
rūpam param darśitam ātma-yogat
tejomayam viśvam anantam ādyam
yan me tvad-anyena na dṛṣṭa-pūrvam

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: Arjuna, being pleased with you I have shown you, through My divine potency, this radiant, infinite, primeval universal form. This form has never been seen by anyone before.

VERSE 48

न वेद यज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर् न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्मैः ।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥४८॥

*na veda-yajñādhyayanair na dānair
 na ca kriyābhīr na tapobhīr ugraib
 evam rūpaḥ śakya abhim nṛloke
 draṣṭum tvad-anyena kuru-pravīra*

O best of the Kuru Dynasty, no one in this world of mortals can see this form that I have revealed to you – neither by study of the *Vedas*, nor the performance of Vedic sacrifices, nor by giving charity, nor by rituals, nor by rigorous austerities.

VERSE 49

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमृद्भावो दृश्या रूपं घोरमीद्भ्यमेदम् ।
 व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥४९॥

*mā te vyathā mā ca vimūḍha-bhāvo
 dr̥ṣṭvā rūpam ghoram idṛn mamedam
 vyapetabbih pṛita-manah punas tvam
 tad eva me rūpam idam prapaśya*

Do not be fearful by seeing this terrifying form of Mine. Do not be bewildered. With a tranquil mind, behold once more the form you desire to see.

VERSE 50

सञ्जय उवाच ।

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
 आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥५०॥

*sañjaya uvāca –
 ity-arjunam vāsudevas tathoktvā
 svakam rūpam darśayāmāsa bhūyaḥ
 āśvāsayāmāsa ca bhītam enam
 bhūtvā punah saumya-vapur mahātmā*

Sañjaya said: Speaking thus, Vāsudeva (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) showed His four-armed form and then resumed His beautiful two-armed form, calming the frightened Arjuna.

VERSE 51

अर्जुन उवाच ।

द्वेष्टे दं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥५१॥

arjuna uvāca —

*dṛṣṭvedam mānuṣam rūpam tava saumyam janārdana
idānīm asmi samvṛttah sacetah prakṛtim gatah*

Arjuna said: Looking at Your sweet human-like form, O Janārdana, my mind is peaceful once more and I have regained my composure.

VERSE 52

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्म ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शन काङ्क्षणः ॥५२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*sudurdarśam idam rūpam dṛṣṭavān asi yan mama
devā apy-asya rūpasya nityam darśana-kāṅkṣīnah*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: This form of Mine that you now see before you is most difficult to see. Even the demigods constantly desire to attain but a glimpse of it.

VERSE 53

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥५३॥

*nāham vedair na tapasā na dānena na cejayayā
śakya evam vidho draṣṭum dṛṣṭavān asi mām yathā*

Not through the *Vedas*, not through penances, not through philanthropic works, nor through sacrificial rituals, is it possible to see Me as you have seen Me.

VERSE 54

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविघोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥५४॥

*bbaktyā tv-ananyayā śakya abam evam vidho'rjuna
jñātum draṣṭum ca tattvena praveṣṭum ca parantapa*

O Arjuna, I can only be fully known through *bhakti-yoga*. By such devotion one can truly see Me and attain Me, O conqueror of the enemy.

VERSE 55

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥५५॥

*mat-karma-kṛṇ mat-paramo mad-bhaktah saṅga-varjitaḥ
nirvairah sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ sa māmeti pāṇḍava*

My devotee who serves Me, accepts Me as the Supreme, rejects all material attachments, and who is free from malice for all living beings can attain Me, O son of Pāṇḍu.

Anuvṛtti

Because Arjuna has an eternal relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and not with Nārāyaṇa in Vaikunṭha, Kṛṣṇa could see that he was not yet peaceful even after seeing His form

as Nārāyaṇa and thus Kṛṣṇa resumed His original two-armed form as Śyāmasundara. Those who have a direct relationship with Kṛṣṇa are most fortunate and are never satisfied by seeing any other *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa besides that of His original form. A similar situation is narrated in the book *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta*, wherein Gopa Kumāra found himself in Vaikuṇṭha in the presence of Nārāyaṇa, but did not feel comfortable or at home. Because Gopa Kumāra has an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana, even being in the presence of the majestic Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha could not pacify him. Thus he continued his journey until at last, he reached the Supreme Abode and the sweet embrace of Kṛṣṇa. Such is the great fortune of Kṛṣṇa's devotee, who is always guided by Him and ultimately attains His sweet embrace.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नामैकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 viśvarūpa-darśana-yogo nāmaikādaśo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Eleven entitled *Viśvarūpa Darśana Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ द्वादशोऽध्यायः
भक्तियोगः

CHAPTER 12
BHAKTI YOGA

The Yoga of Devotion

VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca —

*evam satata-yuktā ye bhaktās tvām paryupāsate
ye cāpy-akṣaram avyaktam teṣām ke yoga-vittamāḥ*

Arjuna said: Who is best situated in *yoga* – those who constantly glorify You or those who are situated in Your impersonal, imperishable aspect?

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

मत्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥२॥

śri bhagavān uvāca —

*mayy-āveśya mano ye mām nitya-yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetās te me yuktatamā matāḥ*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: Those who fix their minds upon Me, who constantly glorify Me and possess great faith – I consider them to be most perfect.

Anuvṛtti

Up to this point in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has explained His personal, impersonal and universal aspects as well as the various types of *yogīs*. Now Arjuna asks for special clarification as to which is the better path – the path of *bhakti-yoga* centred on Kṛṣṇa directly and performed with acts of devotion, or the impersonal path that tries to focus on Kṛṣṇa's Brahman effulgence (*brahma-jyoti*).

This is a question for many persons starting on the path of transcendence – which path is better, the personal or the impersonal? Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that the personal path is best. The *bhakti-yogī*, who is fixed in meditation on Kṛṣṇa's form of beauty, who constantly glorifies Him with great faith and determination is the best of *yogīs*.

The *bhakti-yogīs* that engage on the personal path of self-realisation are called Vaiṣṇavas. Those on the impersonal path are of three types – Brahmvādīs (Vedāntists), Śūnyavādīs (Buddhists) and Māyāvādīs (Śāṅkarites). Brahmvādīs are those who seek to merge the self (*ātmā*) into the bodily effulgence of Kṛṣṇa. Śūnyavādīs seek to annihilate everything and enter the void (*śūnya*) and the Māyāvādīs seek to become God themselves.

The Brahmvādīs seek to merge with the Brahman effulgence, but they have little or no knowledge of the personal form of Kṛṣṇa. Thus they only reach Kṛṣṇa after many lifetimes as will be explained in verse 4. In the annals of self-realisation, there are many instances of *yogīs* and Brahmvādīs failing to achieve Brahman realisation and even accounts of those such as the Four Kumāras, Vasiṣṭha Muni, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and others, who after achieving Brahman realisation, abandoned that for the higher bliss of *bhakti-yoga*. For the seekers of *śūnya* there is never success because there is no *śūnya*. There is no void anywhere. There is nothing outside or beyond Kṛṣṇa and so the Śūnyavādīs face great disappointment at the end of life. The Māyāvādīs reject the personal form of Kṛṣṇa as a manifestation of *māya* (illusion) and want to become God themselves. Māyāvādīs are considered offenders and return to the world of birth and death.

Throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa's statements are consistent in that He repeatedly confirms that of all paths, *bhakti-yoga* is the best. Among all types of *yogīs*, *jñānīs*, philosophers and philanthropists, the *bhakti-yogī* who is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa without any material desires or the desire for liberation, is the best and is very dear to Him.

*anyābbilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śilanam bhaktir-uttamā*

In the highest plane of *bhakti-yoga* one is devoid of all material desires, material activities and the desire for liberation. Such *bhakti-yoga* must be favourably performed according to Kṛṣṇa's desire. (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* I.I.II)

It is further confirmed by the greatest impersonal philosopher of all time, Śrīpāda Ādi Śaṅkara, who chastised his disciples and told them that they should just worship Kṛṣṇa (Govinda). Nothing else is required.

*bhaja govindam bhaja govindam bhaja govindam mūḍha-mate
samprāpte sannibite kāle na hi na hi rakṣati dukṛñ karane*

O foolish students, your repetition of grammatical rules and your philosophical speculation will not save you at the time of death. Just worship Govinda, worship Govinda, worship Govinda! (*Moha-mudgara* I)

VERSE 3-4

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥३॥
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥४॥

*ye tv-akṣaram anirdeśyam avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatra-gam acintyam ca kūṭastham acalam dhruvam
sanniyamyendriya-grāmam sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mām eva sarva-bhūta-bite ratāḥ*

However, those that control their senses, who are mentally composed in all situations, who are dedicated to helping all living beings and who worship My unfathomable, impersonal, inconceivable, unchanging, all-pervading aspect which is fixed and immovable – they also reach Me.

VERSE 5

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्विरवाप्यते ॥५॥

*kleśo'bhikataras teṣām avyaktāsakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham debavadbhir avāpyate*

There is great difficulty for those whose minds are attached to the impersonal aspect. To progress on that path is most troublesome for embodied beings.

Anuvṛtti

Brahman is the bodily effulgence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As such, it is eternal, unfathomable, inconceivable, unchanging, all-pervading, immovable and all-powerful. This is stated in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* as follows:

*yat tad avyaktam ajaram acintyam ajam akṣayam
 anirdeśyam arūpam ca pāṇi-pādādy-asarīyutam
 vibhūti sarva-gataṁ nityam bhūta-yonim akāraṇam
 vyāpya-vyāpta yataḥ sarvam tad vai paśyanti sūrayaḥ*

The Brahman feature of the Supreme is unmanifest, unaffected by time, inconceivable, without material origin, free from decay and diminution, indescribable, formless, without hands, feet, or other limbs, all-powerful, all-pervading, eternal, the origin of all material elements, without any material cause, present in everything, although nothing is situated in it, the source of the material cosmos and the object of vision for the demigods. (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 6.5.66-67).

That effulgence of Kṛṣṇa is non-different from Him and shines like millions, and millions of suns.

*vāsudevād abhinnas tu vahny-arkendu-śata-prabhām
 vāsudevo ‘pi bhagavāṁś tad-dharmā parameśvaraḥ
 svāṁ dīptim kṣobhayaty eva tejasā tena vai yutam
 prakāśa-rūpo bhagavān acyutam cāsakṛd dvija*

The effulgence of the impersonal Brahman is like unlimited fires, suns and moons. Brahman is non-different from Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa). Vāsudeva is full of all auspicious qualities and His nature is that He is the Supreme Controller. When He removes the covering of His own Brahman effulgence, Kṛṣṇa reveals His original, eternal, transcendental form. (*Nārada-pañcarātra*)

The concept of liberation in the impersonal Brahman is often sought by those who are frustrated with material existence, but who have no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. Certainly a sense of detachment and renunciation from material activities is laudable, but Kṛṣṇa says that path is more trouble than it is worth.

If one endeavours for the perfection of life by controlling the senses, being equipoised in all circumstances, cultivates the impersonal Brahman conception, and at the same time is dedicated to helping all living beings, then such a person may eventually reach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The impersonal path, Kṛṣṇa says, is very troublesome and difficult to attain. Therefore, it is expected that ascending such a path can extend over many lifetimes and there is also the chance of total failure and loss.

The Brahmavādīs must cultivate sense-control etc. as mentioned above with the study of *Vedānta*. After many lifetimes, by cultivating such knowledge, when the Brahmavādī understands that Kṛṣṇa is everything (*vāsudevah sarvam iti*), he at last reaches Him. The Śūnyavādī and the Māyāvādī never reach Kṛṣṇa until they adopt the path of *bhakti-yoga*. However, a Vaiṣṇava may come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in one lifetime.

VERSE 6-7

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्न्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥६॥
तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि नचिरात्पार्थं मम्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥७॥

*ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi mayi sannyasya mat-parāḥ
ananyenaiva yogena mām dhyāyanta upāsate*

*teśām abhiṁ samuddhartā mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha mayy-āveśita-cetasām*

O Pārtha, those who renounce all actions and offer them to Me, who take shelter in Me, who are fully absorbed in meditating upon achieving My association and who always worship Me – I swiftly deliver them from the ocean of birth and death.

VERSE 8

मय्येव मन आधत्त्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत उर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥८॥

*mayy-eva mana ādbatsva mayi buddhim niveśaya
nivasiṣyasi mayy eva ata ūrbhvāṁ na saṁśayah*

Fix your mind and intelligence on Me alone and ultimately you will come to Me. Of this there is no doubt.

Anuvṛtti

For those who are embodied, the ocean of material existence is difficult to cross because it is fraught with many dangers. But if one takes shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then He delivers one from the ocean of misery as easily as one is ferried across the water in a boat.

*kṛcchro mahān iha bhavārṇavam aplaveśām
śad-varga-nakram asukhena titīrṣanti
tat tvāṁ harer bhagavato bhajanīyam aṅgbriṁ
kṛtvodupam vyasanam uttara dustarārṇam*

In this life, the ocean of ignorance is most troublesome to cross because it is infested with the sharks of the six senses. Those who have not taken shelter

of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean. Yet you should cross that difficult ocean simply by making a boat of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, which are most worthy of worship. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 4.22.40)

VERSE 9

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शकोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छासुं धनञ्जय ॥९॥

*atha cittam samādhātum na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram
abhyāsa-yogena tato mām icchāptum dbanañjaya*

Dhanañjaya, if you cannot firmly fix your mind upon Me, then try to reach Me by the constant practice of *bhakti-yoga*.

VERSE 10

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्यसि ॥१०॥

*abhyāse'pyasamartho'si mat-karma-paramo bhava
mad-ar�am api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi*

If you cannot keep up the practices of *bhakti-yoga*, then just try offering your work to Me. Thus, you will reach the perfect stage.

VERSE II

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥११॥

*athaitad apy-aśakto'si kartum mad-yogam āśritah
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam tataḥ kuru yatātmavān*

If you are unable to do that, then do your work and offer the results to Me. While controlling the mind, give up all the results of your activities.

VERSE 12

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाच्यानं विशिष्यते ।
ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ १२ ॥

*śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāj jñānād dhyānam viśisyate
dhyānāt karma-phala-tyāgas tyāgāc cāntir anantaram*

If you cannot follow this instruction then engage yourself in the cultivation of knowledge. However, meditation is superior to knowledge. Better than meditation is the renunciation of material gain, for by such renunciation one finds peace.

Anuvṛtti

Bhakti-yoga has two approaches, the direct and the indirect. Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna in verse 8 that the direct approach is to, “Fix your mind and intelligence on Me alone.” Such a stage is called *rāgānugā-bhakti*, or spontaneous devotion which is independent of the support of rules and regulations. However, this stage of *rāgānugā-bhakti* is not easily achieved, especially for beginners. In that case Kṛṣṇa recommends the indirect approach to *rāgānugā-bhakti* which is the constant practice of rules and regulations known as *sādhana-bhakti*. If such a practice is not possible then Kṛṣṇa suggests that one should work for Him. If one cannot do that, then He says that one should renounce the results of one’s activities and offer them to Him. If one cannot do that, then one should engage in the cultivation of knowledge to understand what the body is,

what the *ātmā* is and who Kṛṣṇa is. One will then gradually advance from whatever stage they are at and progress to the topmost stage of approaching Kṛṣṇa directly in *rāgānugā-bhakti*. This is also stated in *Śrī Brhma-saṁhitā* as follows:

*prabuddhe jñāna-bhaktibhyām ātmānānanda-cinmayī
udety anuttamā bhaktir bhagavat-prema-lakṣaṇā*

When transcendental experience awakens by means of knowledge and devotion, the highest devotion which is distinguished by the presence of pure love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of the *ātmā*, awakens in one's heart. (*Brhma-saṁhitā* 5.58)

VERSE 13-14

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥१३॥
संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१४॥

adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ kṣamī

santuṣṭaḥ satataṁ yogī yatātmā dṛḍha-niścayaḥ
mayy-arpita-mano-buddhir yo mad-bhaktah sa me priyah

One who is devoid of hatred, who is friendly and compassionate to all living beings, who is devoid of any sense of possessiveness, free of egotism, objective in all circumstances, forgiving, a self-satisfied practitioner of *yoga*, self-controlled, of strong determination, and whose mind and intelligence is engaged in thinking of Me – that person is My devotee and is thus very dear to Me.

VERSE 15

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।
हर्षामर्घभयोद्वैगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ १५ ॥

*yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyah*

One who does not cause distress to anyone and who is never distressed by anyone, who is free from happiness, anger, fear and anxiety, is very dear to Me.

VERSE 16

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ १६ ॥

*anapekṣaḥ śucir dakṣa udāśīno gata-vyathāḥ
sarvārambha-parityāgī yo mad-bhaktāḥ sa me priyah*

One who is indifferent, pure, expert, dispassionate, free from distress, and who renounces all selfish desires is very dear to Me.

VERSE 17

यो न हृष्ट्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभं परित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

*yo na hrṣyati na dveṣṭi na śocati na kāṅkṣati
śubhāśubha-parityāgī bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyah*

One who neither rejoices nor envies, who feels neither sorrow nor desire, who rejects both auspiciousness and inauspiciousness – that person has devotion and is very dear to Me.

VERSE 18-19

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
 शीतोष्णासुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥१८॥
 तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मैनी संतुष्टो येन केन चित् ।
 अनिकेतः स्थिरमर्तिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥१९॥

*samaḥ śatru ca mitre ca tathā mānāpamānayoḥ
 śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkheṣu samaḥ saṅga-vivarjitaḥ
 tulya-nindā-stutir maunī santuṣṭo yena kenacit
 aniketaḥ sthira-matir bhaktimān me priyo narah*

One who is equal to both friends and enemies, equipoised in fame and infamy, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, who is detached, equal to insult and praise, of controlled speech, satisfied in all circumstances, who has no attachment to any residence and of steady mind – that person has devotion and is very dear to Me.

VERSE 20

ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
 श्रद्धाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥२०॥

*ye tu dharmaṁṛtam idam yathoktam paryupāsate
 śraddadhānā mat-paramā bhaktās te'tīva me priyāḥ*

Those who are faithful and who follow this eternal path of *dharma* that has been described by Me, considering Me to be Supreme – such persons are very dear to Me.

Anuvṛtti

Everyone in the world would like to see peace and harmony, but what prevails is quite the opposite. Verses thirteen to twenty offer a simple solution to most of the problems in today's world, and that is the self-improve-

ment of the individual. In other words, if people were to cultivate the qualities that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has mentioned here, the world would be a far better place. As it is now, the world is no place for a gentleman. Being devoid of hatred, being friendly and compassionate to all living beings, being devoid of any sense of possessiveness, free from egotism, objective in all circumstances, forgiving, self-controlled, and being of strong determination etc. are indeed noble qualities. But how are people to develop them?

Independently these qualities, and other desirable qualities of the human being mentioned throughout *Bhagavad-gītā* are difficult to develop. It is seen that sometimes a person may possess one, two or three of such qualities, but where is that person who has all these qualities?

Kṛṣṇa gives the answer in *Bhagavad-gītā* – become a *bhakti-yogi*, take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and surrender everything to Him. The *ātmā* is naturally complete with all good qualities as could ever be desired by a human being. When one's mind, intelligence, and consciousness are purified by being in association with Kṛṣṇa through the process of *bhakti-yoga*, all desirable qualities develop. Therefore, the open secret to life is that everyone should become a *yogi* in *bhakti-yoga*. Then the world would become a much better place.

Above all good qualities is the quality of devotion to the Supreme Person, from which all other good qualities manifest in great abundance. One does not become dear to Kṛṣṇa simply by independently developing good qualities. All such qualities must be dovetailed with the quality of devotion. One who approaches life in that way is a true *bhakti-yogi* and is very dear to Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*oṁ tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śāta-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśupaniṣatsu
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
bhakti-yogo nāma dvādaśo'dhyāyah*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Twelve entitled *Bhakti Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः
प्रकृतिपुरुषविवेकयोगः

CHAPTER 13
PRAKRITI-PURUṢA VIVEKA YOGA

*The Yoga of Differentiation Between
Matter and Consciousness*

VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।
 प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च ।
 एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca —

*prakṛtiṁ puruṣam caiva kṣetram kṣetrajñameva ca
 etad veditum icchāmi jñānam jñeyam ca keśava*

Arjuna said: O Keśava, I wish to know about material nature (*prakṛti*), the enjoyer (*puruṣa*), the field, the knower of the field, knowledge and the object of knowledge.

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
 इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।
 एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञं इति तद्विदः ॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*idam śarīram kaunteya kṣetram ity-abhidhīyate
 etad yo vetti tam prābuḥ kṣetrajña iti tad-vidah*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: O son of Kuntī, this body is known as the field and one who knows this field is said by the wise to be the knower of the field.

VERSE 3

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
 क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥३॥

*kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata
 kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam yat taj jñānam matam mama*

You should know that I am the knower of all fields, O descendant of Bharata. I consider the knowledge of the field and its knower to be real knowledge.

Anuvṛtti

The basis of knowledge, namely the ability to differentiate between matter, consciousness and Super Consciousness will further be explained in this chapter. In the last few centuries western scientific understanding suggests that consciousness arises out of an inexplicable combination of material elements. In other words, they conclude that the body is the self. *Bhagavad-gītā* however, considers such an understanding to be ignorance. Without understanding the difference between material nature (*prakṛti*) and the self (*kṣetrajña*) who is the conscious knower of the body, there is no basis of real knowledge. Both are distinct from one another and one who understands this is truly learned.

The material body composed of the three subtle elements (mind, intelligence and false ego) and the five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air and space) is known as the field. The indwelling consciousness is known as the knower of the field, and the Super Consciousness situated within all bodies and within the individual consciousness is the knower of all fields of activity. This is the subject of this chapter, upon knowing which one becomes liberated from material bondage.

VERSE 4

तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥४॥

*tat kṣetraṁ yac ca yādṛk ca yad vikāri yataś ca yat
sa ca yo yat prabhāvaś ca tat samāsena me śṛṇu*

Now hear from Me in brief about what that field is, what constitutes it, what are its transformations, its origin and who is the knower of the field and what is his influence.

VERSE 5

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्विर्विनिश्चितैः ॥५॥

*r̄ṣibhir bahudhā gītāṁ chandobhir vividhaiḥ pṛthak
brahma-sūtra-padais caiva hetumadbhir viniścitaib*

This knowledge has been sung of in many different ways by different sages, by the *Vedas*, and is found in the logically conclusive chapters of the *Vedānta-sūtras*.

VERSE 6-7

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥६॥
इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्खातश्चेतना धृतिः ।
एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥७॥

*mahā-bbūtāny-abhāṅkāro buddhir avyaktam eva ca
indriyāṇi daśaikam ca pañca cendriya-gocarāḥ
icchā dveṣah sukham duḥkham saṅghātaś cetanā dbṛtiḥ
etat kṣetram samāsena sa-vikāram udāhṛtam*

The main elements are the false ego, intelligence, the unmanifest material nature, the ten senses, the mind, the five sense-objects, desire, hate, pleasure, pain, the gross body, consciousness and determination. All these elements that are described here are considered to be the field.

VERSE 8-12

अमानित्वमदभित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥८॥

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥९॥
असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥१०॥
मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥११॥
अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥१२॥

*amānitvam adambbitvam abīmśā kṣāntir ārjavam
ācāryopāsanam śaucaṁ sthairyam ātma-vinigrahāḥ
indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam anabhaṅkāra eva ca
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam
asaktir anabhiṣvaṅgah putra-dāra-grhbādiṣu
nityam ca sama-cittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu
mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabbhicāriṇī
vivikta-deśa-sevitvam aratir jana-saṁsadi
adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam
etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yad ato'nyathā*

Desirelessness, humility, non-violence, tolerance, simplicity, service to the spiritual master, purity, steadiness, self-control, detachment from sense gratification, absence of false ego, perception of the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease, detachment, freedom from attachment to wife, children and household life, perpetual equanimity in both happy and distressful circumstances, constant

and firm devotion unto Me, dwelling in a solitary place, free from the desire to socialise with the masses, constant determination in achieving self-realisation and a desire to gain knowledge of the Absolute Truth – all these qualities have been declared to be knowledge. Anything contrary to this is ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Here, the greater wealth of knowledge by which a human being can achieve the perfection of life has been described. This detailed explanation by Śrī Kṛṣṇa leads one to an understanding that promotes self-realisation and frees one from ignorance. Unfortunately, this knowledge is completely lacking in modern societies, both eastern and western. All contemporary fields of knowledge i.e. biology, physics, mathematics and philosophy lead one to accept the body as the self and to accept gratification of one's mind, intelligence, ego and senses as the goal of life. Such an understanding is utterly devoid of the real purpose of life, considering that this one life is the all in all and that after death there is nothing.

The material world is a place of birth, death, old age and disease and is sometimes referred to as *mṛtyu-loka* or the planet of death. Birth, death, old age and disease are indeed the real problems facing all living beings regardless of race, nationality or belief. Any knowledge that does not aim to put an end to these miseries is certainly incomplete at best. There are, of course, medicines, drugs, surgery and medical machines to ease the pain of birth, slow the old age process, cure some diseases and prolong the process of dying, but these are only stopgaps or temporary solutions. One should recognise these problems of life and be inquisitive as to where the real solution is to be found.

Contrary to modern scientific and philosophical understanding, the *Bhagavad-gītā* says that this one life is not the all in all, and that there is life after death. There was life before coming to this material world and that life continues eternally. All that really changes is the type of body one has. For the pious there is future life in higher planets enjoying celestial pleasures, for the ignorant there are future sojourns within the bodies of lower species such as animals or plants, and for the *yogi* and for those who cultivate knowledge of consciousness and Super Consciousness, there is future existence beyond the material universes in the Vaikuṇṭha planets. There, life is eternal and all bodies are of the substance known as *sac-cid-ānanda* (eternity, knowledge and bliss).

VERSE I3

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वामृतमश्रुते ।
अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥१३॥

*jñeyam yat tat pravakṣyāmi yaj jñātvā'mṛtam aśnute
anādimat param brahma na sat tan nāsad ucyate*

I shall now explain the object of knowledge, knowing which one attains immortality. It is subordinate to Me and is the eternal Supreme Brahman that is beyond material cause and effect.

VERSE I4

सर्वतःपाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।
सर्वतःश्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥१४॥

*sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṁ tat sarvato'kṣi-śiro-mukham
sarvataḥ śruti-malā-loke sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati*

His hands and feet are everywhere. His eyes, heads and mouths are everywhere. His ears are everywhere. Thus He exists, pervading all things.

VERSE 15

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।
असक्तं सर्वभृचैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तु च ॥ १५ ॥

*sarvendriya-guṇābhāśam sarvendriya-vivarjitaṁ
asaktam̄ sarva-bhṛc caiva nirguṇam̄ guṇa-bhoktr̄ ca*

He illuminates all the senses and their functions, however He is devoid of any material senses Himself. He remains detached and He is the Maintainer of all. Although He is devoid of all material qualities, He is the Master of all qualities.

VERSE 16

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥ १६ ॥

*bahir antaś ca bhūtānām acaraṁ carameva ca
sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam̄ dūrasthaṁ cāntike ca tat*

He is situated in all moving and non-moving beings. He is near yet simultaneously He is far away. Thus, He is most subtle and difficult to fully understand.

VERSE 17

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तु च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १७ ॥

*avibhaktam̄ ca bhūteṣu vibhaktam̄ iva ca sthitam̄
bhūta-bhارت̄ ca taj jñeyam̄ grasiṣṇu prabhaviṣṇu ca*

Although it seems that He is divided amongst all living beings, He is in fact undivided. He is to be known as the Creator, Maintainer and Destroyer.

VERSE 18

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥१८॥

*jyotiṣām api taj jyotis tamasah paramucyate
jñānam jñeyam jñāna-gamyam hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam*

He is said to be the most brilliant of all luminaries, beyond darkness. He is knowledge, the object of knowledge and the aim of all knowledge.

VERSE 19

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समाप्तः ।
मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥१९॥

*iti kṣetram tathā jñānam jñeyam coktaṁ samāpataḥ
mad-bhakta etad vijñāya mad-bhāvāyopapadyate*

Thus the field of activities, knowledge and the object of knowledge have been briefly explained. By understanding these, My devotee attains love for Me.

Anuvṛtti

As previously mentioned, the Absolute Truth is known in three phases of realisation – Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān. The ‘He’ of whom Kṛṣṇa speaks of in these verses as being subordinate to Him, yet being the Supreme Brahman refers to the Paramātmā. His hands, feet, eyes and ears are everywhere and He is situated in the hearts of all living beings. He is all-pervasive throughout the universe,

He divides Himself to be within all things, yet He Himself is not divided or diminished – He remains the Complete Person. This is stated in the invocation of the *Īśopaniṣad* as follows:

*om pūrṇam adah pūrṇam idam pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam evāvaśisyate*

The Supreme Person is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this material world, are also perfect and complete. Whatever emanates from the Complete Person is also complete in itself. Because He is the Complete Person, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance.

It would seem that the discourse between the theist and the atheist is perpetually in a gridlock. But as mentioned in a previous *Anuvṛtti*, the student of *Bhagavad-gītā* does not consider either the so-called theist or the atheist to have complete knowledge. It may even be that sometimes the atheist is more correct in his opinion than the so-called theist. The theist establishes his God, and the atheist, upon examining the statements of the so-called theist, discovers that the God in question is wrathful, vindictive, jealous, vengeful, sadomasochistic etc. In this instance we would have to agree with the atheist – there is no such God.

However, the atheist then concludes that in the absence of God, the universe and all life within it has come from nothing – yet he has no experience or proof that something can arise from nothing. His proposal is thus self-defeating.

Both ‘God’ and His non-existence are but misconceptions in the minds of the so-called theist and the atheist. However, the student of *Bhagavad-gītā* knows that the subject matter is not a thesis about ‘God’. *Bhagavad-gītā* is a discourse aimed at enlightenment in the Absolute Truth. The Absolute Truth contains all things known, knowable and unknown – before the universe, within the universe, after the universe and beyond the universe.

VERSE 20

प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।
विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ॥ २० ॥

*prakṛtiṁ puruṣam caiva viddhyanādī ubbāv api
vikārāṁś ca guṇāṁś caiva viddhi prakṛti-sambhavān*

You should know that both material nature and the living beings are without beginning. Try to understand that all transformations and the modes of nature originate from material nature.

VERSE 21

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ २१ ॥

*kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve hetub prakṛtir ucyate
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhānām bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate*

It is said that material nature is the source of all causes and effects. The living beings are said to be the cause of their own happiness and distress.

VERSE 22

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुज्ञे प्रकृतिजान्मुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसच्चोनिजन्मसु ॥ २२ ॥

*puruṣaḥ prakṛtistho hi bhūjnkte prakṛti-jān gunān
kāraṇam guṇa-saṅgo'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*

Situated within material nature, the living beings enjoy the modes that are born of material nature. Due to the individuals association with these modes, the living beings take birth repeatedly within higher and lower species of life.

VERSE 23

उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ २३ ॥

*upadraṣṭānumantā ca bhartā bhoktā māheśvarah
paramātmēti cāpy-ukto dehe'smin puruṣaḥ parah*

The Supreme Person, who is known as the Super Consciousness (Paramātmā), resides within this body. He is the Witness of all things, the Supreme Authority, the Provider, the Maintainer and the Ultimate Controller.

VERSE 24

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ २४ ॥

*ya evaṁ vetti puruṣam prakṛtim ca guṇaiḥ saha
sarvathā vartamāno'pi na sa bhūyo'bhibijāyate*

Therefore, one who fully understands the Supreme Person, material nature and the modes of material nature, never takes birth again under any circumstances.

VERSE 25

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥ २५ ॥

*dhyanenātmani paśyanti kecid ātmānam ātmanā
anye sāṅkhyena yogena karma-yogena cāpare*

Through meditation, some *yogīs* glimpse the Supreme within the heart. Others see Him through the process of analysis (*sāṅkhya*), while others perceive Him through *karma-yoga*.

VERSE 26

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥ २६ ॥

*anye tv-evam ajānantaḥ śrutvānyebhya upāsate
te'pi cātitaranty eva mṛtyum śruti-parāyaṇāḥ*

There are also those that do not know these methods, but simply by hearing about Him from others, they engage in His worship. Because they have faith in what they have heard, they too transcend death.

Anuvṛtti

It is described that both material nature (*prakṛti*) and the living beings (*jīvātmā* or *puruṣa*) are without beginning (*anādi*). This means that material nature and the living beings exist as eternal energies of Śrī Kṛṣṇa before the process of creation takes place. The living being's origin is in the *taṭasthā*, or marginal plane, before the onslaught of time. In this regard, the origin of the living beings and material nature are both *anādi*, or having no first cause.

They are without a first cause because they are *śaktis*, or potencies of the Absolute Truth who is Himself without origin. In other words, the cause of all causes is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, He is known as *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*.

Though material nature and the living beings are eternal and without beginning, they nonetheless have distinctly different qualities and characteristics. They are not the same. Material nature is described as the body, senses and other elements as well as the transformations of qualities such as happiness, distress, lamentation and illusion. The living beings are part and parcel of the Supreme Person. They are *sac-cid-ānanda* – having the constitution of eternity, knowledge and bliss. When the living beings identify the self as the material body, they suffer under the miseries of happiness and distress and perpetually transmigrate from one body to the next in the cycle of birth and death.

One of the greatest questions in life, namely, “Where do we come from?” is certainly answered in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Yet the use of the word *anādi* in verse 20 has encouraged some thinkers to conclude that the living beings have always been in the material world. In other words, that although the living beings are eternal, they begin in the material universe and have always been in the material universe. This conclusion however is not supported by previous *ācāryas* of the *Bhagavad-gītā* such as Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa and others. To them, *anādi* means beginningless, before time began.

Regarding the origin of the living beings and their beginning as *anādi*, the Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* Svāmī B. R. Śrīdhara Mahārāja says as follows:

Since time immemorial, man has inquired about the origin of the living being. Who am I? Where have I come from? How does the living being first appear in this world? From what stage of spiritual existence does he fall into the material world?

There are two classes of living beings who come into this world. One class comes from the spiritual Vaikuṇṭha planets by the necessity of nitya-līlā, the eternal pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Another comes by constitutional necessity. The brahma-jyoti, the non-differentiated marginal plane, is the source of infinite living beings (jīvātmās), atomic spiritual particles of non-differentiated character.

The rays of the transcendental body of the Supreme Person are known as the brahma-jyoti, and a ray of the brahma-jyoti is the jīvātmā. The jīvātmā is an atom in that effulgence, and the brahma-jyoti is a product of an infinite number of jīvātmā atoms. Generally, jīvātmās emanate from the brahma-jyoti which is living and growing. Within the brahma-jyoti, their equilibrium is somehow disturbed and movement begins. From non-differentiation, differentiation begins. From a plain sheet of uniform consciousness, individual conscious units grow. And because the jīvātmā is conscious it is endowed with free will.

From the marginal position (taṭasthā-śakti) they choose either the side of exploitation (material world) or the side of dedication (Vaikuṇṭha). Kṛṣṇa bhuli sei jīva anādi bahirmukha. Anādi means that which has no beginning. When we enter the land of exploita-

tion, we come within the factor of time, space and thought. And when we come to exploit, action and reaction begins in the negative land of loan.

When the jīvātmā, by exercise of his free will and out of curiosity, first enters into this land — from then he becomes a factor of this limited world. But his participation is beyond the beginning of this limited world. That is why it is said to be anādi. Anādi means that it does not come from within the jurisdiction of this limited world.

Once subject to contact with material nature, the living beings are then subject to *karma*, the laws of action and reaction. Under these laws the living beings enjoy and suffer in various species of life. During their material sojourn, the Paramātmā accompanies the living beings and is ever watchful for when they will turn their head towards the Absolute Truth. The Paramātmā directs the wanderings of the living beings, and when one desires to know the Truth, the Paramātmā manifests before the living beings as the spiritual master who teaches *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is. Hence the living being transcends the world of birth and death.

*brahmāṇḍa brahmite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija*

According to their *karma*, the *jīvātmās* are wandering throughout the universe. Some *jīvātmās* who are most fortunate receive the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa, and by such mercy they receive the seed of the creeper of devotion. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19.151*)

VERSE 27

यावत्सज्जायते किञ्चित्सन्त्वं स्थावरजडम् ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥२७॥

*yāvat saṁjāyate kiñcit sattvam sthāvara-jaṅgamam
kṣetra-kṣetrajña-saṁyogāt tad viddhi bharatarṣabha*

You should understand that whatever exists, whether moving or non-moving, is simply manifest from the combination of the field and the knower of the field, O best of the Bharata Dynasty.

VERSE 28

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥२८॥

*saṁam sarveṣu bhūteṣu tiṣṭhantam parameśvaram
vinaśyat svaviniśyantam yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

One actually sees when he perceives the Supreme Controller as being situated in all living beings, and realises that neither the Super Consciousness nor the individual unit of consciousness is perishable.

VERSE 29

समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२९॥

*saṁam paśyan hi sarvatra samavasthitam iśvaram
na hinasty-ātmanātmānam tato yāti parām gatim*

By seeing the Supreme Person situated in all places equally, one does not become degraded. Thus he attains the Supreme Abode.

VERSE 30

प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

*prakṛtyaiva ca karmāṇi kriyamāṇāni sarvaśah
yah paśyati tathātmānam akartāram sa paśyati*

One who realises that all activities are performed by material nature, understands that he is not the doer.

VERSE 31

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥ ३१ ॥

*yadā bhūta-pṛthag-bhāvam eka-stham anupaśyati
tata eva ca vistāraṁ brhma sampadyate tada*

When one truly sees, he ceases to identify the body as the self. Realising that all living beings are equal, he attains the Brahman conception and sees them expanded everywhere.

Anuvṛtti

The world is composed of moving and non-moving things. Moving species consist of humans, animals, fish etc. Non-moving objects include trees, mountains, minerals etc. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that all these moving and non-moving things are a combination of material nature and the living beings. One who has deeper vision sees that the Super Consciousness is the Controller of all things and is situated in the hearts of all living beings, within every atom and in between every atom. Such a seer is a true knower and realises that consciousness and Super Consciousness are both eternal and imperishable.

A seer of the truth is never degraded by the influences of material nature. He gradually rises to perfection and attains the Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa. Those who are conditioned by material nature and who have no knowledge of Super Consciousness wrongly conceive that they are the doer of activities, or that they are the overlords of material nature. This however is a foolish idea since they themselves are helplessly suffering at the hands of death.

For those that have the eyes to see, all forms of life indicate the presence of a conscious living being. That is to say that not just humans are conscious or that only human consciousness is eternal. All things that manifest birth, growth, maintenance, reproduction, dwindling and death, regardless of higher birth (human) or lower birth (animal), are known as eternal beings transmigrating in the material world. Thus, one who is friendly, kind and compassionate must be so to all forms of life. It is not that humans are spared but animals and others can be killed or exploited for our pleasure. This idea falls short of the vision of *Bhagavad-gītā* which sees all living beings as part and parcel of the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa. Thus, all living beings have a right to life.

VERSE 32

अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥३२॥

*anāditvān nirguṇatvāt paramātmāyam avyayaḥ
śarīra-stho’pi kaunteya na karoti na lipyate*

O Son of Kuntī, the Super Consciousness has no beginning, He is transcendental to the modes of nature and He

is unlimited. Although He is situated within each individual body, He neither acts nor is He affected by any action.

VERSE 33

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

*yathā sarva-gataṁ sauksmyād ākāśam nopalipyate
sarvatrāvasthito dehe tathātmā nopalipyate*

Just as the subtle element of all-pervading space does not mix with anything, similarly, the individual unit of consciousness does not mix with the material body, although it is situated within.

VERSE 34

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ ३४ ॥

*yathā prakāśayaty-ekah kṛtsnam lokam imam raviḥ
kṣetraṁ kṣetri tathā kṛtsnam prakāśayati bhārata*

O Bhārata, just as one sun illuminates the entire universe, the occupier of the field illuminates the whole field.

VERSE 35

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञायोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥ ३५ ॥

*kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor evam antaram jñāna-cakṣuṣā
bhūta-prakṛti-mokṣam ca ye vidur yānti te param*

One who knows and sees the difference between the body and the self and who understands the process of liberation from material bondage, also attains the supreme goal.

Anuvṛtti

The Paramātmā enters the material nature and makes all things possible within that nature, but He Himself is never contaminated. He is never in illusion, never under the influence of time, never subject to death or the reactions to work and the laws of material nature. Super Consciousness is always the Master of material nature and material nature is always subservient.

Although the living beings are situated within the material body, they do not actually mix or become one with it. The living beings are always distinct from the material body even when the living beings are conditioned by it. One who knows this in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, attains the supreme goal of life.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 प्रकृतिपुरुषविवेकयोगो नाम त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryām saṁhitāyām
 vaiyāsikyām bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 prakṛti-puruṣa-viveka-yogo nāma trayodaśo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Thirteen entitled *Prakṛti-Puruṣa Viveka Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः
गुणत्रयविभागयोगः

CHAPTER 14
GUÑA-TRAYA VIBHĀGA YOGA

*The Yoga of Understanding the
Three Modes of Material Nature*

VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥१॥

śrī-bhagavān uvāca —

*param bhūyah pravakṣyāmi jñānānām jñānam uttamam
yaj jñātvā munayah sarve parām siddhim ito gatāḥ*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: I will now describe to you that knowledge which is the greatest of all types of knowledge. By knowing this, all the sages were able to attain perfection and reach the highest destination.

VERSE 2

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥२॥

*idam jñānam upāśritya mama sādharmyam āgatāḥ
sarge'pi nopajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca*

By taking shelter of this knowledge, one attains My nature. He is neither born during creation nor does he suffer during universal annihilation.

Anuvṛtti

In previous chapters the modes of material nature, goodness, passion and ignorance (*sattva-guṇa*, *raja-guṇa* and *tama-guṇa*) have been mentioned and in this chapter they will be described in greater detail. It will also be described how one can cross beyond the material modes and become free from the cycle of birth and death.

VERSE 3

मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन्नर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥३॥

*mama yonir mahadbrahma tasmin garbhāṁ dadhāmyaham
sambhavaḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ tato bhavati bhārata*

O Bhārata, the vast expanse of material nature is My womb which I impregnate and wherefrom all living beings manifest.

VERSE 4

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥४॥

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya mūrtayah sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir abāṁ bija-pradaḥ pīta*

O son of Kuntī, all forms of life that are born in this world are ultimately born from the great womb of material nature, and I am the seed-giving father.

VERSE 5

सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥५॥

*sattvāṁ rajas tama iti gunāḥ prakṛti-sambhavāḥ
nibadhnanti mahā-bāho dehe dehinam avyayam*

Goodness, passion and ignorance are the modes born of material nature. These modes bind the immutable individual being to the material body, O mighty-armed hero.

VERSE 6

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसङ्गेन बभ्राति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥६॥

*tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt prakāśakam anāmayam
sukha-saṅgena badhnāti jñāna-saṅgena cānagha*

O virtuous Arjuna, amongst these modes, goodness is free from impurities. It gives knowledge and frees one from distress. It conditions one to pleasure and knowledge.

VERSE 7

रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तच्चिबधाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥७॥

*rajo rāgātmakam viddhi tṛṣṇā-saṅga-samudbhavam
tan nibadhnāti kaunteya karma-saṅgena dehinam*

O son of Kuntī, you should know that the mode of passion manifests desire, hankering and attachment. It binds the embodied living beings to their actions.

VERSE 8

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तच्चिबधाति भारत ॥८॥

*tamas tv-ajñānajam viddhi mohanam sarva-dehinām
pramādālasya nidrābbis tan nibadhnāti bhārata*

You should know that the mode of ignorance bewilders all embodied beings, O Bhārata. It binds them through confusion, laziness and excessive sleep.

VERSE 9

सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ॥९॥

*sattvam sukhe sañjayati rajah karmaṇi bhārata
jñānam āvṛtya tu tamah pramāde sañjayaty-uta*

O Bhārata, the mode of goodness conditions one to happiness, the mode of passion creates attachment to perform action, and the mode of ignorance covers knowledge and creates bewilderment.

VERSE 10

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥१०॥

*rajas tamaś cābbibhūya sattvam bhavati bhārata
rajah sattvam tamaś caiva tamah sattvam rajas tathā*

Goodness overpowers passion and ignorance, passion defeats goodness and ignorance, and ignorance overcomes goodness and passion. Thus the modes continually fight for supremacy.

Anuvṛtti

Material nature is compared to a womb and Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He is the seed-giving father (*abhim bīja-pradāb pitā*). The combination of material nature and the living beings thus gives rise to the multitude of life forms which are in turn bound by the modes of material nature and forced to act under their influence.

The mode of goodness is characterised by freedom from impurities, that which gives knowledge, frees one from distress and conditions one to pleasure and accomplishment.

Passion manifests intense desire, hankering and attachment and binds the embodied being to his actions. Ignorance is that which bewilders all embodied beings and constrains one through confusion, laziness and excessive sleep.

The three modes of material nature thus condition one to the illusion of happiness, the attachment to perform action, and bewilderment due to an insufficient fund of knowledge. The combinations of the modes of nature are endless, each fighting with the other for supremacy. Due to this, the embodied living beings are in a constant state of confusion as to the purpose of life and the consequence is the suffering of birth, death, old age and disease.

VERSE II

सर्वद्वारेषु देहे इस्मिन्नकाशा उपजायते ।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥ ११ ॥

*sarva-dvāreṣu dehe'smin prakāśa upajāyate
jñānāṁ yadā tadā vidyād vivṛddhaṁ sattvam ityuta*

When the light of knowledge illuminates all the senses of the body, it should be understood that the mode of goodness is most prevalent.

VERSE 12

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशामः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥ १२ ॥

*lobhab pravrttir ārambhah karmaṇām aśamah sprhā
rajasy-etāni jāyante vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha*

O best of the Bhārata Dynasty, when the mode of passion is most predominant one is under the influence of greed, selfish activities, ambition, restlessness and hankering.

VERSE 13

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥१३॥

*aprakāśo'pravṛttiś ca pramādo moha eva ca
tamasy-etāni jāyante vivṛddhe kuru-nandana*

O descendant of Kuru, by the influence of the mode of ignorance, then darkness, laziness, confusion and delusion are manifest.

VERSE 14

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्मतिपद्यते ॥१४॥

*yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu pralayaṁ yāti deha-bbṛt
tadottama vidāṁ lokān amalān pratipadyate*

When an embodied being dies under the influence of the mode of goodness, he reaches the higher planets wherein those of great intellect reside.

VERSE 15

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसाङ्गिषु जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥१५॥

*rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā karma-saṅgiṣu jāyate
tathā pralīnas tamasi mūḍha-yoniṣu jāyate*

When one dies in the mode of passion, he is reborn amongst those who are attached to worldly activities. If one dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth again in the womb of unintelligent people.

Anuvṛtti

In the above five verses the characteristics of the three modes of nature are further described as well as their influence over the embodied living being at the time of death. When one dies in the mode of goodness, illuminated by knowledge, he reaches the higher planets where those of great intellect reside. When one dies in the mode of passion, characterised by greed, selfish activities, ambition, restlessness and hankering, he is reborn amongst those who are attached to worldly activities. And when the most unfortunate amongst men die in the mode of ignorance, characterised by darkness, laziness, confusion and delusion, they take birth again in the womb of uncivilised people or even worse, descend into the animal kingdom to become dogs, cats and beasts of burden.

VERSE 16

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥ १६ ॥

*karmaṇah sukṛtasyāhuḥ sāttvikam nirmalam phalam
rajasas tu phalam duḥkham ajñānam tamasah phalam*

It has been said that the result of good deeds is purity, the results of passionate activities is misery, and the result of actions in ignorance is bewilderment.

VERSE 17

सत्त्वात्सज्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ १७ ॥

*sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam rajaso lobha eva ca
pramāda-mohau tamaso bhavato'jñānam eva ca*

Goodness gives birth to knowledge, passion gives rise to greed and ignorance breeds illusion, confusion and a lack of knowledge.

VERSE 18

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ १८ ॥

*ūrdhvam gacchanti sattva-sthā madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ
jaghnaya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ*

Those in goodness attain the higher realms, those in passion remain in the middle (the Earth planet) and those in ignorance descend to the lower planes of life.

VERSE 19

नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥ १९ ॥

*nānyam guṇebhyah kartāram yadā draṣṭānupaśyati
guṇebhyaś ca param vetti mad-bhāvam so'bhigacchati*

When one perceives that there is no other active agent except the modes of nature, and he knows the Supreme, he attains My nature.

VERSE 20

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्रुते ॥ २० ॥

*guṇān etān atītya trīn debī deha-samudbhavān
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair vimukto'mṛtam aś्रute*

By transcending these three modes that appear within the body, one becomes liberated from the miseries of birth,

death, old age and other miseries. Then one tastes the nectar of immortality.

Anuvṛtti

Bewilderment and conditioning under the modes of material nature is difficult to overcome, but it is possible when one cultivates the knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* and applies oneself sincerely to the process of *bhakti-yoga*. The knowledge attained through the study of *Bhagavad-gītā* enables one to transcend the modes of nature because such knowledge is in itself transcendental and free from the defects of mistakes (*bhrama*), illusion (*pramāda*), cheating (*vipralipsā*) and false perception (*karaṇāpāṭava*). In other words, the knowledge contained in *Bhagavad-gītā* is perfect and complete. By transcending the modes of nature, Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises that one will be liberated from the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease and one will taste the nectar of immortality. This is also confirmed in the *Īśopaniṣad* as follows:

*vidyāṁ cāvidyāṁ ca yaś tad vedobhayāṁ saha
avidyayā mr̥tyum tīrtvā vidyayāmr̥tam aśnute*

One who transcends ignorance (*avidyā*) and attains transcendental knowledge certainly rises above the influence of repeated birth and death and tastes the nectar of immortality. (*Īśopaniṣad* II)

The contemporary world view of advancement of knowledge is that knowledge is attained through direct evidence, experiment, hypothesis and speculation. This process of acquiring knowledge is called *āroha-panthā*, or the ascending process. However, the ascending process

of knowledge relies completely on the mind, intelligence and senses and is thus subject to the four material defects of mistakes, illusion, cheating and false perception. Accordingly, no scientific knowledge is perfect, nor can it be perfect. Truly, by the admission of many scientists, they never really attain the end of knowledge. The more they learn, the more there is to learn, or the more they learn, the more they discover that their predecessors were wrong. In any case, scientists admit that they do not have perfect knowledge – death comes and another generation of scientists is reduced to dust.

Knowledge that is descending from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and through the guru-disciple *paramparā* is known as *avaroha-panthā* and is free from material defects. *Bhagavad-gītā* means the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa – hearing which enables one to achieve the perfection of life before death comes.

VERSE 21

अर्जुन उवाच ।

कैलिङ्गस्त्रीन्दुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्दुणानतिवर्ते ॥२१॥

arjuna uvāca –

*kair lingais trīn gunān etān atīto bhavati prabho
kim ācāraḥ katham caitāmīs trīn gunān ativartate*

Arjuna inquired: O Kṛṣṇa, by what symptoms can one who has transcended these three modes be known? How does he act and how does he transcend these three modes?

VERSE 22-25

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।
 न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥ २२ ॥
 उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
 गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येवं योऽवतिष्ठति नेञ्जते ॥ २३ ॥
 समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टश्मकाङ्गनः ।
 तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥ २४ ॥
 मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
 सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥ २५ ॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*prakāśam ca pravṛttim ca moham eva ca pāṇḍava
 na dveṣṭi sampravṛttāni na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati
 udāśinavad āśino guṇairyō na vicālyate
 guṇā vartanta ity-evam yo'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate
 sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ svasthaḥ sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanah
 tulya-priyāpriyo dbīras tulya-nindātma-samstutih
 mānāpamānayos tulyas tulyo mitrārī-pakṣayoh
 sarvārambha-parityāgī guṇātītaḥ sa ucyate*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: One who does not like or dislike the presence of illumination, attachment or delusion or laments their absence, who remains dispassionate and is not affected by the modes, who remains unwavering, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who remains content in the self, who sees no intrinsic difference between a lump of earth, a stone and gold, who remains undisturbed in both favourable and unfavourable circumstances, who is wise, to whom insult and praise are equal, who considers honour and infamy to be the same, who is impar-

tial towards both friend and enemy, and who renounces all mundane activities – such a person is considered to be beyond the modes of material nature.

VERSE 26

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान्ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ २६ ॥

*mām ca yo'vyabhicāreṇa bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

One who performs service to Me in *bhakti-yoga* without deviation, transcends these modes of material nature and is qualified for liberation.

VERSE 27

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥ २७ ॥

*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham amṛtasyāvyayasya ca
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikāntikasya ca*

I am the foundation of the immortal, imperishable Brahman, who is the basis of eternal *dharma* and supreme bliss.

Anuvṛtti

The symptoms of one who is free from the modes of nature are herein described. Such a person is equally disposed to the dualities of the material world. Such a person is not affected by happiness and distress because he knows the temporary nature of both. The liberated person is content in the cultivation of the self and is not motivated by wealth or distressed by poverty. He sees gold, dirt or a simple stone as the same (*sama-loṣṭāśma-kāñcanaḥ*). He is

wise, considering infamy and honour the same and has no enemies, as he is impartial to both friends and foes. These are the characteristics of one who is transcendently situated above the three modes of material nature. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* confirms this in the following way:

*sāttvikah kārako ‘saṅgī rāgāndho rājasah smṛtaḥ
tāmasah smṛti-vibhraṣṭo nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ*

One who works free of attachment is in the mode of goodness. One who works with personal desire is in the mode of passion. One who works without discrimination of right and wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But one who takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa is understood to be transcendental to the modes of material nature. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* II.25.26)

The liberated person is always situated in *bhakti-yoga* without deviation because he knows Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the immortal, imperishable Brahman, the giver of eternal wisdom in the form of *Bhagavad-gītā* and the fountainhead of supreme bliss.

अ० तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 guna-traya-vibhāga-yogo nāma caturdaśo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Fourteen entitled *Guṇa-Traya Vibhāga Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः
पुरुषोत्तमयोगः

CHAPTER 15
PURUṢOTTAMA YOGA

The Yoga of the Supreme Person

VERSE I

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
 ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशारखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
 छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेद वित् ॥१॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —
 ūrdhvā-mūlam adhaś sākham aśvattham prābur avyayam
 chandāṁsi yasya parṇāni yas tam vedā sa vedavit*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: It has been told that there is an imperishable banyan tree that has its roots above, its branches below and its leaves are the Vedic *mantras*. One who knows this tree is the knower of the *Vedas*.

VERSE 2

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।
 अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥२॥

*adhaś cordhvāṁ prasṛtās tasya sākhā
 guṇa-pravṛddhā viṣaya-pravālāḥ
 adhaś ca mūlāny-anusantatāni
 karmānubandhīni manusya-loke*

Some branches of this tree spread upwards and others grow downwards, nourished by the modes of nature. The twigs on the tree are the sense-objects, and the roots that extend downwards reach the human plane and are the cause of the binding activities of human society.

VERSE 3-4

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च संप्रतिष्ठा ।
 अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूलम् असङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥३॥

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन्नाता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तमेव चायं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥४॥

*na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate
 nānto na cādir na ca sampratiṣṭhā
 aśvattham enaṁ suvirūḍha-mūlam
 asaṅga-śastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā
 tataḥ padam tat parimārgitavyam
 yasmin gatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ
 tam eva cādyam puruṣam prapadye
 yataḥ pravṛttibḥ prasṛtā purāṇī*

The form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world. Indeed, none can fully comprehend where the tree begins, where it ends, or where its foundation lies. One must cut down this strong-rooted banyan tree with the weapon of detachment and search out that place from which, once having gone, one never returns. One must take shelter of the Supreme Person, from whom all things have originated from time immemorial.

Anuvṛtti

Herein, the material world is compared to a great banyan tree whose roots are above and branches below and whose leaves are the Vedic hymns etc. This is an analogy of the material world as a reflection of reality, whose origin, foundation and end are fully indiscernible to conditioned living beings in the grasp of material illusion. One must cut through this illusion with the weapon of detachment and search out knowledge of the Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* says the following:

*ūrdhvā-mūlam avāk-chākhāṁ vṛkṣāṁ yo veda samprati
na sa jātu janah śraddhadbyāt mṛtyur mā mārayād itih*

He who knows this banyan tree with roots upwards and branches downward acquires the faith (*śradhbā*) that death will not conquer him. (*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka I.II.5.52*)

VERSE 5

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर् गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥५॥

*nirmāna-mohā jita-saṅga-doṣā
adhyātma-nityā vinivṛtta-kāmāḥ
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-samjñair
gacchanty-amūḍhāḥ padam avyayaṁ tat*

Free from pride, illusion and bad association, dedicated to spiritual pursuits, forsaking lust, unburdened by the dualities of happiness and distress – such wise persons attain the eternal realm.

VERSE 6

न तद्वासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्वाम परमं मम ॥६॥

*na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śāśānko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*

My Supreme Abode is not illumined by sun, moon or fire. Once attaining that abode, one never returns.

VERSE 7

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥७॥

*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
manah ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛtisthāni karṣati*

The living beings of this world are My eternal particles. These living beings struggle with the five senses and the mind, which is the sixth sense within.

VERSE 8

शरीरं यद्वाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥८॥

*śarīraṁ yad avāpnoti yac cāpy-utkrāmatīśvarah
gr̥hitvaitāni saṁyāti vāyur gandhān ivāśayāt*

Whenever the individual being, the master of the body, accepts or gives up a material body, his senses and mind follow him to the next birth, just as the wind carries a fragrance from its source.

Anuvṛtti

Perfection in *bhakti-yoga*, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is not achieved without striving to be free from false pride and illusion. To achieve this one should keep company with like-minded persons in pursuit of the Absolute Truth. In other words one should give up bad association.

*asat-saṅga tyāga — ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
strī saṅgī — eka asādhu kṛṣṇābhakta āra*

A Vaiṣṇava (*bhakti-yogī*) should always avoid bad association, those who are materially attached, who

are addicted to illicit sex and who are not interested in the cultivation of the Absolute Truth. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.87)

The Supreme Abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the final destination of the *bhakti-yogī* and Kṛṣṇa says that His abode is not illuminated by sun, moon or fire. Not illuminated by sun, moon or fire means that the Supreme Abode is beyond the reach of the darkness that exists in the material world. In the Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa, known by great self-realised *yogīs* as Goloka Vṛndāvana, everything is filled with the self-effulgence of Kṛṣṇa.

*na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tārakām
 nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto'yam agniḥ
 tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvān
 tasya bhāsā sarvam idam vibhāti*

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor does lightning shine. How then can fire burn? When The Supreme Being shines, all these shine. Through His effulgence He illuminates all things. (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.15)

Kṛṣṇa also says that once attaining that Supreme Abode, one never returns to this world of birth and death. The material world is filled with unlimited fallibilities, but the Supreme Abode is infallible. The fallibility of the material world includes envy, greed, lust, hate, vengefulness etc. but these material qualities cannot enter the abode of Kṛṣṇa.

Some thinkers have postulated that the living beings in this material world have originally fallen from their eternal

position in the Supreme Abode. Such persons are known as ‘Fall-vādīs’. According to the thinking of the ‘Fall-vādīs’, the Supreme Abode is fallible and subject to envy, dissatisfaction, greed, hate and so on. The word ‘fallible’ comes from the Latin word *fallere* that means ‘to deceive’. In order to deceive there must be ignorance, forgetfulness and suspicion etc. However, considering that no material qualities exist in the Supreme Abode, it is not possible for any liberated living being there to become contaminated by material qualities.

Kṛṣṇa says that once going to that abode one never returns to the material world (*yad gatvā na nivartante*). Kṛṣṇa does not say that going *again* to that Supreme Abode one never returns. Therefore, it is understood by Kṛṣṇa’s own words that no one falls from the Supreme Abode.

All living beings in the spiritual and material worlds are eternally Kṛṣṇa’s parts and particles – *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*. However, the living beings who are conditioned by material nature and who have no control of their senses or knowledge of the Supreme Abode, are again and again reborn within the world of birth and death. At the time of death they are carried away to their next body by material desires and the mind, just as a fragrance is carried by the wind.

VERSE 9

ओत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं ग्राणमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥९॥

*śrotram cakṣuh sparśanam ca rasanam ghrāṇam eva ca
adhiṣṭhāya manaś cāyam viṣayān upasevate*

The living beings enjoy the objects of the senses and preside over the ears, eyes, skin, tongue, nose and the mind.

VERSE 10

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुज्ञानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥ १० ॥

*utkrāmantam sthitam vāpi bhujñānam vā gunānvitam
vimūḍhā nānupaśyanti paśyanti jñāna-cakṣuṣab*

Those who are ignorant can neither understand when the individual unit of consciousness is leaving the body, when it is residing within the body, or when it is enjoying the objects of the senses. Only those with the eyes of knowledge can perceive this.

VERSE II

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ ११ ॥

*yatanto yoginaś cainam paśyanty-ātmany-avasthitam
yatanto'py akṛtātmāno nainam paśyanty-acetasah*

The sincere *yogī* sees the *ātmā* situated within, but those who lack true understanding and self-control cannot perceive the *ātmā* no matter how hard they try.

Anuvṛtti

The *ātmā* is not perceivable by the material senses, nor can it be perceived by the aid of a microscope or any such scientific technology because it is transcendental, being composed of *sac-cid-ānanda*.

However, the presence of the *ātmā* can be understood by one's intelligence when one hears from Kṛṣṇa in *Bhaga-*

vad-gītā. Those with misguided intelligence and who are without knowledge cannot understand the *ātmā* by any endeavour, either when it is residing in the body or when it is leaving the body at the time of death. Only those with actual knowledge, who use their intelligence properly, can understand the *ātmā*.

VERSE 12

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्वासयतेऽखिलम् ।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥ १२ ॥

*yad āditya-gatam tejo jagad bhāsayate'khilam
yat candramasi yat cāgnau tat tejo viddhi māmakam*

Know that I am the light of the sun, the moon and fire that illuminates the entire world.

VERSE 13

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १३ ॥

*gām āviśya ca bbūtāni dbārayāmy-abam ojasā
puṣṇāmi cauṣadhbih sarvāḥ somo bbūtvā rasātmakah*

By My potency I enter the earth and maintain all living beings. I nourish all plants by becoming the moon, and provide them with the essence of life.

VERSE 14

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पञ्चाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ १४ ॥

*aharν vaiśvānaro bbūtvā prāṇinām deham āśritab
prāṇāpāna-samāyuktah pachāmy-annam catur-vidham*

I am the fire of digestion that resides in all beings, and I unite with the incoming and outgoing life-airs to digest all types of food.

VERSE 15

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिज्ञानमपोहनं च ।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेद विदेव चाहम् ॥ १५ ॥

*sarvasya cāham hṛdi sannivিষ্টo
mattah smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca
vedaiś ca sarvair abam eva vedyo
vedānta-kṛd vedā-vid eva cāham*

I am situated in the hearts of all living beings, and from Me arises remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness. I alone am to be known through all the *Vedas*. I reveal the *Vedānta* and am the knower of the *Vedas*.

Anuvṛtti

By nature the material world is a dark and lifeless place. Without luminaries like the sun, moon and stars, the world would be dark indeed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that the light of these celestial bodies emanates from Him and that He is also the potency that digests food and nourishes all life.

*tat padam paramam brahma sarvam vibhajate jagat
mamaiva tad-dhanam tejo jñātum arhasi bhārata*

O Bhārata, The Supreme Brahman illuminates the entire universe. You should know that this great effulgence belongs to Me. (*Hari-vamśa* 2.II4.II)

To think that matter alone is the source of life is certainly a less intelligent proposal. The only example we

have is that which we see all around us – that life comes from life. We also see that life is intelligently designed. Therefore, the rational conclusion should be that all life arises from an intelligent life source. Everything comes from Kṛṣṇa.

oṁ janmādy asya yataḥ

The Supreme is He from whom the creation, sustenance and annihilation of the manifested universe arises. (*Vedānta-sūtra* I.I.2)

Kṛṣṇa also says that He is situated in the hearts of all living beings as the Paramātmā and from Him all remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness arises. He says it is He alone who is to be known through the *Vedas*. He reveals the *Vedānta*, the end of knowledge, and it is He who is the knower of the *Vedas*. This is also confirmed in the *Hari-varīṣa* as follows:

*vede rāmāyaṇe caiva purāṇe bhārata tathā
ādāv-cānte ca madhye ca hariḥ sarvatra gīyate*

In the beginning, the middle and the end, all the *Vedas*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Purāṇas* and the *Mahābhārata* only glorify Kṛṣṇa. (*Hari-varīṣa* 3.I32.35)

The *Vedas* are divided into four main divisions – *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva Vedas*. Then comes the *Upaniṣads* and supplementary literature such as the eighteen *Purāṇas* (including the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*), *Mahābhārata* (*Bhagavad-gītā*), *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Vedānta-sūtra*. In all these it is Hari (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) who is to be known.

VERSE 16

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

*dvāv-imau puruṣau loke kṣaraś cākṣara eva ca
kṣarabḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate*

There are two types of beings – those in the material world and those in the spiritual world (Vaikuṇṭha). In the material world all living beings are fallible. In the spiritual world, all living beings are said to be infallible.

VERSE 17

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ १७ ॥

*uttamabḥ puruṣas tv-anyabḥ paramātmety-udbhābṛtaḥ
yo loka-trayam āviśya bibharty-avyaya īśvarabḥ*

Yet there is another Being – the Supreme Person, the imperishable Super Consciousness, who enters the upper, middle and lower planetary systems and maintains them.

VERSE 18

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ १८ ॥

*yasmāt kṣaram atīto'ham akṣarādapi cottamaḥ
ato'smi loke vede ca prathitabḥ puruṣottamaḥ*

I am superior to all fallible beings and I transcend even those who are infallible. Thus I am glorified throughout the universe and in the *Vedas* as the Supreme Person (Puruṣottama).

VERSE 19

यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।
स सर्वविद्वज्ञति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥ १९ ॥

*yo mām evam asammūḍho jānāti puruṣottamam
sa sarva-vid bhajati mām sarva-bhāvena bhārata*

O Bhārata, whoever is free from bewilderment knows Me as the Supreme Person. Such a person knows everything and worships Me with all his heart.

VERSE 20

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ ।
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमानस्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥ २० ॥

*iti gubyatamaṁ śāstram idam uktam mayānagha
etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt kṛta-kṛtyaś ca bhārata*

O faultless one, I have thus explained to you the greatest secret of the *śāstra*. By understanding this, O Bhārata, one finds wisdom and all his activities become perfect.

Anuvṛtti

The fallible beings in this world are those under the three modes of material nature and the infallible beings are those engaged in the pursuit of transcendental knowledge through the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The infallible living beings are known as liberated. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He is superior to the fallible living beings and He is also transcendental to those who are infallible because He is the Supreme Person.

This means that at no time do the liberated living beings become the Supreme or one with Kṛṣṇa. He is, and always

will be, the Supreme Person. This is the declaration found in *Bhagavad-gītā* and throughout the Vedic literature.

*ekale iśvara kṛṣṇa āra saba bhṛtya
yāre yaiche nācāya se taiche kare nr̥tya*

Kṛṣṇa alone is the Supreme Controller. All others are His servants. They dance as He makes them do so. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 5.142)

*satyam satyam punah satyam uddbhṛtya bhujam-ucyate
vedāc chāstraṁ param nāsti na devaḥ keśavāt paraḥ*

Raising my arms in the air, I loudly declare that there is no text greater than the *Vedas*, and no Deity superior to Keśava (Kṛṣṇa). Again and again I say this is true, this is true, this is true. (*Hari-vaiñśa, Śeṣa-dharma-parva* 2.15)

Perfection of life in the material world means the cultivation of social structure, (*dharma*), economic development (*artha*), material enjoyment (*kāma*) and salvation (*mokṣa*). History shows us that seldom ever does a civilisation progress beyond social structure, economic development and material enjoyment. Salvation is the fourth goal of life and is rarely sought by those absorbed in material consciousness. Such hedonistic societies are easily satisfied by the fulfilment of eating, sleeping, mating and defending. Even more rare than salvation however is the fifth goal of life, *prema-bhakti*, or *bhakti-yoga*, the *yoga* of love.

*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas
tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam*

*ramyā kācid upāsanā vraja-vadbū
 vargena yā kalpitā
 śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam amalam
 premā pumartho mahān
 śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idam
 tatrādaro naḥ parah*

The Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental realm of Vṛndāvana are the most worshipable objects. The supreme method of worshipping Him is that adopted by the beautiful *gopīs*, the young wives of Vraja. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is the most pure and most authoritative *sāstra*, and divine love is the fifth and highest achievement of human life beyond *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. It is thus known as *pañcama-puruṣārtha*. This is the verdict of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and we have the highest regard for this conclusion. (*Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣa*)

Thus, the student of *Bhagavad-gītā* has little interest in the first four goals of human society because all such achievements are temporary and do not lead to union (*yoga*) with the Supreme Person. Only that which leads one to Śrī Kṛṣṇa should be the goal of one's life.

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
 पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārate-śata-sāhasryāṁ saṁhitāyāṁ  
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu  
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
 puruṣottama-yogo nāma pañcadaśo'dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Fifteen entitled *Puruṣottama Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.





अथ षोडशोऽध्यायः  
दैवासुरसंपद्विभागयोगः

CHAPTER 16  
DAIVĀSURA SAMĀPAD  
VIBHĀGA YOGA

*The Yoga of Discretion –  
Pious and Impious Natures*



VERSE I-3

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।  
 दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ १ ॥  
 अहिंसा सत्यमकोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।  
 दया भूतेष्वलोलुस्वं मार्दवं हीरचापलम् ॥ २ ॥  
 तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।  
 भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३ ॥

*sri bhagavān uvāca —*

*abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhiḥ jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitib  
 dānam damaś ca yajñaś ca svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam  
 ahīṁsā satyam akrodhas tyāgah śāntir apaiśunam  
 dayā bhūteṣv-aloluptvam mārdavam hrīr acāpalam  
 tejaḥ kṣamā dbṛtiḥ śaucam adroho nātimānitā  
 bhavanti sampadam daivīm abbijātasya bhārata*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O Bhārata, these are the various qualities of one who is born with a divine nature (*deva*) – fearlessness, pure-heartedness, absorption in spiritual knowledge, charity, self-control, sacrifice, study of the *Vedas*, austerity, sincerity, non-violence, truthfulness, freedom from anger, renunciation, serenity, aversion to finding faults in others, compassion for all creatures, absence of avarice, gentleness, modesty, steadiness, valour, forgiveness, patience, cleanliness, freedom from envy and the desire for prestige.

VERSE 4

दम्भो दर्पेऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।  
 अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थं संपदमासुरीम् ॥ ४ ॥

*dambho darpo'bhimānaś ca krodbhaḥ pāruṣyameva ca  
ajñānam cābhijātasya pārtha sampadam āsurīm*

Pride, arrogance, conceit, anger, cruelty and ignorance – these are the qualities manifest in one born of an impious nature (*asura*).

#### VERSE 5

दैवी संपद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।  
मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥५॥

*daivī sampad vimokṣāya nibandhāyāśurī matā  
mā śucah sampadāṁ daivīm abhijāto'si pāṇḍava*

The qualities of a *deva* lead one to liberation, while the qualities of an *asura* cause bondage. Fear not, O Pāṇḍava, for you are born of the nature of a *deva*.

#### VERSE 6

द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च ।  
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥६॥

*dvau bhūta-sargau loke'smin daiva āsura eva ca  
daivo vistaraśah prokta āsurāṁ pārtha me śṛṇu*

Pārtha, there are two types of people born into this world – the *deva* and the *asura*. I have described *devas* in detail. Now listen to Me as I describe the *asuras*.

#### Anuvṛtti

In this chapter Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes to Arjuna the two general categories of human beings, *devas* and *asuras*, or the pious and impious. Up to this point, throughout the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa has mentioned many of the qualities and char-

acteristics of a *deva*. These are the qualities of what we would call a ‘good human being’ and these qualities are also conducive for self-realisation. These are described in verses 1 to 3 of this chapter.

Now Kṛṣṇa begins to detail the qualities of the *asura* so that Arjuna can decide upon the path that he must take in life and the association he must choose. Ultimately, being able to discern between pious and impious natures, Arjuna will be able to perform the duties that lie ahead of him at Kurukṣetra.

#### VERSE 7

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।  
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥७॥

*pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca janā na vidur āsurāḥ  
na śaucam nāpi cācāro na satyam teṣu vidyate*

Those who are *asuras* by nature cannot discriminate as to what actions should be done and what actions should not be done. No purity, proper behaviour or truthfulness can be found in them.

#### VERSE 8

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।  
अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥८॥

*asatyam apratiṣṭham te jagad āhur anīśvaram  
aparaspara-sambhūtam kim anyat kāma-haitukam*

They claim that the world is false, without any basis and without any divinity. They believe that the source of everything is the union between male and female and that life has no purpose besides lust.

### VERSE 9

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टुभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।  
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्मणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥९॥

*etām dṛṣṭim avaśṭabhy naṣṭātmāno'lpā buddhayah  
prabhavanty-ugra-karmāṇah kṣayāya jagato'bhitāḥ*

With this view, such people with depraved and small intellect flourish and engage in malicious activities for the destruction of the world.

### VERSE 10

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।  
मोहाद्वृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥१०॥

*kāmam āśritya duṣpūram dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ  
mohād gṛhitvāsad grāhān pravartante'suci-vratāḥ*

Attached to their insatiable lusty desires and absorbed in pride and arrogance, such people become bewildered and embrace deceitful ideologies, pledging themselves to impure activities.

### VERSE 11-12

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।  
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥११॥  
आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामकोधपरायणाः ।  
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥१२॥

*cintām aparimeyāṁ ca pralayāntām upāśritāḥ  
kāmopabhoga-paramā etāvad iti niścitatāḥ  
āśā-pāśa-satair baddhāḥ kāma-krodha-parāyanāḥ  
ihante kāma-bhogārtham anyāyenārtha-sañcayān*

Believing that slaking their greed and fulfilling their lusty desires is the ultimate goal of life, they undergo unlimited anxieties until the time of death. Bound by hundreds of ambitions and absorbed in lust and anger, they try to amass wealth by any unlawful means in order to satisfy their desires.

VERSE 13-15

इदमय मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्त्ये मनोरथम् ।  
 इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥ १३ ॥  
 असौ मया हतः शत्रुहनिष्ये चापरानपि ।  
 ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥ १४ ॥  
 आद्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।  
 यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥ १५ ॥

*idam adya mayā labdham imam prāpsyē manoratham  
 idam astīdam api me bhavishyati punar dhanam  
 asau mayā hataḥ śatruhanisye cāparān api  
 īśvaro'ham abhi bhogī siddho'ham balavān sukhi  
 ādhyo'bhibjanavān asmi ko'nyo'sti sadṛśo mayā  
 yakṣye dāsyāmi modiṣya ity-ajñāna-vimohitāḥ*

They say: “I have gained this today, now I shall fulfil my other desires. This wealth belongs to me and in the future it will increase. This enemy has been slain by me and in the future I will slay others. I am in control! I am the enjoyer! I am perfect! I am powerful! I am happy! I am wealthy and aristocratic. Is there anyone equal to me? I shall perform sacrifices, give in charity and enjoy!” Thus they are deluded by ignorance.

## Anuvṛtti

The inability to discriminate between proper and improper actions is the first recognisable characteristic of an *asura*. Additionally, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, they do not know what is purity, proper behaviour or truthfulness. Truthfulness, cleanliness, austerity and mercy are most desirable qualities for a human being, but these are totally lacking in one who has acquired the nature of an *asura*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa continues to describe in detail the qualities and characteristics of the *asura* mentality and if one takes careful note of what Kṛṣṇa is saying, then one is faced with the stark realisation that the world we live in today is dominated by the thinking and activities of the *asuras*.

The structure of our world is now based on rampant consumerism, the ‘shop till you drop’ mentality. Enjoy, enjoy, enjoy! The ‘if it feels good, do it’ mentality is everywhere. We are led to believe that there is no ultimate reality, that this one life is the all in all, and therefore we should enjoy it while it lasts – the fulfilment of the sexual lust of men and women being at the forefront of such enjoyment. The epitome of this is represented worldwide by the casual and legal acceptance of contraception and abortion.

With the present mentality of the human being, it seems that the world is set on a path of destruction – with devastation of the environment, economic collapse, extinction of species and even genocide of certain races of humans. Have we no eyes to see what is happening? Has the human race become so proud and arrogant of its achievements that it has become blind?

Good government is essential in a civilised world. Such a government is for the purpose of safeguarding society

from danger – not just from the danger of an invading army, but also from the threat of unwholesome ideologies that may destroy a civilisation from within. Unfortunately, it seems as though governments worldwide have abandoned all sense of proper behaviour and they themselves have become the leading plunderers of the people. Amassing wealth by any means and depriving the people from even the most basic necessities of life, such despots know no shame. Indeed, the world is in a period of great darkness at the hands of the *asura* mentality.

From their high pulpits the heads of state declare, “Our enemies must be killed. The evildoers must be defeated. We shall be victorious, we shall rule the world, we shall enjoy, we are the chosen people, we are powerful, we are happy and none are our equals!” And while the hysteria of the masses runs wild, the innocent are sent to their graves and the Earth weeps for her children. Yet it seems we are unfazed. Such, Kṛṣṇa says, is our ignorance.

#### VERSE 16

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।  
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥ १६ ॥

*aneka-citta-vibhrāntā moha-jāla-samāvṛtāḥ  
prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeṣu patanti narake�śucau*

The minds of the *asuras* are full of various bewildering thoughts and thus they are ensnared in a network of illusion. As they become absorbed in fulfilling their mundane desires, they descend into a foul abyss.

### VERSE 17

आत्मसंभाविताः स्तव्या धनमानमदान्विताः ।  
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥१७॥

*ātma-sambhāvitāḥ stabdhā dhana-māna-madānvitāḥ  
yajante nāma-yajñais te dambhenāvidhi-pūrvakam*

Full of self-importance, stubborn and intoxicated with their wealth, they perform sacrifices in name only that are against the rules of *dharma*.

### VERSE 18

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।  
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥१८॥

*ahaṅkāraṁ balam darpam kāmam krodham ca saṁśritāḥ  
mām ātma-para-deheṣu pradviṣanto'bhyasūyakāḥ*

Surrendering to egotism, power, pride, lust and anger, such people hate Me, who is situated in their own bodies and the bodies of others.

### VERSE 19

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।  
क्षिपाम्यजघमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥१९॥

*tān abāṁ dvīṣataḥ krurān saṁsāreṣu narādhamān  
kṣipāmy-ajasram aśubhān āsurīṣv-eva yoniṣu*

Such envious and cruel persons are perpetually born among the impious and unrighteous where they suffer in the repeated cycle of birth and death, for they are the lowest of all mankind.

VERSE 20

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।  
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥२०॥

*āsurīm yonim āpannā mūḍhā janmani janmani  
mām aprāpyaiva kaunteya tato yānty-adhamām gatim*

O Kaunteya, continually taking birth amongst the impious, such foolish persons never attain Me. Rather, they fall to the most abominable destinations.

VERSE 21

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।  
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्वयं त्यजेत् ॥२१॥

*tri-vidhaṁ narakasyedam dvāram nāśanam ātmanah  
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet*

There are three paths leading to the lower planets and self-destruction – lust, anger and greed. Thus, these three must be abandoned because they are the great destroyers of self-realisation.

VERSE 22

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।  
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२२॥

*etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya tamo-dvārais tribhir narah  
ācaraty-ātmanah śreyas tato yāti parām gatim*

O Kaunteya, one who is free from these three paths of darkness acts in his best interest. He gradually reaches the Supreme Abode.

### VERSE 23

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।  
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥२३॥

*yah śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya vartate kāma-kārataḥ  
na sa siddhim avāpnōti na sukham na parām gatim*

He that neglects the rules of the *Vedas* in order to satisfy his material desires, never attains perfection, happiness, or the Supreme Abode.

### VERSE 24

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।  
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥२४॥

*tasmāc-chāstraiḥ pramāṇaiḥ te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau  
jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktaṁ karma kartum ihaṛhasi*

The Vedic injunctions are your authority pertaining to what is to be done and what is not to be done. Thus, realising your duty in this world, you should act accordingly.

### Anuvṛtti

Ultimately, there is no happiness, no success, no well-being nor advancement in self-realisation when one follows the path of the *asura*. What then should be done?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa identifies the three main characteristics of the *asura* mentality in verse 21 as *kāma*, *krodha* and *lobha* – lust, anger and greed. These are indeed the cause of great misfortune amongst all living beings and such are the destroyers of self-realisation. Therefore, lust, anger and greed must be conquered by one who wants to make progress in human life. To triumph over the great enemies of

lust, anger and greed, one must apply oneself diligently to controlling the senses and perform the prescribed activities in *bhakti-yoga* known as *sādbhana*. The practice of *sādbhana* is learned from the guru, a *tattva-darśī* who has seen the truth, and the guru instructs the student according to their ability and present stage of advancement. To this end, the guru will advise all students in *bhakti-yoga* to chant the *mahā-mantra* and fix the mind upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This process is purifying and beneficial to everyone, regardless of one's being a novice or being very advanced. Everyone should engage in chanting the *mahā-mantra* to defeat the enemies of lust, anger and greed, and to dispel the ignorance and darkness of the age of Kali-yuga.

*nāma-saṅkīrtanāṁ-yasya sarva-pāpa-praṇāśanam  
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas tāṁ namāmi harim param*

The chanting of the *mahā-mantra* can relieve us from all undesirable habits, all unwanted characteristics and all miseries. Chant the *mahā-mantra*! Nothing else is necessary. Chant the *mahā-mantra* and begin your real life in this dark age of Kali-yuga with the most broad and wide theistic conception. Let us all bow down to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 12.13.23)

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां  
वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु  
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे  
दैवासुरसंपद्विभागयोगो नाम षोडशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārata-sāta-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ  
vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi  
śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu  
brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
daivāsura-sampad-vibhāga-yogo nāma ṣodaśo'dhyāyah*

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Sixteen entitled *Daivāsura Sampad Vibhāga Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथ सप्तदशोऽध्यायः  
श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगः

CHAPTER 17  
ŚRADDHĀ-TRAYA  
VIBHĀGA YOGA

*The Yoga Explaining Three Types of Faith*



VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सुज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।  
तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥१॥

*arjuna uvāca —*

*ye śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ  
teṣāṁ niṣṭhā tu kā kṛṣṇa sattvam ābo rajas tamah*

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the position of those that neglect the rules of the *Vedas*, yet worship with faith. Is such worship considered to be in the mode of goodness, passion or ignorance?

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।  
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥२॥

*śrī bhagavān uvāca —*

*tri-vidhā bhavati śraddhā dehināṁ sā svabhāva-jā  
sāttvikī rājasī caiva tāmasī ceti tām śṛṇu*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: The faith of the embodied living beings is of three types – goodness, passion and ignorance. That faith arises from their own nature from impressions of previous lives. Please hear about this.

VERSE 3

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।  
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥३॥

*sattvānurūpā sarvasya śraddhā bhavati bhārata  
śraddhāmayo'yaṁ puruṣo yo yac chṛaddhaḥ sa eva saḥ*

O Bhārata, according to their consciousness, all living beings develop a particular type of faith. Indeed, a person is made of his faith.

VERSE 4

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।  
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥४॥

*yajante sāttvikā devān yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi rājasāḥ  
pretān bhūta-gaṇāṁś cānye yajante tāmasā janāḥ*

Those in goodness worship the demigods; those in passion worship the ancestors and demoniac forces and those in ignorance worship ghosts.

VERSE 5-6

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।  
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलाच्चिताः ॥५॥  
कर्षयन्तः शारीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः ।  
मां चैवान्तःशारीरस्थं तान्विद्यासुरनिश्चयान् ॥६॥

*aśāstra-vibitam ghoram tapyante ye tapo janāḥ  
dambhāhaṅkāra-saṁyuktāḥ kāma-rāga-balānvitāḥ  
karṣayantah śarīra-stham bhūta-grāmam acetasaḥ  
māṁ caivāntah śarīra-stham tān viddhy-āsura-niścayān*

Out of pride and egotism, those who are ignorant undergo severe austerities that have no basis in the *Vedas*. Driven by lust, ambition and the desire for power, they torture the body and thus they also torture Me who resides within the body – know that such persons are of the nature of *asuras*.

## Anuvṛtti

In this chapter Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers the question of Arjuna regarding those who reject the *Vedas*, but perform worship with some faith. Arjuna wants to know to which mode of material nature they belong. The first lesson to learn here is that by not following the Vedic injunctions one automatically acts as one likes, but is henceforth always under the modes of material nature – goodness, passion and ignorance. Thus, one is never situated in transcendence. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then further describes food, sacrifice, austerity and charity as they are influenced by, or born of, the three modes of material nature.

First faith (*śraddhā*) is discussed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that *śraddhā* arises in this life due to one's own nature and from impressions in the mind from previous lives. All activities in life depend on faith to one degree or another. It does not matter what one's creed may be – theist or atheist, one must have faith. The theist has faith that there is a God, and the atheist has faith that there is no God. If one states a particular doctrine or philosophy, but says he has no 'faith' then that is pure hypocrisy.

Kṛṣṇa says that when one's faith is in the mode of goodness, one worships the demigods such as Gaṇeśa, Śiva, Sūrya, Indra and Sarasvatī etc. When one's faith is in the mode of passion, one worships the spirits in nature or the ancestors – this also includes humanists and atheists. When one's faith is in the mode of ignorance, one is found to worship ghosts and spirits. All these types of worship are current in the world today.

In India, many people worship the demigods by building big temples and offering fire sacrifices known as *yajñas*. In

the Far East, ancestor worship is very popular amongst the Buddhists, Shintoists and Taoists. Similarly, in Europe and America, great monuments are erected to revere scientists, politicians, soldiers, movie stars, rock stars etc. In Africa, Tibet, Mexico and South America, the worship of ghosts and spirits is popular. All these forms of worship are conducted in the three modes of material nature. Therefore, having rejected the *Vedas*, it is to be concluded that the worshippers of demigods, ancestors, famous personalities, ghosts and spirits are not transcendently situated.

To be transcendental to material nature means to accept the *Vedas* and thus be situated beyond the modes of nature in the realm of *viśuddha-sattva*, pure goodness. When one's faith is situated in pure goodness, one worships the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa. This is the highest stage of monotheism – the acceptance of one Supreme Being. Pure-goodness is described by Śiva as follows:

*sattvāṁ viśuddhaṁ vasudeva-śabditarī<sup>m</sup>  
 yad īyate tatra pumān apāvṛtaḥ  
 sattve ca tasmin bhagavān vāsudevo  
 by adbhokṣajo me namasā vidhīyate*

One should always worship Kṛṣṇa in pure goodness. Pure goodness is always pure consciousness in which the Absolute Truth, known as Vāsudeva, is revealed without any covering. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 4.3.23)

In the stage of pure consciousness, one is guided by the highest type of faith called *nirguna-śraddhā*, transcendental faith that is uncontaminated by the modes of material nature. After many lifetimes of following the *Vedas*

and associating with the virtuous and pious, one develops *sukṛti*, accumulated merit. This *sukṛti* then leads one to the association of *sādbhus* (self-realised *yogīs*) and under their guidance *nirguṇa-śraddhā* develops and progresses through various stages – ultimately reaching the highest stage of self-realisation, *prema-bhakti*.

*Nirguṇa-śraddhā* awakens in the heart of the *bhakti-yogī* and enables one to see, hear and feel the subjective world, the Absolute Truth. *Nirguṇa-śraddhā* is that which reveals Kṛṣṇa just as a flash of lightning reveals the shape of a monsoon rain cloud in the dead of night. In the darkness of night, the cloud cannot be seen, but when lightning appears, the form of the cloud becomes visible. Similarly, when *nirguṇa-śraddhā* appears in the heart of the *yogī*, one can perceive the ultimate form of beauty that is Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Guided by *nirguṇa-śraddhā*, the student of *bhakti-yoga* will feel that one is meant for Kṛṣṇa – that he is not an independent being. One must feel completely dependent on Kṛṣṇa. Such is the process of understanding the Supreme Person, who is beyond the modes of material nature.

Kṛṣṇa says that one who is driven by lust, ambition, power, pride and egotism often undergoes severe austerities that are not prescribed in the *Vedas* or in the process of *bhakti-yoga* – such austerities parch the senses of the body. These may include austerities such as prolonged periods of fasting, self-flagellation, self-crucifixion, wearing cilice chains, piercing the body, walking on hot coals and so on. Because these austerities are performed in the mode of ignorance they neglect the Paramātmā within – thus leading to no good result. Kṛṣṇa says the performers of such austerities are to be known as *asuras*.

VERSE 7

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।  
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥७॥

*ābhāras tv-api sarvasya tri-vidho bhavati priyah  
yajñas tapas tathā dānam teṣām bhedam imam śrṇu*

The food that people enjoy as well as the methods of sacrifice, austerity and charity are also of three types. Listen now about the distinctions between them.

VERSE 8

आयुः सत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।  
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥८॥

*āyuh sattva-balārogya-sukha-prīti-vivardhanāḥ  
rasyāḥ snigdhabhāḥ sthirā hṛdyā ābhārāḥ sāttvika-priyāḥ*

Food that increase one's life, energy, strength, health, happiness and satisfaction, that is succulent, fatty, wholesome and appealing is dear to those in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 9

कद्बस्तुलवणात्पुष्टीक्षणरूक्षविदाहिनः ।  
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥९॥

*katv-amla-lavanāty-uṣṇa-tīkṣṇa-rūkṣa-vidāhinah  
ābhārā rājasasyeṣṭā duḥkha-śokāmaya-pradāḥ*

Food that is too bitter, too sour, too salty, too hot, too pungent, too dry and creates a burning sensation within, causes pain, sorrow and disease. Such food is dear to those in the mode of passion.

VERSE 10

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।  
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेघं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥ १० ॥

*yāta-yāmam gata-rasam pūti paryuṣitam ca yat  
ucchiṣṭam api cāmedhyam bbojanam tāmasa-priyam*

Food that is stale, tasteless, foul-smelling, rotten, left by others and unfit for sacrifice is dear to those in the mode of ignorance.

**Anuvṛtti**

As Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, the French politician, lawyer and connoisseur wrote in 1826, “*Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es* – Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are.” In other words, you are what you eat. But in ancient times this was better understood than in today’s world. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that all food is divided into three groups and is dear to one according to the acquired mode of nature.

Food that increases life, gives energy, strength, health, happiness and satisfaction is in the mode of goodness. This includes fruits, vegetables, grains, sugar, salt, spices and milk products. These are basically known as vegetarian foods and are dear to those in the mode of goodness.

Food that is too bitter, too sour, too sweet, too salty, too spicy, too pungent and too dry, that creates excessive heat in the stomach, causes pain, creates gas and disease is to be known as food in the mode of passion. Such food may be vegetarian, but it is usually over-salted, and over-spiced. Too much salt and spice creates mucus in the body and leads to such diseases as high blood pressure, heart failure, diabetes and cancer. Such food should be avoided.

Kṛṣṇa says that food that is stale, tasteless, foul smelling, rotten, left behind by others or unfit for sacrifice, is food in the mode of ignorance. Food left behind by others means the scraps left behind on someone's plate, that in western countries, are usually fed to dogs and cats. Food not fit for sacrifice means that food contaminated by an animal, or that has come in contact with something filthy and impure.

Food in the mode of ignorance may include some vegetarian food that has become contaminated. Food in the mode of ignorance generally pertains to all varieties of non-vegetarian foodstuff such as meat, fish and eggs. These include beef, mutton, goat, pig, chicken, venison, turkey, duck, turtle, prawn, crab, frog, insect, snake, clam, oyster, shark, whale, caviar, horse and dog, just to name a few. Absurd as it may sound to the student of *bhakti-yoga*, all the food mentioned above is very popular in various parts of the world. Such food is to be avoided by all classes of *yogīs*, as well as by progressive human beings in general.

All types of *yogīs* prefer food in the mode of goodness, but the *bhakti-yogīs* prefer to eat only the remnants of food in the mode of goodness that has first been offered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with love and devotion (*yo me bhaktyā prayacchati*). Such remnants are called *prasādam* or *mahā-prasādam*.

Even eating food in the mode of goodness carries a *karmic* reaction if it is not first offered to Kṛṣṇa. This has also been mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Chapter Three, verse 13 as follows:

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinah santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ  
bhuñjate te tvagham pāpā ye pacanty-ātma-kāraṇāt*

Saintly persons are liberated from all types of impiety by accepting the remnants of foodstuffs offered in sacrifice (to Kṛṣṇa). However, those who only cook for themselves perpetuate their own bondage.

Food that is to be offered to Kṛṣṇa must be prepared with love and devotion, and in a kitchen that is clean and where domestic pets such as cats and dogs do not enter. Everyone loves their pets – indeed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself loves His two pet dogs, Vyāghra and Bhramaraka, as well as other animals. However, pets should not be allowed in the kitchen where offerings are prepared.

The student of *bhakti-yoga* should not be a fanatic, but should practice moderation in all things. However, the *yogī* should be diligent to avoid food in the modes of passion and ignorance.

### VERSE II

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।  
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥ ११ ॥

*aphalākāṅkṣibhir yajño vidhidṛṣṭo ya ijyate  
yaṣṭavyam eveti manah samādhāya sa sāttvikah*

Sacrifices that are resolutely performed according to Vedic injunctions, by those who have no desire for any personal gain are said to be in the mode of goodness.

### VERSE 12

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।  
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ १२ ॥

*abhisandhāya tu phalam dambhārtham api caiva yat  
ijyate bharata-śreṣṭha tam yajñam viddhi rājasam*

However, O best of the Bharata Dynasty, those sacrifices that are performed out of pride and with selfish intent should be considered to be in the mode of passion.

### VERSE I3

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।  
श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ॥ १३ ॥

*vidhi-hinam asṛṣṭānnam mantra-hinam adakṣiṇam  
śraddhā-virahitam yajñam tāmasam paricakṣate*

That sacrifice which disregards Vedic rules, where no food is given in charity, which is without the chanting of proper *mantras* and without charity to the *brāhmaṇas* – such a sacrifice is faithless and in the mode of ignorance.

### Anuvṛtti

For every age the Vedic literature recommends a particular sacrifice for those desiring self-realisation. It should be noted that those sacrifices are never in the category of blood sacrifice. In other words, those seeking self-realisation never perform animal or human sacrifice. Both animal and human sacrifice have been practiced in many parts of the world since ancient times, but at no time in history have there been animal or human sacrifices performed by those seeking self-realisation in *bhakti-yoga*.

In today's world, some religious sects sacrifice animals before eating them. Similar rituals are performed in other sects wherein a symbolic representation of the blood and body of a saint are eaten. However, one should know that all such barbaric activities are completely absent in the practice of *bhakti-yoga*.

In the modern age, the Vedic literature gives recommendation for only one sacrifice and that is *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* in which one chants the *mahā-mantra*, preceded by the *pañca-tattva mantra*:

*jaya śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya, prabhu nityānanda*  
*jaya advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi gaura-bhakta-vrndā*  
*bare kṛṣṇa bare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bare bare*  
*bare rāma bare rāma rāma rāma bare bare*

The chanting of the *pañca-tattva mantra* is to precede the *mahā-mantra* and frees the chanter from any previous offences that may have been committed knowingly or unknowingly. When the performance of *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* is done alongside the distribution of Kṛṣṇa *mahā-prasādam* it is considered perfect and complete. In the age of Kali-yuga no other sacrifice is necessary.

#### VERSE 14

देवद्विजगुरु प्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।  
 ब्रह्मचर्यमहिसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥ १४ ॥

*deva-dvija-guru-prājña-pūjanam ūaucam ārjavam*  
*brahmacaryam ahirinsā ca ūarīraṁ tapa ucyate*

Proper physical austerity consists of worshipping the Supreme, the *brāhmaṇas*, the spiritual master and the wise, as well as purity, sincerity, celibacy and non-violence.

#### VERSE 15

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियाहितं च यत् ।  
 स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥ १५ ॥

*anudvega-karam vākyam satyam priyabitarū ca yat  
svādhyāyābhyaśanam caiva vāñmayam tapa ucyate*

Truthful speech that does not disturb others, which is pleasing and beneficial as well as the recitation of the *Vedas* – this is known as verbal austerity.

VERSE 16

मनःप्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।  
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्पो मानसमुच्यते ॥ १६ ॥

*manah prasādaḥ saumyatvam maunam ātma-vinigrahaḥ  
bhāva-saṁśuddhir ity-etaḥ tapo mānasam ucyate*

Mental austerity is said to be peace of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of heart.

VERSE 17

श्रद्धया परया तसं तपस्तच्चिविधं नरैः ।  
अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ॥ १७ ॥

*śraddhbayā parayā taptaṁ tapas tat tri-vidham naraiḥ  
aphalākāṅkṣibhir yuktaih sāttvikam paricakṣate*

When these three types of austerity are taken up with strong faith by one who is strict and who is without selfish motivation, they are said to be in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 18

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् ।  
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमधुवम् ॥ १८ ॥

*satkāra-māna-pūjārtham tapo dambhena caiva yat  
kriyate tadiha proktam rājasam calam adbruvam*

Austerities that are performed with pride in order to achieve prestige, name and fame are said to be in the mode of passion. The results of such austerities are unstable and temporary.

VERSE 19

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।  
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ १९ ॥

*mūḍha-grāhenātmano yat pīdayā kriyate tapaḥ  
parasyotsādanārthaṁ vā tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

Austerities performed out of foolishness that inflict pain on oneself and others, are said to be in the mode of ignorance.

**Anuvṛtti**

Austerity is called *tapasya*, or the undertaking of some measure of practice that diminishes material activities and promotes a conscious awareness of the Absolute Truth. These austerities are described in verses 14, 15 and 16. Physical austerities are described as maintaining purity (cleanliness), sincerity, celibacy and non-violence. Celibacy means not to engage in acts of illicit sex (sex outside of marriage). Physical austerity also includes the worship of the Supreme Person and honouring the guru and saintly persons.

Austerities that are performed out of pride and for the purpose of prestige, name and fame are to be rejected. This may also include fasting for political, social or economic advantages. Austerities performed out of foolishness that cause pain and suffering should also be rejected. All such austerities are thus abandoned because they are performed

in the modes of passion and ignorance – the results of which are temporary and do not promote self-realisation.

Speaking truthfully, but not in such a way as to offend others, is known as verbal austerity. The saying is, ‘the truth hurts’, but this does not apply to *Bhagavad-gītā*. The truth should be presented in such a way that it is attractive and pleasing to hear.

*satyam brūyāt priyam brūyānna brūyāt satyam-apriyam  
priyam ca nānṛtam brūyād esa dharmah sanātanah*

One should only speak the truth, and one’s speech should be pleasing. One should not speak any truth that offends and one should not speak any lie even if it is pleasing – such is eternal *dharma*. (*Manu-sambitā* 4.138)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the friend and well-wisher of all living beings and His message should be presented in that way. *Bhagavad-gītā* does not condemn – it simply points to that which should be done and that which should not be done.

#### VERSE 20

दातव्यमिति यदानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।  
देशो काले च पात्रे च तद्वानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥२०॥

*dātavyam iti yad dānam dīyate'nupakāriṇe  
deśe kāle ca pātre ca tad dānam sāttvikam smṛtam*

Charity that is given without any expectation of reward, at a proper place, at an auspicious time, to a qualified recipient with the mentality that it should be given, is in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 21

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।  
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तदानं राजसंस्मृतम् ॥२१॥

*yat tu pratyupakārārthaṁ phalam uddiśya vā punaḥ  
dīyate ca parikliṣṭam tad dānam rājasam smṛtam*

However, charity that is given reluctantly, with the expectation of return and with a selfish desire for results, is in the mode of passion.

VERSE 22

अदेशकाले यदानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।  
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्त्वामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

*adeśa-kāle yad dānam apātrebhyaś ca dīyate  
asatkṛtam avajñātām tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

Charity that is given with disdain, at the wrong time and place, to an unworthy beneficiary, is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Now the ideal of charity is being discussed – what types of charity should be performed, to whom and for what purpose. It is certainly the duty of every person to look out for his fellow human being. As such, no one should go hungry in this world, be without clothing, proper shelter, education or sufficient medical care. That is the ideal for human society. But our present reality is quite different – there are shortages of food, inadequate clothing, shelter, education and medical treatment in many places in the world, causing millions of human beings to suffer unnecessarily. This suffering, however, is not due to a lack of commodi-

ties as much as it is due to mismanagement and hoarding. There are sufficient facilities to maintain everyone on this Earth in a proper state of health and well-being, but the facilities are simply mismanaged. And more to blame than the mismanagement between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’ of this world, is hoarding. There is enough wealth in the world to easily solve the problems facing humanity, particularly that of hunger – but that wealth is being hoarded by a very small minority of people. They have amassed so much that no individual could spend or use that much wealth within one or even a dozen lifetimes. Corporate giants receive millions of dollars in annual bonuses while millions of children die each year due to malnutrition. Is this not shameful?

Charity, like other things discussed in this chapter, is also in the different modes of nature according to how it is given and whom it is given to. There is charity in goodness, passion and ignorance as stated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa above, but ultimately the highest charity is to give that which helps the human being bring an end to all material miseries and even to death itself. Such charity is the distribution of the spiritual wealth found in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The root cause of all suffering in the world is a lack of understanding of who we are, where we have come from, what the purpose of life is and where we will go at the time of death. One who understands these things from the perspective of *Bhagavad-gītā* becomes full in knowledge, free from the illusion of the body as the self and ultimately defeats death. This is the highest gift and greatest charity that one can give a fellow human being.

VERSE 23

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।  
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥ २३ ॥

*om-tat-sad iti nirdeśo brahmaṇas tri-vidhabḥ smṛtaḥ  
brāhmaṇāḥ tena vedāś ca yajñāś ca vibitāḥ purā*

The three words *om tat sat* are described by the *Vedas* to represent the Absolute Truth. In ancient times, the *brāhmaṇas*, the *Vedas* and the process of sacrifice were manifested from these three words.

VERSE 24

तस्माद् ॐ इत्युदाहृत्य यज्ञादानतपःक्रियाः ।  
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥ २४ ॥

*tasmād om ity-udāhṛtya yajñā-dāna tapaḥ kriyāḥ  
pravartante vidhānoktāḥ satataṁ brahma-vādinām*

Thus, those that seek the Supreme always chant the syllable *om* when they commence sacrifices, give in charity, perform austerities and undertake other activities prescribed in the *Vedas*.

VERSE 25

तदित्यनभिसंधाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।  
दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥ २५ ॥

*tad ity-anabhisandhāya phalaṁ yajñā-tapaḥ-kriyāḥ  
dāna-kriyāś ca vividhbāḥ kriyante mokṣa-kāṅkṣibhīḥ*

By uttering the word *tat*, those that aspire for liberation perform various types of sacrifices, austerities and charity without the selfish desire to enjoy the results.

VERSE 26

सद्गावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।  
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थं युज्यते ॥२६॥

*sad-bhāve sādhu-bhāve ca sad ity-etaḥ prayujyate  
praśaste karmaṇi tathā sac-chabdaḥ pārtha yujyate*

The word *sat* indicates the nature of the Absolute as well as the *sādbhus* that seek Him. Therefore, O Pārtha, the word *sat* is uttered during all virtuous activities.

VERSE 27

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।  
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥२७॥

*yajñe tapasi dāne ca sthitibḥ sad iti cocyate  
karma caiva tad-arthīyam sad ity-evābbhidhīyate*

Steadiness in the performance of sacrifices, austerities and charity is known as *sat*. Any activity that is performed for the Supreme is known as *asat*.

VERSE 28

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तसं कृतं च यत् ।  
असदित्युच्यते पार्थं न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥२८॥

*aśraddhayā butaṁ dattam̄ tapas taptam̄ kṛtaṁ ca yat  
asad ity-ucyate pārtha na ca tat pretya no iha*

O Pārtha, any sacrifice, austerity, charity or activity that is performed without faith is known as *asat* – false. Such activities bear no auspicious results in this world or the next.

## Anuvṛtti

One who acts whimsically never achieves happiness or perfection in this life or the next. One should therefore perform all austerities, sacrifice and acts of charity in the mode of goodness as prescribed in *Bhagavad-gītā*, for passion and ignorance simply drag one down to the lower stages of consciousness.

Herein, it is stated that in ancient times all acts and injunctions of the *Vedas* were accompanied with the words, *om tat sat*, indicating the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This practice however is no longer in vogue in Kali-yuga. To the contrary, the real purpose of human life is all but forgotten and people regrettably live their lives aimlessly, eating, drinking and merrymaking.

Kṛṣṇa has already said in *Bhagavad-gītā* that what a great man does, the common men will follow (*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janah*). Therefore, we call upon all good-hearted men and women of the world to hasten to the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* and accept Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person. Such a movement in the world, under the banner of *Bhagavad-gītā*, will surely bring about the greatest fortune and well-being of humanity. No greater good can be done than this and there is no greater time for this than the present.

*ekam sāstram devakī-putra-gītam  
 eko devo devakī-putra eva  
 eko mantras tasya nāmāni yāni  
 karmāpy ekam tasya devasya sevā*

The most ideal literature is *Bhagavad-gītā*, which was sung by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī. The

Absolute Truth is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The topmost *mantra* to be chanted is the *mahā-mantra* and the ultimate duty of everyone is the service of that one Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. (*Gītā-māhātmya* 7)

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ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम सप्तदशोऽध्यायः ॥

*oṁ tat saditi śrī-mahābhārate-śata-sāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ
 vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāsūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyāṁ yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde
 śraddhātraya-vibhāga-yogo nāma saptadaśo'dhyāyah*

OṂ TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Seventeen entitled *Śraddhā Traya Vibhāga Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.



अथाष्टादशोऽध्यायः
मोक्षयोगः

CHAPTER 18
MOKSHA YOGA

The Yoga of Supreme Perfection

VERSE I

अर्जुन उवाच ।

संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।

त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥१॥

arjuna uvāca —

sannyāsasya mahā-bāho tattvam icchāmi veditum

tyāgasya ca hṛṣīkeśa pṛthak keśi-niṣūdana

Arjuna said: O Mighty-armed one, O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Killer of the Keśī demon – I wish to understand the true meaning of renunciation (*sannyāsa*) and detachment (*tyāga*) as well as the difference between them.

VERSE 2

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥२॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca —

*kāmyānām karmaṇām nyāsam sannyāsam kavayo viduḥ
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam prāhus tyāgam vicakṣaṇāḥ*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied: Those who are intelligent realise that *sannyāsa* means the renunciation of activities performed for personal benefit. *Tyāga* refers to the renunciation of all activities.

Anuvṛtti

The final chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* begins with an inquiry about *sannyāsa* and *tyāga*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that *sannyāsa* means to renounce activities performed for one's own personal benefit, and *tyāga* means the renunciation of all activities. One at the stage of *sannyāsa* is called a

sannyāsī. To be a *sannyāsī* means to act for the benefit of the complete whole, the Absolute Good, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A *sannyāsī* performs all types of actions, but does so only in *bhakti-yoga*, in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

The social structure of the *bhakti-yoga* community is divided into four spiritual orders – *brahmacārī*, *grhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. All these are to study the Vedic literature. Additionally, their duties are as follows: the *brahmacārīs* are the students, whose duties are service to the spiritual master and the observance of celibacy. *Grhasthas* are the householders, whose duties are to earn an honest living, to give in charity and to raise children. *Vānaprasthas* are those who have completed household affairs and whose duties are to relinquish their wealth, visit holy places and cultivate detachment. The *sannyāsīs* are the spiritual masters in the *bhakti-yoga* community and they are to give lessons to the *brahmacārīs*, *grhasthas* and *vānaprasthas*, to be renounced from worldly pleasure, to be detached from politics and to always be engaged in *bhakti-yoga* with *kaya*, *mana*, *vākya*, *jīva* – by body, mind, words and the full surrender of the self. *Sannyāsa* and *tyāga* are further described in the coming verses.

VERSE 3

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।
यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥३॥

*tyājyam doṣavad ity-eke karma prāhur maniṣināḥ
yajña-dāna-tapah-karma na tyājyam iti cāpare*

Some scholars claim that all actions should be rejected because they are inherently imperfect. Others maintain

that actions such as sacrifice, charity and austerity should never be given up.

VERSE 4

निश्चयं श्रणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तिः ॥४॥

*niścayam śṛṇu me tatra tyāge bharata-sattama
tyāgo hi puruṣa-vyāghra tri-vidbhāḥ samprakīrtitah*

O best of the Bharata Dynasty, O tiger amongst men, please listen to My conclusion concerning the three kinds of renunciation.

VERSE 5

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥५॥

*yajña-dāna-tapah-karma na tyājyam kāryam eva tat
yajño dānam tapaś caiva pāvanāni manīṣinām*

The three types of renunciation – sacrifice, charity and austerity should never be given up. Sacrifice, charity and austerity purify even the wise.

VERSE 6

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥६॥

*etāny-api tu karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā phalāni ca
kartavyānīti me pārtha niścitan matam uttamam*

However, O Pārtha, even these activities must be performed without attachment to the results. This is My definite and supreme conclusion on this matter.

Anuvṛtti

There is a certain class of philosophers and spiritual seekers in India that say that the world is false and that all activities should be given up if one wants to achieve perfection in human life – but this is not the conclusion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Kṛṣṇa says that one must act according to one's nature and that beneficial works such as sacrifice, charity and austerity should never be abandoned for they are purifying even for the wise.

VERSE 7

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तिः ॥७॥

*niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ karmaṇo nōpapadyate
mohāttasya parityāgas tāmasaḥ parikīrtitah*

The renunciation of one's prescribed duties is improper. Giving them up out of bewilderment is said to be in the mode of ignorance.

VERSE 8

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्यजेत् ।
स कृत्वा राजसंत्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥८॥

*duḥkham ity-eva yat karma kāya-kleśa-bhayāt tyajet
sa kṛtvā rājasam tyāgam naiva tyāga-phalam labhet*

Those who give up prescribed duties because they are difficult, or through fear that they may be physically taxing, engage in renunciation in the mode of passion. Such persons never attain the benefits of true detachment.

VERSE 9

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेर्जुन ।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥९॥

*kāryam ity-eva yat karma niyatam kriyate'rjuna
saṅgam tyaktvā phalam caiva sa tyāgah sāttviko mataḥ*

O Arjuna, when prescribed activities are performed out of duty, while abandoning attachment to the results, such renunciation is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 10

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ॥१०॥

*na dveṣṭy-akuśalam karma kuśale nānuṣajjate
tyāgī sattva-samāviṣṭo medhāvī chinna-saṁśayaḥ*

The wise *tyāgī*, who is absorbed in the mode of goodness, having destroyed all doubts, neither resents difficult duties nor becomes attached to pleasant ones.

VERSE II

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥११॥

*na hi deha-bhṛtā śakyam tyaktum karmāṇy-aśeṣataḥ
yastu karma-phala-tyāgī sa tyāgīty-abhidhīyate*

It is impossible for those who have accepted a material body to totally renounce all activities. However, one who renounces the results of his actions is known as a true renunciate.

Anuvṛtti

If one gives up activities out of bewilderment, considering them to be troublesome, physically taxing or gives up activities out of laziness, then such renunciation is considered false and in the modes of passion and ignorance. Those who are embodied can never give up action. In ancient times as well as in our own, there are many examples of those who have abandoned everything, ran to the Himālayas or to the deserts to escape the world, but again returned to resume a life of sense enjoyment or to perform philanthropic activities.

When one gives up attachment to the results of one's actions and acts with a detached heart – remembering always that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer and proprietor of everything – then such a person is a true *tyāgī* or *sannyāsī*. Thus, the renunciation of a *tyāgī* and a *sannyāsī* are the same.

VERSE I2

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥ १२ ॥

*aniṣṭam iṣṭam miśraṁ ca tri-vidhaṁ karmaṇaḥ phalam
bhavaty-atyāginām pretya na tu sannyāsinām kvacit*

Those who do not accept renunciation accept three kinds of results after death – good, bad and mixed. But these results never come to one who is a true *sannyāsī*.

VERSE I3

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ १३ ॥

*pañcaitāni mahā-bāho kāraṇāni nibodha me
sāṅkhye kṛtānte proktāni siddhaye sarva-karmanām*

O mighty-armed warrior, learn from Me the five factors that accomplish all actions that are explained in the *Vedānta*.

VERSE 14

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक्केष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ १४ ॥

*adhiṣṭhānam tathā kartā karaṇam ca pṛthag-vidham
vividhāś ca pṛthak ceṣṭā daivam caivātra pañcamam*

The basis (the body), the performer of activities (the false ego), the instrument (the senses), the different types of endeavours and the Supreme Person – these are the five factors that accomplish all actions.

VERSE 15

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।
न्यायं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चते तस्य हेतवः ॥ १५ ॥

*śarīra-vāñmanobhir yat karma prārabhate narah
nyāyyam vā viparītam vā pañcaite tasya hetavah*

These five factors are the source of all actions, both good and bad, that an embodied being experiences in this world.

VERSE 16

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥ १६ ॥

*tatraivam sati kartāram ātmānam kevalam tu yah
paśyaty akṛta-buddhitvān na sa paśyati durmatih*

Yet the fool that believes only the self is the doer, cannot understand this subject due to meagre intelligence.

VERSE 17

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ १७ ॥

*yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo buddhir yasya na lipyate
hatvā'pi sa imāl-lokān na hanti na nibadhyate*

Those who have no false ego and whose minds are detached – even if they kill everyone on this battlefield, they actually do not kill and are not bound by their actions.

Anuvṛtti

Arjuna is a *kṣatriya*, a warrior, and he stands with Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra between two great armies. Seeing friends and well-wishers on both sides, Arjuna initially resolved not to fight, but to throw down his weapons and renounce his duty. Śrī Kṛṣṇa herein brings our attention back to the battlefield when He says, *hatvā'pi sa imāl-lokān na hanti na nibadhyate* – he who kills does not actually kill and does not incur any reaction.

If Arjuna abandons his duty as a warrior, then certainly he will incur a *karmic* reaction for avoiding his duty. However, Arjuna will not actually ‘kill’ anyone in the truest sense of the word, because the living beings arrayed before him ready for battle are eternal parts and parcels of the Supreme Person and thus eternal. The *ātmā* can never be ‘killed’. And lastly, Arjuna will not incur any *karmic* reaction for doing his duty.

If one avoids one’s prescribed duties and renounces them out of fear, bewilderment and so forth, then one

incurs a *karmic* reaction and has to suffer in this life or the next. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa wants Arjuna to give up his weakness of heart and perform his duty.

VERSE 18

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।
करणं कर्म कर्तृति त्रिविधः कर्मसञ्चाहः ॥ १८ ॥

*jñānam jñeyam parijñātā tri-vidbhā karma-codanā
karaṇam karma karteti tri-vidbhāḥ karma-saṅgrahāḥ*

Knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower are the three elements that stimulate action. The senses, the activity and the performer are the three constituents of action.

VERSE 19

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥ १९ ॥

*jñānam karma ca kartāca tri-dhaiva guṇa-bhedataḥ
procyate guṇa-saṅkhyāne yathāvac chṛṇu tānyapi*

According to the *sāṅkhya* texts, knowledge, action and the performer of action have been classified in three ways according to the modes of nature. Now hear about these.

VERSE 20

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २० ॥

*sarva-bhūteṣu yenaikam bhāvam avyayam iksate
avibhaktam vibhakteṣu taj jñānam viddhi sāttvikam*

Knowledge in which the one undivided, imperishable element is perceived in all variegated species of life is considered to be knowledge in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 21

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ २१ ॥

*pṛthaktvena tu yaj jñānam nānā-bhāvān pṛthag-vidhān
vetti sarveṣu bhūteṣu taj jñānam viddhi rājasam*

However, that knowledge by which one perceives that within different bodies there is a different kind of living being, is known to be in the mode of passion.

VERSE 22

यत्तु कृत्स्वदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्प्य च तत्त्वामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २२ ॥

*yat tu kṛtsnavad ekasmin kārye saktam abaitukam
atattvārthavad alpaṁ ca tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

That knowledge by which one is attached to one kind of activity, that is without any truth and based upon trivial pursuits is known as knowledge in the mode of ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Knowledge, as previously explained, means to understand the difference between matter and consciousness. Those whose knowledge is pure and uncontaminated see individual consciousness as parts and parcels of the undivided Super Consciousness, as present in all species and as transmigrating from one body to the next, life after life. In other words, the same *ātmā* may be present in one life in

the body of an elephant or a tiger, and in the next life in the body of a human being. There are no elephant, tiger or animal *ātmās* as distinguished from human *ātmās*. One who says that the *ātmā* of an animal and that of a human or a demigod are different *ātmās* has knowledge influenced by the mode of passion.

One who has no proper understanding of the *ātmā*, who is attached to the body, the actions of the body, who is absorbed in the trivial pursuits of economic development and sense enjoyment, is said to have knowledge in the mode of ignorance.

VERSE 23

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तसात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥ २३ ॥

*niyatam saṅga-rabitam arāga-dveṣataḥ kṛtam
aphala-prepsunā karma yat tat sāttvikam ucyate*

Regulated actions performed without attachment or aversion and with no desire for results are said to be in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 24

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥ २४ ॥

*yat tu kāmepsunā karma sāhaṅkāreṇa vā punah
kriyate bahulāyāsaṁ tad rājasam udāhṛtam*

Actions undertaken out of pride, to reap some benefit and with great endeavour are said to be in the mode of passion.

VERSE 25

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तामसमुच्यते ॥ २५ ॥

*anubandham kṣayam hiṁsām anapekṣya ca pauruṣam
mohād ārabhyate karma yat tat tāmasam ucyate*

Actions performed out of bewilderment, without consideration of consequences, loss, injury and one's personal capacity, are said to be in the mode of ignorance.

VERSE 26

मुक्तसङ्गेऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ २६ ॥

*mukta-saṅgo'naḥaṁvādī dhṛty-utsāha-samanvitah
siddhy-asiddhyor nirvikāraḥ kartā sāttvika ucyate*

Those who perform activities without attachment, devoid of egotism, who are tolerant, enthusiastic and unaffected by loss or gain, are said to be in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 27

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ २७ ॥

*rāgī karma-phala-prepsur lubdho hiṁsātmako'śucih
harṣa-śokānvitah kartā rājasah parikirtitah*

Those who perform work desiring to enjoy the results of their actions, who are greedy, violent by nature, impure and affected by happiness and distress are said to be in the mode of passion.

VERSE 28

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तव्यः शाठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥२८॥

*ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhaḥ śaṭho naishkṛtiko’lasaḥ
viṣādī dīrgha-sūtrī ca kartā tāmasa ucyate*

Those who perform work in an undisciplined manner, those who are coarse, stubborn, unscrupulous, offensive, lazy, bad-tempered and procrastinate are said to be in the mode of ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Herein, actions in goodness, passion and ignorance are described. When one looks at the world today, bearing in mind the different modes of action and their characteristics, then it is no wonder that the planet is in such a state of conflict, inflation, depression, economic despair, confusion and denial.

When people are busy exercising their over-inflated egos, acting unscrupulously and violently toward their fellow human beings and animals, how are we to expect any improvement in the world? How can there be peace?

Therefore, it is the duty of every sane human being to cultivate knowledge and actions in the mode of goodness that are without attachment or aversion and are free from desire and egotism. Life is a science, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that through our actions we reap the harvest of our good or bad *karma*.

VERSE 29

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्वैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥ २९ ॥

*buddher bhedaṁ dhṛteś caiva guṇatas tri-vidham śṛṇu
procyamānam aṣeṣena pṛthaktvena dhanañjaya*

O Dhanañjaya, please hear as I now describe to you in detail the various mentalities and determination according to the three modes of nature.

VERSE 30

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्यकार्यं भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३० ॥

*pravṛttiṁ ca nivṛttiṁ ca kāryākārye bhayābhaye
bandhaṁ mokṣaṁ ca yā vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī*

O Pārtha, the mentality in the mode of goodness is that which can distinguish what should be done and what should not be done, duty and non-duty, what is to be feared and what is not to be feared and the nature of material bondage and liberation.

VERSE 31

यथा धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३१ ॥

*yayā dharmam adharmaṁ ca kāryam cākāryam eva ca
ayathāvat prajānāti buddhiḥ sā pārtha rājasī*

O Pārtha, the mentality in the mode of passion cannot distinguish between *dharma* and *adharma*, cannot discern what is right and what is wrong, and cannot decide what is duty and what is not duty.

VERSE 32

अधर्म धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२ ॥

*adharmaṁ dharmam iti yā manyate tamasāvṛtā
sarvārthbān viparītāṁś ca buddhiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī*

O Pārtha, the mentality in the mode of ignorance regards that which is *adharma* to be *dharma* and that which is *dharma* to be *adharma*. It regards everything to be the opposite of reality.

VERSE 33

धृत्या यया धारयते मनः प्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः ।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ ३३ ॥

*dhṛtyā yayā dbārayate manah prāṇendriya-kriyāḥ
yogenāvyabbhichārīnyā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī*

O Pārtha, that determination by which one strictly controls the mind, life-airs and the senses through the process of *yoga* is in the mode of goodness.

VERSE 34

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्या धारयते र्जुन ।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३४ ॥

*yayā tu dharma-kāmārthbān dhṛtyā dbārayate' rjuna
prasaṅgena phalakānkṣī dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha rājasī*

O Pārtha, that determination by which one maintains a sense of *dharma* in order to accrue wealth and fulfil material desires is in the mode of passion.

VERSE 35

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।
न विमुच्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥३५॥

*yayā svapnaiḥ bhayaṁ śokaṁ viṣādaṁ madameva ca
na vimuñcati durmedhā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī*

O Pārtha, the determination of those who cannot conquer sleep, fear, lamentation, misery and pride is in the mode of ignorance.

Anuvṛtti

Throughout the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna as Pārtha, the son of Kuntī. Kṛṣṇa also addresses him as Bhārata (best of the Bharata Dynasty), Pāṇḍava (son of Pāṇḍu), Kuru-nandana (descendant of the Kurus), Parantapa (conqueror of the enemy), Guḍākeśa (conqueror of sleep) and Dhanañjaya, (winner of wealth). Kṛṣṇa addresses Arjuna thusly to remind him of his position as a great warrior in a dynasty of warriors and to encourage him to stand and fight.

Sometimes fighting is necessary if it is for the right cause, but the problem lies herein. Who is to say which cause is just, who is right and who is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done? In the above verses, Kṛṣṇa gives some indication as to who is of the right mentality and right determination. Clearly, those in the modes of passion and ignorance are always mistaken – not being able to distinguish right from wrong, what is to be done from what is not to be done, or proper duty from dereliction of duty.

VERSE 36-37

सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥ ३६ ॥
यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥ ३७ ॥

*sukham tvidānīm tri-vidham śṛṇu me bharatarṣabha
abhyāsād ramate yatra duḥkhāntam ca nigacchati
yat tad agre viṣam iva pariṇāme'mṛtopamam
tat sukham sāttvikam proktam ātma-buddhi-prasāda-jam*

O best of the Bharata Dynasty, now hear from Me about the three types of happiness. Happiness that leads to the end of all suffering is in the mode of goodness. Such happiness tastes bitter in the beginning, but is nectar at the end because it awakens one to self-realisation.

VERSE 38

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसंस्मृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥

*viṣayendriya saṁyogād yat tad agre'mṛtopamam
pariṇāme viṣamiva tat sukham rājasam smṛtam*

Happiness that is born from contact between the senses and sense-objects and is like nectar in the beginning, but bitter in the end, is known to be in the mode of passion.

VERSE 39

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ ३९ ॥

*yad agre cānubandhe ca sukham mohanam ātmanah
nidrālasya-pramādottham tat tāmasam udāhṛtam*

Happiness that arises from sleep, laziness and delusion and is self-deceptive in both the beginning and the end is considered to be happiness in the mode of ignorance.

VERSE 40

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्तिभिर्गुणैः ॥४०॥

*na tad asti pr̄thivyām vādivi deveṣu vā punaḥ
sattvam̄ prakṛti-jair muktam̄ yad ebhiḥ syāt tri-bhir gunaiḥ*

There is no living being, neither on Earth nor amongst the celestial beings, that is free from these three modes of material nature.

Anuvṛtti

Everyone and everything in the material world is governed by the three modes of material nature. In the truest sense of the word, there is no meaning of freedom or independence unless one is free from the modes of nature. All such celebrations in the name of political emancipation are merely another form of self-deception. Where is the question of freedom when our every action is controlled by nature and we are being pushed down the highway of life to face ultimate death?

Independence from the three modes of material nature is only afforded to those who have taken shelter of a bona-fide guru, who have understood the knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* and have applied themselves to *bhakti-yoga*. Only the *bhakti-yogī* can truly celebrate freedom.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that happiness in the mode of goodness is bitter in the beginning, but nectar in the end. This

means that to control the senses and perform austerities (*tapasya*) in the beginning may be distasteful for the novice, but in the end such austerities lead to the nectar of self-realisation.

Happiness derived from enjoying one's senses in the mode of passion may be like nectar in the beginning, but it is bitter in the end because sense gratification ultimately ends in frustration, hatred and anger. Happiness that arises from sleep, laziness and delusion and is self-deceptive is in the mode of ignorance because it is miserable in the beginning and miserable in the end.

Real happiness only comes when one awakens to the eternal self and lives a life with one's body, mind and senses absorbed in a higher conscious plane.

VERSE 4I

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥४१॥

*brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśām śūdrāṇām ca parantapa
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ*

O conqueror of the enemy, O Arjuna, know that *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are classified according to the quality of their work in the three modes of material nature.

VERSE 42

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिराज्ञवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥४२॥

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucam kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca
jñānam vijñānam āstikyam brahma-karma svabhāva-jam*

Calmness, self-control, austerity, cleanliness, clemency, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and faith in the Supreme – these are the natural activities of a *brāhmaṇa*.

VERSE 43

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दक्षयं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥४३॥

*śauryam tejo dhṛtir dākṣyam yuddhe cāpy-apalāyanam
dānam iśvara-bhāvaś ca kṣātram karma svabhāva-jam*

Heroism, power, steadfastness, dexterity, never fleeing from battle, generosity and social administration – these are the natural activities of a *kṣatriya*.

VERSE 44

कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥४४॥

*kṛṣi-gorakṣya-vāṇijyam vaiśya-karma svabhāva-jam
paricaryātmakam karma śūdrasyāpi svabhāva-jam*

Farming, cow protection and business are the natural activities of a *vaiśya*. For the *śūdra* there is service to others.

Anuvṛtti

Herein, the status of the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are described according to the qualities of their work. These are the four social orders of life and they are present in all civilised cultures in the world. Everywhere we find those that resemble the *brāhmaṇas*, the intellectual class. Everywhere there are those that resemble *kṣatriyas*, administrators and warriors, and everywhere we find the mercantile and labour class, the *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*. These

are the natural divisions in society and they are determined by the quality of their work.

Unfortunately, in modern India, this social system described by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* has become corrupted and is now known as the caste system which determines one's social status by birth. The caste system is not actually the social system described in *Bhagavad-gītā* known as *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

The caste system in India is certainly deplorable, hardly better than that of slavery, because it limits a person's potential according to one's birth. Kṛṣṇa clearly states that a person is to be known by his actions and not his pedigree.

Although social systems having intellectuals, administrators, mercantile and labour classes are found around the world, they are also not the same as the *varṇāśrama* system mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

In addition to being an intellectual, a *brāhmaṇa* must know what is Brahman. A *kṣatriya* must do more than just administrate and fight battles – he must be above corruption, give protection to the people and protect the principles of *dharma* found in *Bhagavad-gītā*. And above all, a *kṣatriya* is never to be an aggressor – he is never to invade a sovereign country.

The duty of a *vaiśya*, in addition to business, is farming and cow protection. Naturally, the purpose of business is to earn a living, but nowadays this has gone far beyond actual necessity as per the advice of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Simple business has turned into massive industry – the establishing of mega multi-national corporations, money hoarding and fractional banking. These in turn have led to the corruption of government officials around the world

and ultimately to the destruction of the environment, increased poverty, and war.

Cow protection (*kṛṣi-gorakṣya*) is especially mentioned in verse 44 because of all animals it is the cow that is most necessary for the survival of the human being. Human bodies thrive on animal fat and the cow is the animal that provides human beings with the most milk, yogurt, butter, cheese etc. Milk and milk products, when taken in appropriate quantities, provide the human being all the necessary fat required for healthy living, thus enabling the suspension of animal slaughter. In other words, killing animals and eating meat is not necessary to obtain fat. When cows are protected then there will be plenty of whole milk available for everyone to maintain a healthy diet. The value of the cow for human society is indisputable and therefore in Vedic culture the cow is considered one of the seven natural mothers. These seven mothers are as follows:

*ātma-mātā guroḥ patnī brāhmaṇī rāja-patnikā
dbenur dhātrī tathā pṛthvī saptaitā mātarāḥ smṛtāḥ*

One's own mother, the wife of the guru, the wife of a *brāhmaṇa*, the king's wife, the cow, the nurse and the Earth – these should be considered as our seven mothers. (*Cāṇakya Nīti-sāstra* 5.23)

Unfortunately, the business community has turned to corporate farming and mass slaughter of cows and other animals in the name of delivering health and prosperity to the people. In actuality, the people have lost their lands and the family farm that was once the backbone of societies everywhere has ceased to exist. Industrial farming has

replaced organic fertilisers with chemical fertilisers that render the soil lifeless and produce food that is low in nutrition and high in toxic content. The meat from the slaughterhouse is also toxic and far less healthy than a vegetarian diet.

Society cries for the return of the *vaiśya* worldwide, but governments turn a deaf ear and a blind eye and it is the *śūdra*, the labourer class, at the tail end of the food chain who suffers the most. But change is in the air as people worldwide wake up from the nightmare that has become their reality and seek genuine answers to their problems. For such sincere persons, *Bhagavad-gītā* will provide much insight and guidance.

VERSE 45

*sve sve karmany-abhirataḥ samsiddhim labhate narāḥ
svakarma-nirataḥ siddhim yathā vindati tacchrāṇu ॥४५॥*

*sve sve karmany-abhirataḥ samsiddhim labhate narāḥ
svakarma-nirataḥ siddhim yathā vindati tacchrāṇu*

Now please hear from Me how those who perform their prescribed duties attain all perfection.

VERSE 46

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ yena sarvam idam tatam
svakarmanā tam abhyarcyā siddhim vindati mānavāḥ ॥४६॥*

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ yena sarvam idam tatam
svakarmanā tam abhyarcyā siddhim vindati mānavāḥ*

Human beings achieve perfection through prescribed duties by worshipping the Supreme Person, from whom all things originate and who is omnipresent.

VERSE 47

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥४७॥

*śreyān sva-dharma viguṇah para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt
svabhāva-niyatam karma kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

It is better to perform one's own duty (*dharma*) imperfectly than to perform another's duty perfectly. One is never subject to bad *karma* by performing one's prescribed duties according to one's own nature.

VERSE 48

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाभ्यरिवावृताः ॥४८॥

*saha-jam karma kaunteya sa-doṣam api na tyajet
sarvārambhā hi doṣena dhūmenāgnir ivāvṛtāḥ*

O son of Kuntī, one's prescribed duties must never be abandoned. All activities are covered with some fault, just as smoke covers fire.

VERSE 49

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां सन्न्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥४९॥

*asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra jitātmā vigata-spr̥haḥ
naiṣkarmya-siddhim paramām sannyāsenādhigacchati*

The stage of perfect renunciation is attained by becoming unattached to material objects, disregarding material enjoyment, by doing one's duty and being unattached to the results.

Anuvṛtti

In the above verses, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stresses to Arjuna that one's duties or prescribed *dharma* according to the *varṇāśrama* system should never be abandoned. One may think that they are not performing their duty perfectly, but Kṛṣṇa says that one should remain steadfast and not yield to abandonment.

At the beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Arjuna showed an inclination to abandon his duty as a *kṣatriya*. Arjuna was disinclined to fight and was thinking that it might be better to take up the plough or the staff of renunciation, but Kṛṣṇa did not agree.

Now the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna is drawing to a close and we will soon see that Kṛṣṇa has revived Arjuna and with a regained heart, he will resume his duty with full enthusiasm.

VERSE 50

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥५०॥

*siddhim prāpto yathā brhma tathāpnoti nibodha me
samāsenaiwa kaunteya niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā*

O son of Kuntī, now learn from Me how one can attain perfection by acting in the way that I shall now briefly describe to you.

VERSE 51-53

बुद्ध्या विशुद्ध्या युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥५१॥

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्यायमानसः ।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥५२॥
अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥५३॥

*buddhyā viśuddhbhayā yukto dhṛtyātmānam niyamya ca
śabdādīn viṣayāṁs tyaktvā rāga-dveṣau vyudasya ca
vivikta-sevī laghv-āśī yata-vāk-kāya-mānasah
dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam vairāgyam samupāśritah
abaṅkārām balaṁ darpaṇam kāmaṁ krodhaṁ parigraham
vimucya nirmamah sānto brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

With pure intelligence, controlling the mind with determination, abandoning attachment to sense-objects, being devoid of both attachment and hatred, residing in a secluded place, eating little, controlling speech, body and mind, being constantly engaged in meditating on the Supreme Person, being renounced, free from egotism, the misuse of power, conceit, lust, anger, covetousness and being unselfish and peaceful — such a person is qualified for realisation of the Absolute Truth.

VERSE 54

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥५४॥

*brahma-bbūtah prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samah sarveṣu bhūteṣu mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

When such a self-satisfied person realises the Absolute Truth, he neither rejoices nor laments. Seeing all beings equally, he attains transcendental devotion unto Me.

VERSE 55

भक्त्वा मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥५५॥

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśate tad-anantaram*

Through such devotion that person knows Me in truth.
Thus, knowing Me in truth he enters My realm.

VERSE 56

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वणो मद्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥५६॥

*sarva-karmāṇy-api sadā kurvāṇo mad-vyapāśrayah
mat-prasādād avāpnōti śāśvataṁ padam avyayam*

Although one may constantly engage in various activities,
by My mercy, those who take shelter of Me reach My
eternal abode.

VERSE 57

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥५७॥

*cetasā sarva-karmāṇi mayi sannyasya mat-parah
buddhi-yogam upāśritya mac-cittah satataṁ bhava*

Consciously renouncing all activities unto Me, considering
Me to be the supreme goal and taking shelter of the pro-
cess of devotion, always think of Me.

VERSE 58

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।
अथ चेत्त्वमहङ्कारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्ग्यसि ॥५८॥

*mac-cittah sarva-durgāṇi mat-prasādāt tariṣyasi
atha cet tvam ahaṅkārān na śroṣyasi vinaṅkṣyasi*

By My mercy, all your troubles will be overcome if you think of Me. However, if out of false ego you ignore Me, you will perish.

VERSE 59

**यदङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥५९॥**

*yad ahaṅkāram āśritya na yotsya iti manyase
mithyaaiṣa vyavasāyas te prakṛtis tvāṁ niyokṣyati*

If due to false ego you think, “I will not fight,” your decision will be useless because your very nature will urge you to do so.

VERSE 60

**स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥६०॥**

*svabhāva-jena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā
kartum necchasi yan mohāt kariṣyasy-avaśopi tat*

Being bound by your intrinsic nature, the very activity that you now refuse to perform due to bewilderment will inevitably be carried out by you, O son of Kuntī.

VERSE 61

**ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृदेशोऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥६१॥**

*iśvarah sarva-bhūtānām bṛd-deśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bṛāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

O Arjuna, the Supreme Controller resides in the hearts of all living beings. By His illusory energy He directs all their activities as if they were mounted on a machine.

VERSE 62

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥६२॥

*tam eva śaraṇāṁ gaccha sarva-bhāvena bhārata
tat prasādāt parām̄ sāntim̄ sthānām̄ prāpsyasi sāśvatam̄*

O Bhārata, take shelter in Him with all your heart and by His mercy you will achieve everlasting peace and the Supreme Abode.

Anuvṛtti

Śrī Kṛṣṇa now gives Arjuna an infusion of encouragement by stating that by following His instructions Arjuna will realise the Absolute Truth and will enter His Supreme Abode. By consciously offering the results of all his actions unto Kṛṣṇa, by devoting himself to Kṛṣṇa and always thinking about Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna will achieve all perfection.

The alternative, Kṛṣṇa says, is that by neglecting His instructions, Arjuna will surely perish. This is the open secret of *Bhagavad-gītā* – one who adheres to its message, that is free from all material defects and is delivered by the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, becomes perfect in knowledge and self-realisation. Neglecting Kṛṣṇa's instructions is however tantamount to spiritual suicide and Kṛṣṇa warns Arjuna that if he takes that path he will surely perish into the world of bewilderment, illusion and death.

VERSE 63

इति ते ज्ञानमारब्धातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥६३॥

*iti te jñānam ākhyātām gubyād gubyataram mayā
vimṛśyaitad aṣeṣena yathēcchasi tathā kuru*

I have thus disclosed to you that knowledge which is the most confidential. Deliberate upon it and do as you wish.

VERSE 64

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढभिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥६४॥

*sarva-gubyatamam bhūyah śṛṇu me paramam vacaḥ
iṣṭo'si me dṛḍham iti tato vakṣyāmi te hitam*

Listen once again to the most confidential secret of all, My supreme instruction. Because you are very dear to Me, I am telling you this for your ultimate benefit.

VERSE 65

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥६५॥

*manmanā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru
mām evaisyasi satyam te pratijāne priyo'si me*

Fix your mind upon Me, devote yourself to Me, worship Me and offer your respects unto Me. By doing so you will certainly come to Me. I promise you this because you are very dear to Me.

VERSE 66

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥६६॥

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja
aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayisyāmi mā śucab*

Abandon all types of *dharma* – come and surrender unto Me alone! Do not fear, for I will surely deliver you from all reactions.

Anuvṛtti

In verse 63 Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that He has disclosed to Arjuna the most confidential knowledge and tells Arjuna to deliberate upon it and then do as he wishes. But because Arjuna is very dear to Kṛṣṇa and because Kṛṣṇa is Arjuna's guru and well-wisher, Kṛṣṇa again gives him one last instruction and assurance.

Kṛṣṇa's final instruction is that Arjuna should always fix his mind upon Him, he should devote himself fully to Him, worship Him and offer his respects unto Him. This is the essence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa says that by doing this Arjuna will surely come to Him. The ultimate instruction to always remember Kṛṣṇa is also stated in *Padma Purāṇa* as follows:

*smartavyaḥ satataṁ viṣṇur vismartavyo na jātucit
sarve vidhi-niṣedhbāḥ syur etayor eva kiñkarāḥ*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu) should always be remembered and never be forgotten at anytime. All rules and regulations mentioned in the *sāstra* should be subservient to these two principles. (*Padma Purāṇa* 6.71.100)

In verse sixty-six, we find the climax of *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein the ultimate *dharma* of surrendering oneself fully to Kṛṣṇa is stated. Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that giving up everything to follow His instructions need not be a cause of fear because Kṛṣṇa will protect him. By such self-surrender Arjuna will come to Kṛṣṇa in His Supreme Abode.

The Supreme Abode lies beyond the material universe and is known by those who are learned as Vaikuṇṭha. Those who worship the Viṣṇu *avatāras*, or forms of Nārāyaṇa, will attain to the Vaikuṇṭha realm. But superior to Vaikuṇṭha are the realms of Kṛṣṇa's *avatāras* such as Śrī Rāmacandra in Ayodhyā and Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā. Those who worship Śrī Rāmacandra and Kṛṣṇa's expansion as Vāsudeva, will attain to Ayodhyā, Dvārakā and Mathurā respectively.

Superior to Dvārakā is Mathurā. Superior to Mathurā is Vṛndāvana. Govardhana is superior to Vṛndāvana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa is superior to Govardhana. Only those who worship Kṛṣṇa's human-like form known as Śyāmasundara (Govinda) will attain to the topmost realm.

vaikuṇṭhāj janito varā madbu-purī tatrāpi rāsotsavād
 vṛndāraṇyam udāra-pāni-ramaṇāt tatrāpi govardhanāḥ
 rādhā-kuṇḍam ihāpi gokula-pateḥ premāmṛtāplāvanāt
 kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevāṁ vivekī na kaḥ

Because Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared there, Mathurā is considered to be spiritually superior to Vaikuṇṭha. Greater than Mathurā is the forest of Vṛndāvana because this was where the *rāsa-līlā* pastimes of Kṛṣṇa took place. Govardhana Hill is considered to be superior

to Vṛndāvana because Kṛṣṇa performed wonderful pastimes there and raised it with His left hand. However, Rādhā-kuṇḍa is superior to Govardhana because it is brimming with the nectar of divine love for the Master of Gokula. Which intelligent person will not render service to this place that is situated at the feet of Govardhana? (*Upadeśāmṛta* 9)

The Supreme Abode of Kṛṣṇa is the land of Vraja, which includes Vṛndāvana, Govardhana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa. In verse 66, Śrī Kṛṣṇa indicates to Arjuna by the use of the verb ‘vraja’ (meaning ‘to go’) that Arjuna will come to Kṛṣṇa in the topmost realm of the spiritual world. This superior realm is also known as Goloka Vṛndāvana and is described in *Brabma-saṁhitā* as follows:

cintāmani-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-
lakṣāvṛteṣu surabbīr abhipālayantam
lakṣmī-sabasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānāṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣāṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

I worship Govinda, the Original Person, who is tending the cows, in that divine realm where the abodes are built with touchstone. He is surrounded by millions of desire trees and is constantly served with great care and attention by hundreds of thousands of goddesses of fortune. (*Brabma-saṁhitā* 5.29)

veṇūṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam-
barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam
kandarpa-koti-kamaniya-višeṣa-sobham
govindam ādi-puruṣāṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

I worship Govinda, the Original Person, who is playing His flute and has beautiful eyes like blooming lotus petals. His head is decorated with peacock feathers, and His charming form, tinged with the hue of rain clouds, is so alluring that it enchants millions of Cupids. (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.30)

ālola-candraka-lasad-vanamālyā-vamśī-
 ratnāṅgadaṁ prañaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam
 śyāmam̄ tri-bhaṅga-lalitaṁ niyata-prakāśam̄
 govindam ādi-puruṣam̄ tam abam̄ bhajāmi

I worship Govinda, the Original Person, whose neck is decorated with a garland of forest flowers that swings to and fro. His hands, that hold His flute, are adorned with jewelled bracelets. His threefold bending form as Śyāmasundara is eternally manifest as He enjoys His various pastimes of divine love. (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.31)

premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
 santah sadaiva hrdayeṣu vilokayanti
 yam̄ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpam̄
 govindam ādi-puruṣam̄ tam abam̄ bhajāmi

I worship the Original Person, Govinda, who is always meditated upon by those whose eyes are anointed with the salve of divine love. His eternal form as Śyāmasundara is eternally endowed with inconceivable qualities and He is always situated within the hearts of His beloved devotees. (*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.38)

śriyah kāntah kāntah parama-puruṣah kalpa-taravo
 drumā bhūmiś cintāmanī-gaṇa-mayi toyam amṛtam
 kathā gānāṁ nātyaṁ gamanam api vāṁsi priya-sakhi
 cid-ānandam jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api ca
 sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyāś ca su-mahān
 nimeśārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ
 bhaje śvetadvīpam tam abam iba golokam iti yam
 vidantas te santah kṣiti-virala-cārāḥ katipaye

I worship the divine abode of Śvetadvīpa, where the goddesses of fortune are the loving consorts to the Supreme Person Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In that place, every tree is a desire tree; the land is made of touchstone; all water is nectar; every word is a song; every step is a dance; the flute is the dearest friend; the light is full of spiritual bliss and all things there are most relishable; where vast oceans of milk continuously flow from millions of cows; where time does not pass away even for half a moment. That realm, Goloka Vṛndāvana, is only known to a very few self-realised yogis in this world. (*Brhma-saṁhitā* 5.56)

VERSE 67

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।
 न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥६७॥

*idam te nātапaskāya nābhaktāya kadācana
 na cāśuśrūṣave vācyam na ca mām yo'bhyaśūyati*

This knowledge should never be disclosed to those who are not self-controlled, who do not perform *bhakti-yoga* or who are envious of Me.

VERSE 68

य इदं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्ट्यत्यसंशयः ॥ ६८ ॥

*ya idam paramam guhyam mad-bhakteṣv-abhidhāsyati
bhaktim mayi parām kṛtvā mām evaisyaty-asamśayah*

One who teaches this supreme secret of *bhakti-yoga* to others, advances to the highest platform of devotion and attains full consciousness of Me. Of this there is no doubt.

VERSE 69

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥ ६९ ॥

*na ca tasmān manusyeṣu kaścin me priya-kṛttamah
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyah priyataraḥ bhuvi*

There is no one dearer to Me in this world than such a devotee. Nor will there ever be anyone dearer to Me than one who teaches this supreme secret.

VERSE 70

अध्येष्ठते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ ७० ॥

*adhyesyate ca ya imam dharmyam saṁvādam āvayoh
jñāna-yajñena tenāham iṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ*

Those that study this sacred conversation of ours worship Me through the sacrifice of knowledge. This is My conclusion.

VERSE 7I

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभांह्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥७१॥

*śraddhāvān anasūyaś ca śṛṇuyād api yo narab
so'pi muktaḥ śubhāñl-lokān prāpnuyāt puṇya-karmaṇām*

Those who hear this sacred conversation with transcendental faith and without envy will achieve perfection and reach My auspicious Abode.

Anuvṛtti

Herein, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says that those who are envious cannot be taught the science of the Absolute Truth. However, those with the fortitude of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, who study this sacred conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna and who teach this knowledge to the non-envious are dear to Kṛṣṇa and will achieve perfection and attain Kṛṣṇa's abode. This is confirmed in the following verses of the *Gītā-māhātmya* and the *Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra*:

*gītā-sāstram idam puṇyam yah paṭhet prayataḥ pumān
viṣṇoh padam avāpnoti bhaya śokādi varjitaḥ*

One who recites the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which bestows all virtue, with resolute devotion will attain to the Supreme Abode of Viṣṇu/Kṛṣṇa, which is always free from the mundane qualities based on fear and lamentation. (*Gītā-māhātmya* I)

*samsāra-sāgaram ghoram tartum icchati yo narab
gītā-nāvam samāsādya pāram yāti sukhena saḥ*

A person who desires to cross over the terrible ocean of material suffering can do so very easily by taking shelter of the boat of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.
(Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra, Gītā-māhātmya 7)

*śālāgrāma-śilāyāṁ vā devāgāre śivālaye
tirthe nadyāṁ paṭhed gītāṁ saubhāgyāṁ labhate dhruvam*

One who recites the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the presence of the Deity, *śālāgrāma-śila*, or in a temple of the Supreme Person, or in a temple of Śiva, at a place of pilgrimage or on a bank of a sacred river – such a person becomes qualified to receive all good fortune.
(Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra, Gītā-māhātmya 21)

*etān māhātmya-saṁyuktāṁ gītā-pāṭhami karoti yaḥ
śraddhayā yaḥ śrṇoty-eva paramāṁ gatim āpnuyāt*

One endowed with faith, who studies and glorifies the *Gītā*, certainly reaches the Supreme Abode.
(Vaiṣṇavīya-tantra-sāra, Gītā-māhātmya 84)

VERSE 72

कच्चिदेतच्छूतं पार्थं त्वयैकग्रेण चेतसा ।
कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रणष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥७२॥

*kacchid etac chrutāṁ pārtha tvayaikāgreṇa cetasa
kaccid ajñāna-saṁmohah pravaṇaśas te dbanañjaya*

O Pārtha, O Dhanañjaya, have you heard this carefully with undivided attention? Has your ignorance and bewilderment been destroyed?

VERSE 73

अर्जुन उवाच ।

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥७३॥

arjuna uvāca —

*naṣṭo mohah smṛtir labdhā tvat prasādān mayācyuta
sthito'smi gata-sandehah kariṣye vacanam tava*

Arjuna replied: O infallible one, O Kṛṣṇa, by Your mercy my delusion has been dispelled and my mental equilibrium has been restored. Now that my doubts have been removed I am steady once more and will follow Your advice.

VERSE 74

सञ्जय उवाच ।

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥७४॥

sañjaya uvāca —

*ityaham vāsudevasya pārthasya ca mahātmnah
saṁvādam imam aśrauṣam adbhutam romaharṣanam*

Sañjaya said: Thus I heard this conversation between Vāsudeva and the great Arjuna that is so glorious that my hairs stand on end.

VERSE 75

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यमहं परम् ।
योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥७५॥

*vyāsa-prasādāc chrutavān etad guhyam abham param
yogam yogesvarāt kṛṣṇāt sākṣat kathayataḥ svayam*

By the grace of Vyāsa, I have heard this most confidential secret concerning the topmost system of *yoga* spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of all *yoga*.

VERSE 76-77

राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिमद्भुतम् ।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥७६॥
तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।
विस्मयो मे महात्राजन्हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥७७॥

*rājan saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya saṁvādam imam adbhutam
keśavārjunayoh puṇyam hṛṣyāmi ca muhur muhuḥ
tac ca saṁsmṛtya saṁsmṛtya rūpam atyadbhutam hareḥ
vismayo me mahān rājan hṛṣyāmi ca punah punah*

O Emperor, continuously remembering this most profound conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the killer of the Keśi demon, and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again. When I remember the beautiful form of the Supreme Person Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I am struck with wonder.

VERSE 78

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्ध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥७८॥

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanur-dharah
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nīti matir mama*

Where there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of *yoga*, and where there is Arjuna, the mighty archer, there will always be prosperity, victory, opulence and righteousness – this is my firm conviction.

Anuvṛtti

The sacred conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna ends with verse seventy-three wherein Arjuna says that his delusion and doubts have all been dispelled. Thus Arjuna agrees to follow Kṛṣṇa's instructions. This is the ideal relationship between guru and disciple. The guru must dispel the delusion and doubts of a disciple by delivering the message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa found in *Bhagavad-gītā*, without change or adulteration, and the disciple must be willing to follow such instructions.

The potency of hearing Kṛṣṇa's message is also confirmed in *Śrimad Bhāgavatam* as follows:

śrīvatāṁ sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇah punya-śravaṇa-kīrtanāḥ
hṛdy-antāḥ stho hy-abhadrāṇi vidhunoti subṛt satām

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the friend of the pious. He removes all inauspiciousness from the heart of those who have developed the desire to hear His message, which is virtuous when properly heard and chanted. (*Śrimad Bhāgavatam* I.2.17)

Sañjaya has been narrating the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna to Emperor Dhṛtarāṣṭra and now he expresses his own satisfaction and ecstasy. He says that by remembering the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and by seeing His beautiful form, he feels great ecstasy (*br̥asya*) and great wonder (*vismaya*). Sañjaya then concludes with the benediction that wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of *yoga*, and wherever there is Arjuna, the sincere disciple, there will always be prosperity, victory, opulence and righteousness.

Thus ends the *Anuvṛtti* of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमहाभारते शतसाहस्र्यां संहितायां
 वैयासिक्यां भीष्मपर्वाणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूनिषत्सु
 ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
 मोक्षयोगो नामाष्टादशोऽध्यायः ॥

*om tat saditi śrī-mahābhārate-śata-sāhasryām samhitāyām
 vaiyāsikyām bhīṣma-parvāṇi
 śrīmad bhagavad-gītāśūpaniṣatsu
 brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna-samivāde
 mokṣa-yogo nāmāṣṭādaśo’dhyāyaḥ*

OM TAT SAT – Thus ends Chapter Eighteen entitled *Mokṣa Yoga* from the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in the *Upaniṣad* known as *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, the *yoga-śāstra* of divine knowledge, from the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*, the literature revealed by Vyāsa in one hundred thousand verses.

। इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता संपूर्णम् ।

iti śrīmad bhagavad-gītā sampūrṇam

Thus ends the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*.

ŚRĪ GURU PARAMPARĀ

(THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Śrī Kṛṣṇa | 22. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu |
| 2. Brahmā | 23. Rūpa Gosvāmī (Sanātana,
Raghunātha Dāsa) |
| 3. Nārada | 24. Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja |
| 4. Vyāsa | 25. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura |
| 5. Madhvācārya | 26. Viśvanātha Cakravartī
Ṭhākura |
| 6. Padmanābha Tīrtha | 27. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa |
| 7. Narahari Tīrtha | 28. Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī |
| 8. Mādhava Tīrtha | 29. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura |
| 9. Akṣobhya Tīrtha | 30. Gaura-kiśora Dāsa Bābājī |
| 10. Jaya Tīrtha | 31. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Ṭhākura |
| 11. Jñāna-sindhu Tīrtha | 32. A.C Bhaktivedānta Swami
Prabhupāda |
| 12. Dayā-nidhi Tīrtha | Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva
Gosvāmī |
| 13. Vidyā-nidhi Tīrtha | Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī |
| 14. Rājendra Tīrtha | 33. Swami Bhakti Gaurava
Narasiṅgha |
| 15. Jaya-dharma Tīrtha | |
| 16. Puruṣottama Tīrtha | |
| 17. Brahmaṇya Tīrtha | |
| 18. Vyāsa Tīrtha | |
| 19. Lakṣmī-pati Tīrtha | |
| 20. Mādhavendra Purī | |
| 21. Īśvara Purī | |

SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The Vowels are as Follows:

a —	as in <i>but</i> or <i>cup</i>	r —	as in <i>rim</i> (slightly rolled)
ā —	as in <i>far</i> or <i>calm</i>	e —	as in <i>they</i> or <i>save</i>
i —	as in <i>sit</i> or <i>pick</i>	ai —	as in <i>aisle</i> or <i>pie</i>
ī —	as in <i>pique</i> or <i>clean</i>	o —	as in <i>go</i> or <i>coat</i>
		au —	as in <i>how</i> or <i>town</i>
u —	as in <i>push</i> or <i>pull</i>		
ū —	as in <i>rule</i> or <i>mood</i>		

The Consonants are as Follows:

Gutterals	Labials
(pronounced from the throat)	(pronounced with the lips)

k —	as in <i>kite</i>	p —	as in <i>pine</i>
kh —	as in <i>Ekhhart</i>	ph —	as in <i>haphazard</i>
g —	as in <i>give</i>		(not f)
gh —	as in <i>aghast</i>	b —	as in <i>bird</i>
n —	as in <i>sing</i>	bh —	as in <i>abbor</i>
		m —	as in <i>mother</i>

Cerebrals	Palatals
(pronounced with tongue against roof of mouth)	(pronounced with middle of tongue against palate)

t —	as in <i>tub</i>	c —	as in <i>chair</i>
th —	as in <i>light-heart</i>	ch —	as in <i>staunch-heart</i>
d —	as in <i>dove</i>	j —	as in <i>joy</i>
dh —	as in <i>adhere</i>	jh —	as in <i>hedgehog</i>
n —	as in <i>sing</i>	ñ —	as in <i>canyon</i>

Dentals

(pronounced with tongue
against teeth)

- t – as in *talk*
th – as in *quiet-home*
d – as in *dark*
dh – as in *kindhearted*
n – as in *nothing*

Aspirate

- h – as in *home*

Anusvara

- m̐ – a resonant nasal
sound as in *numb*

Semivowels

- y – as in *yes*
r – as in *run*
l – as in *light*
v – as in *vine*

Sibilants

- ś – as in the German
word *sprechen*
ʂ – as in *shine*
s – as in *sun*

Visarga

- ḥ – a final *h*-sound
pronounced like
aha

GLOSSARY OF NAMES

Including names of persons, places and literature found in this book

Abhimanyu – The son of Arjuna.

A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda – One of the foremost *ācāryas* and commentators on the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the 20th Century, who propagated the message of *bhakti-yoga* throughout the world.

Acyuta – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘Infallible’.

Ādityas – The twelve sons of Aditi and the sage Kaśyapa. The Ādityas are solar deities who represent the twelve months of the year.

Ādi Śaṅkara – A 9th Century philosopher who founded the monist school of impersonalism known as *advaita*.

Agni – The predominating demigod of fire.

Airāvata – The elephant of Indra, king of the demigods.

Ananta – The cosmic serpent who supports the universe.

Ananta-vijaya – The name of the conch shell belonging to Yudhiṣṭhira.

Artha-śāstra – Books of law pertaining to rules of conduct in Vedic society.

Aryamā – The demigod who presides over the planet of the forefathers.

Asita – An ancient sage from Vedic times.

Aśvatthāmā – The son of Drona who fought against the Pāṇḍavas in the Mahābhārata War.

Aśvinī-kumāras – Twin demigods that preside over sunrise and sunset. They are the physicians of the demigods.

Asura – Unrighteous beings.

Atri – A great sage from Vedic times.

Ayodhyā – The spiritual realm of Rāma, the *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa.

Badarīnātha – An ancient holy town in the Himālayas, sacred to Viṣṇu.

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa – An 18th Century Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* who wrote commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Vedānta-sūtras*.

Balarāma – The older brother and first expansion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Bhagavān – A name for Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu that literally means ‘One who possesses all good qualities.’

Bhāgavatam – (See *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*)

Bhakti-rasāmr̥ta-sindhu – ‘The Ambrosial Ocean of Devotional Mellows’ – a book on the science of *bhakti* written by Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – An 19th Century Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* from Bengal, who wrote a vast number of works on the subject of *bhakti-yoga*.

Bhārata – An epithet of Arjuna meaning ‘descendant of the Bharata Dynasty’.

Bhīma – One of the five sons of Pāṇḍu, brother of Arjuna

Bhiṣma – The grandsire of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.

Bhramaraka – One of Kṛṣṇa’s pet dogs in Vṛndāvana.

Bṛhgu – One of the Seven Sages, the son of Brahmā and the father of Vedic astrology.

Bhūriśrava – A powerful warrior of the Balhika Province who fought against the Pāṇḍavas.

Brahmā – The first living being in the universe. The demigod in charge of creation.

Brahma-saṁhitā – An ancient Sanskrit text composed of verses spoken by Brahmā glorifying Kṛṣṇa.

Bṛhan-Nāradiya Purāṇa – An ancient Sanskrit text in the form of a dialogue between the two sages Nārada and Sanat-kumāra that extols devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Bṛhaspati – The guru of the demigods.

Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta – A work written in two parts by the Vaiṣṇava ācārya Sanātana Gosvāmī. The first part deals with ontological hierarchy. The second part delineates the devotional process from initiation to the attainment of Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Bṛhat-Sāma – A series of prayers found in the *Sāma Veda* that is chanted at the end of Vedic rituals.

Buddha – The *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who descended in order to teach non-violence and put an end to animal slaughter.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta – A 15th Century biography of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu written in Bengali by Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. It describes the life and philosophy of Śrī Caitanya in great detail.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu – The 15th Century *avatāra* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and inaugurator of the *sāṅkīrtana* movement, who appeared in West Bengal in 1486.

Caitanya-mata-maṇjuṣa – A commentary on the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* written by Śrīnātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

Cāṇakya Nīti-śāstra – A social treatise, written by the wise *brāhmaṇa* advisor to King Candragupta Maurya (340-293 BCE).

Cāra-dhāma – Four major holy places found in the four directions of India – Badarīnātha in the north, Rāmeśvaram in the south, Jagannātha Purī in the east and Dvārakā in the west.

Cārvāka – An atheistic philosopher of Ancient India, circa 500 BCE.

Cekitāna – Prince of the Kekayas and an ally of the Pāṇḍavas.

Citraratha – The king of the Gandharvas.

Daitya – A powerful race of demons that are the enemies of the demigods.

Dānava – (see *Daitya*)

- Deva** – The Sanskrit word for Demigod.
- Devadatta** – The name of Arjuna's conch shell.
- Devakī** – The mother of Kṛṣṇa and wife of Vasudeva.
- Devala** – A famous sage from Vedic times.
- Dhanañjaya** – An epithet for Arjuna meaning 'the winner of wealth'.
- Dharma-śāstra** – Texts dealing with the dharma of various classes found in Vedic society.
- Dhṛṣṭadyumna** – The commander of the Pāṇḍava army and the brother of Draupadī.
- Dhṛṣṭaketu** – King of the Kekayas and an ally of the Pāṇḍavas.
- Dhṛtarāṣṭra** – The blind uncle of the Pāṇḍavas, father of Duryodhana.
- Dhṛti** – The personification of the quality of conviction.
- Draupadī** – The daughter of King Drupada and wife of the Pāṇḍavas.
- Drona** – The military teacher of both the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.
- Drupada** – The king of Pañcāla (modern day Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh) and father of Draupadī. Drupada fought for the Pāṇḍavas at Kurukṣetra.
- Durvāsā** – A famous Vedic sage.
- Duryodhana** – The corrupt son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and main antagonist of the *Mahābhārata*.
- Dvārakā** – The spiritual realm of Vāsudeva, the expansion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It's earthly facsimile is found in Gujarat, western India.
- Four Kumāras** – (Skt. *Catub-sana*) The four mind-born sons of Brahmā, namely, Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra.
- Gadādhara Paṇḍita** – An eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- Gandharva** – Male demigods who are skilled singers and dancers.
- Gāndīva** – Arjuna's bow that was handed down by Brahmā.
- Gāṅgā** – The river Ganges.
- Gaṇeśa** – The demigod who removes material obstacles.
- Garuḍa** – The bird-carrier of Viṣṇu.
- Gaura-Gadādhara** – Caitanya Mahāprabhu (known also as Gaura) and His eternal associate Gadādhara Paṇḍita.
- Gaura-Nitāi** – Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His eternal associate Nityānanda (known also as Nitāi).
- Gāyatrī** – A famous *mantra* found in the *Vedas*, chanted three times a day by the advanced students of *bhakti-yoga*.
- Godāvarī** – A holy river that runs through Andhra Pradesh in South India.
- Goloka (Goloka Vṛndāvana)** – The eternal abode of Kṛṣṇa where He sports with His most intimate associates.

Gopa Kumāra – The main protagonist in the second part of *Bṛhad-bbāgavatāmṛta*.

Gopāla – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘Protector of the Cows’.

Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad – An ancient text connected to the *Atharva Veda* which glorifies Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Gopīs – The cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana; the topmost devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Govardhana – The name of a hill in Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa performed many of His pastimes.

Govinda – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘One who gives pleasure to the cows and the senses’.

Guḍākeśa – A name for Arjuna meaning ‘conqueror of sleep’.

Hariṇā – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who descends to speak transcendental knowledge to Brahmā and the Kumāras.

Hanumān – The foremost devotee of Rāma.

Hari – A name for Kṛṣṇa which means ‘One who removes all inauspiciousness’.

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa – A book written by Sanātana Gosvāmī that deals with the rituals and conduct of Vaiṣṇavas.

Haridvāra – A holy city in India, also written as Hardwar or Haridwar.

Hari-vamśa – A supplement to the *Mahābhārata* that narrates the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

Hṛṣīkeśa – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘Master of the senses’.

Hṛṣīkeśa – A famous holy place situated in North India.

Ikṣvāku – A pious king from Vedic times.

Indra – The king of the demigods.

Indraloka – The abode of Indra; the celestial planet of the demigods.

Īśvara – The Supreme Controller.

Īśopaniṣad – One of the principle *Upaniṣads* of the *Yajur Veda* that describes the nature of the Supreme Person.

Jagannātha – A form of Kṛṣṇa who is generally worshipped along with His brother, Balarāma and His sister Subhadrā.

Jagannātha Purī – A famous temple town in Orissa, East India, where Kṛṣṇa resides as Jagannātha, the Lord of the Universe.

Janaka – A great virtuous king of Vedic times.

Janārdana – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning, ‘Maintainer of all living beings’.

Jayadeva Gosvāmī – A 12th Century Vaiṣṇava poet who wrote on the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Jayadratha – The mighty king of the Sindhu kingdom who fought against the

Pāñḍavas.

Jīva Gosvāmī – A 15th Century Vaiṣṇava ācārya and philosopher. He was the nephew of Rūpa Gosvāmī and wrote extensively on Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

Kālī – The consort of Śīva.

Kali-santaraṇa Upaniṣad – An *Upaniṣad* narrating a conversation between Brahmā and Nārada about the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mabā-mantra*.

Kalki – The *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who is scheduled to appear at the end of Kali-yuga.

Kāma – The demigod of sensual pleasure.

Kāma-dhenu – A celestial cow.

Kapila Muni – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa and the founder of the theistic Sāṅkhya philosophy.

Karṇa – The king of the Aṅga region (part of modern day Bihar) and half-brother of the Pāñḍavas. He fought for Duryodhana at Kurukṣetra.

Kārtikeya – The son of Śīva, commander of the armies of the demigods.

Kāśī – Modern day Benares, or Varanasi.

Kaṭha Upaniṣad – One of the primary *Upaniṣads* wherein Yama discusses the science of the *ātmā* with the *brāhmaṇa*, Naciketā.

Kaunteya – A name for Arjuna meaning ‘son of Kuntī.’

Kāverī – A holy river in South India.

Keśava – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘Killer of the demon Keśī.’

Keśī – A demon who took the form of a horse and was killed by Kṛṣṇa.

Keśī-ghāṭa – A place in Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa killed the Keśī demon.

Kīrtī – The personification of fame.

Kratu – A great sage from Vedic times.

Kṛpa – Uncle of Aśvatthāmā and brother-in-law of Droṇa.

Kṣamā – The personification of patience.

Kulaśekhara Ālvār – A famous Vaiṣṇava king of South India who ruled during the 7th Century CE.

Kuntī – Mother of the Pāñḍavas and aunt of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kuntibhoja – The foster-father of Kuntī, the mother of the Pāñḍavas.

Kārma – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who appears in order to help the demigods.

Kuru – A virtuous king who performed great penances on the land which was later named after him as Kurukṣetra.

Kurukṣetra – A holy place 160 km north of Delhi in the state of Harayana in India. Kurukṣetra was the place where the great *Mahābhārata* war was fought between the Pāñḍavas and the Kauravas, and the place where Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to His devotee, Arjuna.

Kuru-nandana – A name for Arjuna meaning ‘descendant of Kuru.’

Kuśa – A perennial grass that is considered sacred by the followers of the *Vedas*. Its botanical name is *Desmostachya bipinnata*.

Kuvera – The demigod of wealth and the king of the Yakṣas.

Lalitā – One of the eternal *gopī*-friends of Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī.

Mādhava – A name of Kṛṣṇa that has two meanings – ‘Killer of the Madhu demon’ and ‘Husband of the Goddess of Fortune.’

Madhu – The name of a demon killed by Kṛṣṇa.

Madhusūdana – A name of Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘Killer of the Madhu demon.’

Madhvā – A 13th Century Vaiṣṇava philosopher from Karnataka, South India. Madhva established the philosophy of *dvaita* that emphasises the eternal distinction between the living beings and Viṣṇu.

Mahābhārata – *Mahābhārata* refers to both Greater India which comprised of much of the civilised world five thousand years ago, and also the epic written by Vyāsa telling the history of the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.

Mahājanas – (Skt. ‘great personality’) A title denoting those who have attained the favour of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Makara – A fantastic aquatic creature mentioned in the Vedic literature.

Maṇipuṣpaka – The conch shell of Sahadeva.

Manus – The fourteen sons of Brahmā and the progenitors of mankind.

Manu-saṁhitā – A Vedic law book for those following *varṇāśrama-dharma*.

Mārga-śīrṣa – The ninth month of the Vedic calendar that is considered to be very auspicious. This month begins in mid November and ends in mid December.

Marīci – One of the mind-born sons of Brahmā and one of the Seven Sages.

Marutas – Minor demigods that preside over storms.

Mathurā – The greater area where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs His divine pastimes of His youth.

Matsya – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who appears in order to save the *Vedas*.

Māyāpura – A holy place in West Bengal, India on the banks of the Ganges, the birth place of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Medhā – The personification of intelligence.

Meru – A celestial mountain.

Moha-mudgara – (Skt. ‘The hammer that smashes illusion’) A Sanskrit composition by Ādi Śaṅkara that emphasises devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Mukti-pada – ‘The giver of liberation’ – a name for Kṛṣṇa.

Mukunda – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘The giver of liberation.’

Mukunda-mālā Stotram – A Sanskrit text written by King Kulaśekhara

glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad – One of the principle *Upaniṣads*, which is associated with the *Atharva Veda*. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* explains Brahman, ātmā, as well as material and spiritual knowledge.

Nakula – Son of Pāṇḍu and younger brother of Arjuna.

Nārada – A great sage amongst the demigods and one of the sons of Brahmā.

Nārada-pañcarātra – An ancient Sanskrit text that is divided into five parts. It is a conversation between the sage Nārada and Śiva wherein the glories and nature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are explained.

Narasimha – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who appears in order to save His devotee Prahlāda from the murderous clutches of his demonic father, Hiranyakāsiṇu.

Nārāyaṇa – The four-armed *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa in Vaikuṇṭha.

Nimbāditya – An ancient Vaiṣṇava ācārya from Tайлangana, South India.

Nimbārka – (See *Nimbāditya*)

Padma Purāṇa – One of the eighteen *Purāṇas* that glorify Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu.

Pāñcajanya – The conch shell of Kṛṣṇa.

Pāñca-tattva – Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, worshipped along with His four principle associates, Nityānanda, Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa.

Pāṇḍavas – The five sons of Pāṇḍu, Yudhiṣṭhīra, Arjuna, Bhīma, Nakula and Sahadeva.

Pāṇḍu – Brother of Dhṛitarāṣṭra and father to the five Pāṇḍavas.

Paramātmā – Super Consciousness. The localised aspect of Kṛṣṇa which enters every living being and every atom in the universe.

Parantapa – A name for Arjuna meaning ‘conqueror of the enemy.’

Parāśara Muni – A great sage and father of Vyāsa.

Paraśurāma – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in order to admonish corrupt administration.

Pārtha – A name of Arjuna meaning ‘Son of Pṛthā’.

Pārtha-sārathi – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘the charioteer of Arjuna.’

Patañjali – The famous compiler of the *Yoga-sūtras*.

Pauṇḍra – The conch shell of Bhīma.

Prahlāda – A famous child-devotee of Viṣṇu born in a family of *daityas*.

Prajāpatis – The sons of Brahmā and progenitors of mankind.

Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī – A 15th Century expounder of impersonalism who later became a follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prameya-ratnāvalī – A book written by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa delineating the main teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Pṛthā – A name for Kuntī, the mother of Arjuna.

Pulaha – A famous sage of Vedic India.

Pulastya – A famous sage of Vedic India.

Purāṇa – Ancient texts narrating the creation and destruction of the universe, genealogies of kings, sages, and demigods, and descriptions of cosmology, philosophy, and geography.

Puruṣottama – Arjuna's maternal uncle.

Puruṣottama – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning 'The Supreme Person.'

Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa – Kṛṣṇa, along with His eternal consort, Rādhārāṇī.

Rādhā-kuṇḍa – The topmost place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's intimate pastimes found in Vṛndāvana.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī – An associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Rākṣasa – A malevolent man-eating creature.

Rāma (Rāmacandra) – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who shows the example of an ideal ruler. He is the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Rāmānuja – A 12th Century Vaiṣṇava philosopher who founded the school of *viśiṣṭhādvaita*, or qualified oneness.

Rāmāyaṇa – A famous book written by the sage Vālmīki detailing the life of Rāma, the *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa.

Rāmeśvaram – A holy city in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Rg Veda – One of the four *Vedas*.

Rudras – The eleven expansions of Śiva that destroy the universe at the time of annihilation.

Rūpa Gosvāmī – A 15th Century Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* and the foremost follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote many books of the science of *bhakti*.

Sacī Mātā – The mother of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Sādhyā – The personified rites and prayers of the *Vedas*.

Sahadeva – Son of Pāṇḍu and younger brother of Arjuna.

Śaibya – A king of the Śibi Dynasty who fought alongside the Pāṇḍavas.

Śalāgrāma-śilā – A stone-like object revered as non-different from Kṛṣṇa/Viṣṇu and found in the Gāṇḍākī River in Nepal.

Sāma Veda – One of the four *Vedas*.

Sanaka – One of the Four Kumāras.

Sanātana Gosvāmī – The elder brother of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Śaṅkara – (see Śiva)

Sañjaya – The loyal retainer of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and disciple of Vyāsa.

Sarasvatī – The demigoddess of knowledge and learning.

Sarasvatī Thākura – A famous Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* of early 20th Century, who

spread the message of *bhakti-yoga* throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Sārvabhauma Bhāṭṭācārya – A famous 15th Century scholar of rhetoric and logic who later became a follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Satyaki – A valiant warrior of the Vṛṣṇi Dynasty who was devoted to Kṛṣṇa. He fought for the Pāṇḍavas during the Mahābhārata War.

Satya-loka – The planet of Brahmā, the highest material planet in the universe.

Seven Sages – (Skt. *Sapta-rṣis*) The sons of Brahmā. The seven are Marīci, Bhrigu, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu and Vasiṣṭha.

Siddhas – Sages who have mastered all yogic perfections.

Śikhaṇḍī – The son of Drupada who fought at Kurukṣetra on the side of the Pāṇḍavas.

Śikṣāṣṭaka – Eight prayers composed by Caitanya Mahāprabhu extolling the glories of the name of Kṛṣṇa.

Śiva – The powerful demigod who destroys the material cosmos at the time of universal destruction.

Śiva-loka – The abode of Śiva.

Skanda – (See Kārtikeya)

Smṛti – The personification of remembrance.

Soma – A celestial beverage that is taken by the demigods.

Śrī – The personification of beauty.

Śridhara Svāmī – An ancient Vaiṣṇava ācārya who wrote a commentary, known as the *Subodbhinī-ṭīka* on the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam – The essence of all Vedic literatures that specifically focuses upon devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The most important section amongst all twelve divisions is the Tenth Canto which narrates the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal consort; the female aspect of the Absolute Truth.

Śrīnātha Cakravartī – A famous ācārya in the *paramparā* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Subhadrā – The daughter of Vasudeva and sister of Kṛṣṇa.

Sughoṣa – The conch shell of Nakula.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī – The son of Vyāsa and the famous narrator of the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

Sūta – A disciple of Vyāsa. Sūta heard the *Mahābhārata* from Vaiśampāyana and repeated it to the sages of Naimiṣāranya forest.

Surya – The demigod of the sun planet.

Svāmī B. R. Śrīdhara – One of the foremost Vaiṣṇava philosophers and ācāryas of the 20th Century.

Svarūpa Dāmodara – An eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śvetadvīpa – The spiritual world where Kṛṣṇa resides.

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad – An ancient Sanskrit text associated with the *Yajur Veda*. It explicitly explains the science of *bhakti*.

Śyāmasundara – The most charming form of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

Taittirīya Āranyaka – A supplement to the *Vedas* describing various Vedic rituals.

Tulasī-devī – (See *Vṛndā*)

Uccaiḥśrava – The horse of Indra.

Upadeśāmṛta – A short work of eleven verses written by Rūpa Gosvāmī on the science of *bhakti*.

Upaniṣads – Ancient philosophical texts that mostly explain the aspect of impersonal Brahman.

Uśanā – The guru of the *daityas*.

Uttamauja – A prince of the Pañcala province.

Vaikuṇṭha – The eternal spiritual abode of Viṣṇu.

Vaiśampāyana – A disciple of Vyāsa. Vaiśampāyana learned the verses of *Mabābhārata* from Vyāsa and repeated them to the king Janamajaya. He was the first narrator of *Mabābhārata*.

Vaiṣṇavī-tantra-sāra – An ancient Sanskrit text that includes an elaborate glorification of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Vaivasvata Manu – The seventh Manu and the progenitor of the current age.

Vāk – The personification of speech.

Vāmana – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who appears as a young *brāhmaṇa* boy in order to chastise the demon-king, Balirāja.

Variśī-vaṭa – A place in Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa danced with the *gopīs*.

Varāha – An *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa who descends to save the Earth planet from the demon, Hiranyakṣa.

Varāha Purāṇa – One of the eighteen major *Purāṇas* that glorifies Kṛṣṇa in His *avatāra* as Varāha.

Vārṣṇeya – A name of Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘descendant of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty’.

Varuṇa – The demigod of water.

Vasiṣṭha – A famous sage of ancient times.

Vasiṣṭha-smṛti – A Sanskrit text by Vasiṣṭha on social laws.

Vāsuki – The king of the celestial serpents.

Vasus – The eight minor demigods that represent the eight elements.

Vasudeva – The father of Kṛṣṇa.

Vāsudeva – A name of Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘the son of Vasudeva’ or ‘One who

pervades all things.'

Vāyu – The demigod of the air.

Vedānta-sūtra – (Skt. ‘The end of knowledge’) A philosophical treatise written by Vyāsa concerning self-realisation and the nature of the Absolute.

Vedas – An extensive body of spiritual literature from more than 10,000 BCE, from a time before monotheism religious principles found their way to the western hemisphere.

Vidura – The wise brother of Pāṇḍu and Dhṛitarāṣṭra, and uncle to the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas.

Vikarṇa – One of the sons of Dhṛitarāṣṭra.

Virāṭa – A king who fought for the Pāṇḍavas at Kurukṣetra.

Viśākhā – One of the eternal *gopī*-friends of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Viṣṇu – (see *Nārāyaṇa*)

Viṣṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa – An appendix to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.

Viṣṇu Purāṇa – One of the eighteen *Purāṇas* that glorify Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu.

Viṣṇu Svāmī – An ancient Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* who wrote a commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtras*.

Viśvadeva – A class of demigods that collect the offerings made in sacrifice.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī – An 18th Century Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* who wrote many books on the philosophy of *bhakti* and the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Vivasvān – The presiding demigod of the sun planet.

Vraja – (See *Vṛndāvana*)

Vṛndā – One of the *gopī* friends of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana.

Vṛndāvana – The holy town in modern day Uttar Pradesh where Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

Vṛṣabhānu – The father of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Vṛṣṇis – An ancient dynasty in India. Kṛṣṇa appeared in this family.

Vyāghra – One of Kṛṣṇa’s pet dogs in Vṛndāvana.

Vyāsa – The literary *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa, compiler of the Vedic literature and guru of Sañjaya.

Yādava – A name of Kṛṣṇa meaning ‘descendant of the Yadu Dynasty’.

Yakṣa – Nature spirits that guard hidden treasure.

Yama – The demigod of death.

Yamunā – A holy river that flows through Vṛndāvana.

Yogeśvara – A name for Kṛṣṇa meaning, ‘The Master of *yoga*’

Yudhāmanyu – A prince of the Pañcala province.

Yudhiṣṭhira – One of the sons of Pāṇḍu and oldest brother of Arjuna.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Including Sanskrit terminology found in this book

Ācārya – A spiritual master who teaches others by his perfect example.

Acintya – Inconceivable.

Acintya-bhedābheda-tattva – The philosophy taught by Caitanya Mahāprabhu that expounds that Kṛṣṇa and His potencies are simultaneously and inconceivably one and different.

Acintya-śakti – Kṛṣṇa's potency of inconceivability.

Adharma – Unlawful activities that cloud the living beings consciousness and separate them from the Absolute Truth.

Adhokṣaja – That which is beyond the reach of the material senses.

Advaita – The philosophy of monism propagated by Ādi Śaṅkara. *Advaita* identifies the individual consciousness as being the same as the Super Consciousness. It postulates that all beings are essentially the Supreme but that they are temporarily covered by *māyā*.

Ahaṅkāra – The false ego that makes the living being identify with the material body and its environment.

Ājñā-cakra – The *cakra* situated in the pineal gland. This is also known as the 'third eye'.

Akarma – Activities performed exclusively for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa.

Anādi – Without beginning.

Anāhata-cakra – The *cakra* situated in the heart.

Anala – The element of fire.

Ānanda – Spiritual bliss or perfection.

Ānandamaya – The last of the *pañca-kośa*: cultivating and entering into a relationship with Kṛṣṇa and experiencing eternal bliss.

Anartha-nivṛtti – Clearing the heart of unwanted desires and assorted contaminations.

Āṇimā-siddhi – The yogic perfection of becoming very small.

Annamaya – The first of the *pañca-kośa*: the most external plane of consciousness primarily based upon nourishment.

Anu – The finite consciousness of the living beings.

Āpa – The element of water.

Aparā-prakṛti – Kṛṣṇa's inferior material energy.

Aparā-vidyā – Knowledge of matter.

Arcana – The process of Deity worship.

Arca-vigraha – The authorised form of Kṛṣṇa worshipped by His devotees.

Āroha-panthā – The path of ascending knowledge.

Artha – Economic development.

Āryan – One who carries out one's duties in accordance with the Vedic injunctions.

Āsakti – Great attachment to the Absolute Truth.

Āsana – Systematic bodily exercises and postures aimed at toning and bringing into balance one's entire physical organism.

Āśrama – The four stages of life within the Vedic social system.

Āśraya – Spiritual shelter.

Āṣṭāṅga-yoga – The eightfold process of *yoga*: *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*.

Āṣṭa-siddhis – The eight yogic perfections: *aṇīma*, *laghimā*, *prāpti*, *mahimā*, *iśitva*, *vaśitva*, *prākāmya* and *kāmāvasāyitā*.

Ātmā – The individual consciousness.

Avaroha-panthā – Transcendental knowledge descending through the disciplic succession.

Avatāra – The manifestation or descent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in various forms to perform pastimes on Earth.

Avatārī – Kṛṣṇa, the origin of all *avatāras*.

Bhajana-kriyā – Spiritual practices in relation to Kṛṣṇa performed under the guidance of a guru.

Bhakti – Devotion to Kṛṣṇa. The inherent *dharma* of all living beings.

Bhakti-yoga – The yogic process of devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Bhāva – The stage of deep spiritual affection for Kṛṣṇa.

Bhrama – The tendency to make mistakes.

Bhūmi – The element of earth.

Brahmacārī – A celibate student of the *Vedas* within the Vedic social system.

Brahma-jyoti (Brahman) – The glaring effulgence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's body.

Brāhmaṇa – A member of the intellectual class in Vedic society.

Brahmavādī – Those who desire to merge into the effulgence of Brahman.

Buddhi – Material intelligence.

Cakras – Points of energy within the subtle body.

Dhāraṇā – Concentrating the mind without distractions from external sources.

Dharma – The quintessential duty or knowledge that elevates our consciousness to a direct connection with the Absolute Truth.

Dhyāna – The process of meditation.

Dikṣā – The process of initiation.

Dikṣā-guru – The guru who initiates the disciple into the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and the *gāyatrī*.

Dvāpara-yuga – The third age within a cosmic time cycle which lasts for 864,000 years. In Dvāpara-yuga, virtuous qualities are reduced by 50%.

Dvaita – The system of Vaiṣṇava philosophy propounded by Madhvā. *Dvaita* stresses the distinction between the Absolute and the living beings and posits that the material world is real, as opposed to the monist belief that the world is an illusion.

Dvaitādvaita – The Vaiṣṇava philosophy of difference and non-difference proposed by Nimbārka. *Dvaitādvaita* considers *cit* (spiritual substance) and *acit* (matter) to be different from the Absolute as they both exist separately from the HIm with distinct qualities and capacities. Simultaneously they are considered as non-different because they have no independent existence from Him.

Fall-vādī – A hybrid compound word describing those who mistakenly believe that the living being originally fell from the Supreme Abode to the material world.

Gṛhastha – A Vedic householder within the Vedic social system.

Guṇa – (1) The material qualities of goodness, passion and ignorance.

(2) The inherent qualities of an individual.

Guṇāvatāra – The three personalities of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, who preside over the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance respectively.

Guru-paramparā – The disciplic succession of guru-disciple stretching back to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Hlādinī-sakti – The pleasure potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Īśitva-siddhi – The yogic perfection of being able to create something wonderful or to destroy anything at will.

Jagad-guru – A title for a great *ācārya*, meaning ‘Universal Teacher’.

Japa – The silent chanting of the *mahā-mantra* on beads.

Jīva – The living being; the self (See *ātmā*).

Jñāna – Knowledge of the consciousness and the Super Consciousness.

Jñānī – One who tries to achieve the Absolute by intellectual pursuits

Kāla – Time.

Kali-yuga – The fourth and present age of the cosmic time cycle. According to the *Sūrya-siddhānta*, an ancient Vedic treatise on astronomy, Kali-yuga commenced in 3102 BCE. This is the age of quarrel and hypocrisy that lasts for 432,000 years, virtuous qualities are reduced to 25%.

Kāma – Sensual pleasure.

Kāmāvasāyī-siddhi – The yogic perfection of being able to assume any form one wishes.

Karaṇāpāṭava – The tendency to have defective sensory perception.

Karma – (I) Actions performed according to Vedic injunctions that produce good results.

(2) The laws of material nature pertaining to action and reaction.
(3) Activities performed by an individual.

Karma-yoga – The path of selfless action.

Karma-yogī – One who follows the path of *karma-yoga*.

Karmī – One who tries to attain salvation by performing Vedic rituals.

Kaya – The material body.

Kham – The element of accommodating space for existence.

Krodha – Anger.

Kṣatriya – A member of the administrative warrior class in Vedic society.

Kuṇḍalinī-yoga – A system of *yoga* based on the concept of raising the consciousness through the *cakras*.

Laghimā-siddhi – The yogic perfection of becoming lighter than air.

Lobha – Greed.

Mahā-mantra – The ‘great *mantra*’ to be chanted in Kali-yuga, consisting of the names of Kṛṣṇa.

Mahā-māyā – (See *māyā*)

Mahā-pralaya – The cyclic annihilation of the entire material universe.

Mahā-prasādam – (See *prasāda*)

Mahimā-siddhi – The yogic perfection of becoming heavier than the heaviest.

Mana – The mind.

Maṇipūra-cakra – The *cakra* situated in the solar plexus.

Manomaya – The third *pañca-kośa* – the stage of mental awareness.

Māyā – The external illusory potency of Kṛṣṇa that bewilders the living beings in the material world.

Māyāvādī – Those who consider the form of Kṛṣṇa as illusory and believe that they can become the Absolute.

Mokṣa – Salvation, perfection.

Mūlādhāra-cakra – The base *cakra* situated in the prostate gland.

Muni – A *yogī*.

Nābhās – (See *khām*)

Nirguṇa-śraddhā – Faith that is uncontaminated by the modes of material nature.

Nirvāṇa – Freedom from material bondage through attaining the spiritual abode of Kṛṣṇa.

Niṣṭha – Steadiness in service to Kṛṣṇa.

Niyama – The observance of regulations during the process of *yoga*.

Om – The supreme combination of letters denoting the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Pañca-kośa – The five stages of consciousness: *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya* and *ānandamaya*.

Pañcama-puruṣārtha – Divine love for Kṛṣṇa, the fifth goal of life.

Pandita – A wise man.

Paramparā – The unbroken disciplic succession of guru and disciple that reaches back to the time of Kṛṣṇa.

Paripraśna – Submissive inquiry by the disciple to the guru.

Prākāmya-siddhi – The yogic perfection of being able to fulfil all of one's desires.

Prākṛti – Material nature.

Pralaya – The partial annihilation of the material universe.

Pramāda – The tendency to fall prey to illusion.

Prāṇamaya – The second of the *pañca-kośa*, consciousness of the preservation of one's body.

Prāṇāyāma – The yogic system of controlling the inward and outward breath by systematic breathing exercises.

Prāpti-siddhi – The yogic perfection of being able to retrieve anything from anywhere.

Prasādam – The mercy of Kṛṣṇa. The remnants of foodstuffs offered to Kṛṣṇa.

Pratyāhāra – Withdrawing the senses from the sense objects and training the mind to become introspective and intuitively orientated.

Pṛiti – (See *prema*)

Prema (or *prema-bhakti*) – Divine love for the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Pūjā – Vedic rituals to worship the Supreme.

Rāgānugā-bhakti – Direct spontaneous loving service to Kṛṣṇa.

Raja-guna – The mode of passion.

Ruci – Tasting the pure sweetness of realisation in the Absolute Truth.

Sādhana (or *sādbhana-bhakti*) – Devotional activities supported by the rules and regulations of the *sāstra*.

Sādhu – A self-realised *yogī*.

Sādhu-saṅga – Association with *sādbhus*.

Sahasrāra-cakra – The highest *cakra* situated on the top of the head. Those who are adept at *yoga* leave the material body from this *cakra*.

Sakhya-rasa – The eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in the mood of friendship.

Śakti – Potency.

Samādhi – Being fully absorbed in pure spiritual consciousness or conscious of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person.

Saṁsāra – The cycle of birth and death within the material world.

Sanātana-dharma – The occupational duty of all living beings.

Saṅkirtana (or *nāma-saṅkirtana*) – The congregational chanting of the *mabā-mantra*.

Sannyāsa – The path of renouncing all material things that are unrelated to Kṛṣṇa.

Sannyāsī – The highest order of renunciates in the Vedic social order. One who renounces all activities for their own benefit.

Śāstra – The Vedic literature.

Sac-cid-ānanda – The spiritual qualities of eternity, knowledge and bliss.

Sattva-guṇa – The mode of goodness.

Satya-yuga – The first age of the cosmic time cycle lasting for 1,728,000 years. During Satya-yuga the majority of the population is in the mode of goodness.

Sevā – Service to one's spiritual superiors.

Śikṣā – Instructions on how to approach the Absolute Truth.

Śikṣā-guru – The guru who imparts practical instructions to the disciple for progressive advancement in self-realisation.

Śraddhā – Faith. That which leads to truth and self-realisation.

Śuddhādvaita – The Vaiṣṇava philosophy of purified monism established by Viṣṇu Svāmī. *Śuddhādvaita* considers the individual *ātmās* and the Supreme as both one in nature, but in quantity they are distinct. Thus the *ātmā* is eternally minute and finite whereas the Absolute is always all-pervading and infinite.

Śūdra – A member of the labourer class in Vedic society.

Sukṛti – Spiritual merits derived from previous lifetimes.

Śūnya – Void.

Śūnyavādi – Those who reject the existence of the *ātmā* and wish to annihilate their existence.

Suṣumnā-nadi – The subtle channel that connects the *mūlādhāra-cakra* to the *sabasrāra-cakra*.

Svādhiṣṭhāna-cakra – The *cakra* situated at the base of the spinal cord.

Tama-guṇa – The mode of ignorance.

Tapasvī – One who tries to attain the Absolute by the performance of severe penances.

Tapasya – Austerities that decrease material consciousness and promote a conscious awareness of the Absolute truth.

Taṭasthā – The marginal position between the spiritual and mundane planes.

Tattva-darśī – One who understands the Absolute Truth.

Treta-yuga – The second age of the cosmic time cycle which lasts for 1,296,000 years. In Treta-yuga, virtuous qualities decrease by one fourth compared to Satya-yuga.

Tyāga – The renunciation of all activities.

Tyāgī – One who renounces all actions.

Vaiṣṇava – A practitioner of *bhakti-yoga*, who worships Kṛṣṇa/Viṣṇu as the Supreme Truth.

Vaiśya – A member of the mercantile class in Vedic society.

Vākya – Speech.

Vānaprastha – Householders who have retired from family life to dedicate themselves to the Absolute.

Varṇa – The four social orders in Vedic society.

Varnāśrama (or *varṇāśrama-dharma*) – (See *Varṇa* and *Āśrama*)

Vaśitva-siddhi – The yogic perfection of being able to control the material elements.

Vāyu – The element of air.

Vibhu – The all-pervading infinite consciousness of Kṛṣṇa.

Vijñāna – Realised knowledge of the Absolute.

Vijñānamaya – The fourth *pañca-kośa* – the cultivation of consciousness based on higher knowledge.

Vikarma – Forbidden activities, contrary to Vedic injunctions that produce bad karmic reactions.

Vipralipsā – The tendency to cheat and be cheated.

Viśiṣṭhādvaita – The Vaiṣṇava philosophy of qualified non-dualism propounded by Rāmānuja. In *viśiṣṭhādvaita* the Absolute Truth and the living beings are eternally individual, but simultaneously the Absolute and the living beings are considered to be an inseparable organic whole.

Viśuddha-cakra – The *cakra* situated in the throat.

Viśuddha-sattva – Pure goodness. The spiritual platform beyond the three modes of material nature.

Yajña – The process of sacrifice.

Yama – The rules of the *yoga* process.

Yoga-māyā – Kṛṣṇa's transcendental internal energy.

Yuga – Cosmic time cycle.

Yuga-dharma – The main *dharma* for each of the four *yugas* that awards spiritual perfection.

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anye ca bahavaḥ śūrā 1.9
anye sāṅkhyena yogena 13.25
anye tv-evam ajānantah 13.26
apāne jubvatī prāṇāti 4.29
aparātī bhavato janma 4.4
aparaspara-sambhūtātī 16.8
apare niyatāhārāḥ prāṇān 4.30
apareyam itas tvanyātī 7.5
aparyāptātī tad asmākarātī 1.10
apaśyad deva-devasya 11.13
aphalāṅkṣibhir yajño 17.11
aphalāṅkṣibbir yuktaiḥ 17.17
aphala-prepsunā karma 18.23
api ced asi pāpebhyāḥ 4.36
api cet sudurācāro 9.30
api traīlokya-rājyasya 1.35
aprakāśo'pravṛttiś ca 14.13
aprāpya māti nivartante 9.3
aprāpya yoga-saṁsiddhiḥ 6.37
apratiṣṭho mahā-bāho 6.38
āpūryamāṇam acala 2.70
ārto jīvīnasur arthārthī 7.16
ārurukṣor muner yogātī 6.3
asad ity-ucyate pārtha 17.28
asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra 18.49
asaktātī sarva-bhṛc caiva 13.15
asaktir anabhiṣvarīgāḥ 13.10
asakto hyācaran karma 3.19
asammūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu 10.3
asariṣṭāyātī mahā-bāho 6.35
asariṣṭāyātī samagratī māti 7.1

- āśāriyātātmāna yogo 6.36
 āśā-pāśa-śatair baddhāḥ 16.12
 āśāstra-vibitāni ghorāni 17.5
 asatkṛtam avajñātarin tat 17.22
 asatyam apratiṣṭham te 16.8
 asau mayā hataḥ śatrur 16.14
 āścaryavac-caṇam anyaḥ 2.29
 āścaryavat paśyati kaścidēnam 2.29
 asito devalo vyāsaḥ 10.13
 asmākarin tu viśiṣṭā ye 1.7
 aśocyān anvaśocas tvarī 2.11
 aśraddadbānāḥ puruṣā 9.3
 aśraddhāyā butarī dattarī 17.28
 āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā 7.18
 āśurīni yonim āpannā 16.20
 āśvāsayāmāsa ca bhītam 11.50
 aśvatthaḥ sarva-vṛkṣāṇī 10.26
 aśvatthāmā vikarṇāś ca 1.8
 aśvatthām enān suvirūḍha 15.3
 atattvārthavad alparī ca 18.22
 atha caiṇāni nitya-jātarī 2.26
 atha cet tvam abāṅkārān 18.58
 atha cet tvam imarī 2.33
 atha cittarī samādhātūri 12.9
 athaitad apy-aśaktō'si 12.11
 atha kena prayukto'yāni 3.36
 athavā babunaitena 10.42
 athavā yoginām eva 6.42
 atha vyavasthitān dṛṣṭvā 1.20
 ātmāiva hy-ātmāno bandhur 6.5
 ātmāny-eva ca santuṣṭas 3.17
 ātmāny-evātmāna tuṣṭah 2.55
 ātmā-sambhāvitāḥ stabdhaḥ 16.17
 ātmā-saṁsthāni manah kṛtvā 6.25
 ātmā-saṁiyama-yogāgnau 4.27
 ātmāupamyena sarvatra 6.32
 ātmā-vantāni na karmāṇi 4.41
 ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā 2.64
 ato'smi loke vede ca 15.18
 atra śūrā maheśvāsā 1.4
 atyeti tat sarvam idāni 8.28
 avācyā-vādānś ca babūn 2.36
 avajānanti māni mūḍhā 9.11
 avāpya bhūmāv-asapatnam 2.8
 avibhaktarī ca bhūteṣu 13.17
 avibhaktarī vibhakteṣu 18.20
 avināśi tu tad viddhi 2.17
 āvṛtarī jñānam etena 3.39
 avyaktādīni bhūtāni 2.28
 avyaktād vyaktayah sarvāḥ 8.18
 avyaktāḥ gatir dubkham 12.5
 avyaktarī vyaktim āpannāni 7.24
 avyakta-nidhanāny-eva 2.28
 avyakto'kṣara ity-uktas 8.21
 avyakto'yaṁ acintyo'yaṁ 2.25
 ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu 1.11
 ayathāvat prajānāti 18.31
 ayatiḥ śraddhayopeto 6.37
 āyudhānām abāni vajraṇī 10.28
 āyuḥ sattva-balārogya 17.8
 ayuktaḥ kāma-kāreṇa 5.12
 ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhaḥ 18.28
- B
- bahavo jñāna tapasā 4.10
 bahir antaś ca bhūtānām 13.16
 bahūdararī babu-dariṣṭrā 11.23
 bahūnām janmanām ante 7.19
 bahūni me vyatītāni 4.5
 bahūny-adṛṣṭa-pūrvāṇī 11.6
 bahu-śākhāḥ hy-anantāś 2.41
 balaṇi balavatāni cābaṇi 7.11
 bandhāni mokṣāni ca yā vetti 18.30
 bandhur ātmāmanas tasya 6.6

bāhya-sparśeṣv-asaktātmā 5.21
bhajanty-ananya-manaso 9.13
bhaktiṁ mayi parāmī kṛtvā 18.68
bhakto’si me sakha ceti 4.3
bhakteā mām abhijānāti 18.55
bhakteā tv-ananyayā 11.54
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha 12.7
bhavān bhīṣmaś ca karnaś 1.8
bhavanti bhāvā bhūtānām 10.5
bhavanti sampadarīn daivīm 16.3
bhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām 11.2
bhāva-saṁśuddhir ity-etat 17.16
bhavaty-atyāgīnām pretya 18.12
bhavisyāṇi ca bhūtāni 7.26
bhavītā na ca me tasmād 18.69
bhayād ranād uparataṁ 2.35
bhīṣma drona pramukhataḥ 1.25
bhīṣmam evābhīrakṣantu 1.11
bhīṣmo dronaḥ sūta-putras 11.26
bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām 2.44
bhoktāraṁ yajñā-tapasām 5.29
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni 18.61
bhruvor madhye prāṇam 8.10
bhūmir āpo’nalo vāyuḥ 7.4
bhuñjate te tvagbāni papa 3.13
bhūta-bhartṛ ca taj jñeyāni 13.17
bhūta-bhāvana bhūteśa 10.15
bhūta-bhāvodbhava karo 8.3
bhūta-bhṛṇ na ca bhūta-stho 9.5
bhūta-grāmaḥ sa evāyāni 8.19
bhūta-grāmam imāni kṛtsnam 9.8
bhūta-prakṛti-mokṣāni ca 13.35
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā 9.25
bhūya eva mahā-bāho 10.1
bhūyah kathaya ṛptir bi 10.18
bījāni māni sarva-bhūtānān 7.10
brahma-bhūtah prasannātmā 18.54

brahmācaryam abīrīsā ca 17.14
brahmāgnāv-apare yajñāni 4.25
brahmaiva tena gantavyāni 4.24
brāhmaṇa-ksatriya-viśāni 18.41
brahmāṇam iśāni kamalāsana 11.15
brāhmaṇās tena vedāś ca 17.23
brahmaṇo bi pratiṣṭhābam 14.27
brahmaṇy-ādhāya karmāṇi 5.10
brahmārpaṇāni brahma havir 4.24
brahma-sūtra-padaīś caiva 13.5
bṛhat-sāma tathā sāmnām 10.35
buddhau śaraṇam anviccha 2.49
buddher bhedāni dhṛteś caiva 18.29
buddhī buddhimatām asmi 7.10
buddhī jñānam asarīmohāḥ 10.4
buddhi-yogam upāśritya 18.57
buddhi-yukto jabātīha 2.50
buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto 18.51
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha 2.39

C

cañcalāni bi manāḥ kṛṣṇa 6.34
cātūr-varṇyāni mayā srṣṭāni 4.13
catur-vidhā bhajante māni 7.16
cetasā sarva-karmāṇi 18.57
chandārīsi yasya parṇāni 15.1
chinna-dvaidhā yatātmānāḥ 5.25
chittvaināmī saṁśayāmī yogam 4.42
cintām aparimeyāni ca 16.11

D

dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ tam 10.10
daivam evāpare yajñāni 4.25
daivī hy-eṣā guṇamayī 7.14
daivī sampad vimokṣāya 16.5
daivo vistaraśah prokta 16.6
dambhāharikāra-saṁyuktāḥ 17.5

dambho darpo'bhimānaś ca 16.4
daniṣṭrā-karālāni ca te 11.25
dāna-kriyāś ca vividhāḥ 17.25
dānarīn damaś ca yajñāś ca 16.1
dānam iśvara-bhāvaś ca 18.43
daṇḍo damayatām asmi 10.38
darśayāmāsa pārthāya 11.9
dātavyam iti yad dānarīn 17.20
dayā bhūteṣv-aloluptvarī 16.2
debi nityam avadhyo'yanī 2.30
debino'smin yathā dehe 2.13
deśe kāle ca pātre ca 17.20
devā apy-asya rūpasya 11.52
deva-dvija-guru-prājñā 17.14
devān bhāvayatānena te 3.11
devān deva-yajo yāntī 7.23
dharmā-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre 1.1
dharmā-saṁsthāpanārthāya 4.8
dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu 7.11
dharme naṣṭe kularīn kṛtsnam 1.39
dharmyāddhi yuddhāc chreyo 2.31
dhārtarāṣṭrā rāṇe banyus 1.45
dhārtarāṣṭrasya durbuddher 1.23
dhṛṣṭadyumno virātaś ca 1.17
dhṛṣṭaketuś cekitānāḥ 1.5
dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate 18.33
dhūmenāvriyate vahnir 3.38
dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇāḥ 8.25
dyānāt karma-phala-tyāgas 12.12
dyāna-yoga-paro nityam 18.52
dyānenātmāni paśyanti 13.25
dyāyato viṣayān purisāḥ 2.62
diśo na jāne na labhe 11.25
divi sūrya-sahasrasya 11.12
divya-mālyāmbara-dharamī 11.11
divyatīn dadāmi te cakṣuḥ 11.8
dīyate ca parikliṣṭam tad 17.21

doṣair etaiḥ kula-ghnānānī 1.42
draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpam 11.3
dravya-yajñās tapo-yajñā 4.28
dronārīn ca bbīṣmaṇīn ca 11.34
dṛṣṭvādbhutānī rūpam ugraṇī 11.20
dṛṣṭvā hi tvārīn pravyathita 11.24
dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānīkānī 1.2
dṛṣṭvedānī mānuṣānī rūpānī 11.51
dṛṣṭvemānī svajanaṇī kṛṣṇā 1.28
drupado draupadeyāś ca 1.18
duḥkham ity-eva yat karma 18.8
duḥkheṣv-anudvignā manāḥ 2.56
dūreṇā by-avarān karma 2.49
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha 15.5
dvau bhūta-sargau loke'smin 16.6
dvāv-īmau puruṣau loke 15.16
dyāv-āpṛthivyor idam 11.20
dyūtarīn chalayatām asmi 10.36

E

ekākī yata-cittātmā 6.10
ekam apy-āsthitaḥ samyag 5.4
ekānī sāṅkhyānī ca yogānī ca 5.5
ekatvena prabhaktvena 9.15
ekayā yāty-anāvṛttim 8.26
eko'thavāpy-acyuta tat 11.42
eṣā brāhmaṇī sthitīḥ pārtha 2.72
eṣā te'bbihitā sāṅkhye 2.39
eṣā tūddeśataḥ prokto 10.40
etac chṛtvā vacanānī 11.35
etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt 15.20
etaddhi durlabhataraṇī loke 6.42
etad veditum icchāmi 13.1
etad yonīni bhūtāni 7.6
etad yo vetti tāmī prābuḥ 13.2
etair vimohayaty eṣā 3.40
etair vimuktāḥ kaunteya 16.22

etaj jñānam iti proktam 13.12
etān dṛṣṭim avaṣṭabhyā 16.9
etān vibhūtiṁ yogarī ca 10.7
etan me sariśayarī kṛṣṇa 6.39
etān na bantum icchāmi 1.34
etāny-āpi tu karmāṇi 18.6
etasyābarī na paśyāmi 6.33
etat kṣetrarī samāsena 13.7
evānī babu-vidhā yajñā 4.32
evānī buddheḥ parānī buddhvā 3.43
evam etad yathāttīha 11.3
evānī jñātvā kṛtarī karma 4.15
evānī paramparā prāptam 4.2
evānī pravartitan cakrān 3.16
evānī rūpaḥ śakya abān 11.48
evānī satata-yuktā ye 12.1
evānī trayī-dharmam 9.21
evam ukto hrṣikeśo 1.24
evam uktvā hrṣikeśām 2.9
evam uktvārjunāḥ saṅkhye 1.46
evam uktvā tato rājan 11.9

G

gacchānty-apunar-āvṛttiṁ 5.17
gām āviśya ca bbūtāni 15.13
gandharvāṇānī citrarathāḥ 10.26
gandharva-yakṣasura-siddha 11.22
gāṇḍīvarī strānisate hastāt 1.29
gata-saṅgasya muktasya 4.23
gatāsūnī agatāsūnīś ca 2.11
gatir bhartā prabbuḥ sāksī 9.18
gr̥bitvaitāni saṁyāti 15.8
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta 3.28
guṇān etān atītya trīn 14.20
guṇā vartanta ity-evānī 14.23
guṇebhyāś ca parānī vetti 14.19
gurūn abatvā bi mahānubhāvān 2.5

H

hanta te kathayiṣyāmi 10.19
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair 12.15
harṣa-śokānvitāḥ kartā 18.27
hato vā prāpsyasi svargam 2.37
batvā'pi sa imāl-lokān 18.17
batvārtha kāmārīstu gurūn 2.5
hetunānena kaunteya 9.10
hrṣikeśānī tadā vākyam 1.20

I

icchā dveṣaḥ sukhanī duḥkhānī 13.7
icchā-dveṣa samutthena 7.27
idam adya mayā labdhām 16.13
idam astidam api me 16.13
idānī jñānam upāśritya 14.2
idānī śārīraṇī kaunteya 13.2
idānī te nātāpaskāya 18.67
idānī tu te guhyatamarīn 9.1
idānīṁ asmi sāmivṛttāḥ 11.51
ihaikasthānī jagat kṛtsnam 11.7
ihaiva tair jitāḥ sargo yesāmī 5.19
ihante kāma-bhogārtham 16.12
ijyate bharata-śreṣṭha 17.12
īkṣate yoga-yuktātmā 6.29
imānī vivasvate yogarī 4.1
indriyāṇāmī bi caratāmī 2.67
indriyāṇāmī manaś cāsmī 10.22
indriyāṇī daśaikānī ca 13.6
indriyāṇī mano buddhir 3.40
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas 2.58
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas 2.68
indriyāṇīndriyārtheṣu 5.9
indriyāṇī parāny-ābur 3.42
indriyāṇī pramāthīni 2.60
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā 3.6
indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam 13.9

indriyasyendriyasyārthe 3.34
iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā 3.12
iṣṭo’si me dṛḍham 18.64
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi 2.4
iṣvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ 18.61
iṣvaro’ham abām bhogī 16.14
iti guhyatamāṁ sāstram 15.20
iti kṣetrāṁ tathā jñānāṁ 13.19
iti māṁ yo’bbijānāti 4.14
iti matvā bhajante māṁ 10.8
iti te jñānam ākhyātāṁ 18.63
ityahāṁ vāsudevasya 18.74
ity-arjunāṁ vāsudevas 11.50

J

jagbhanya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā 14.18
jahi śatrūṁ mahā-bāho 3.43
janma-bandha-vinirmuktih 2.51
janma karma ca me divyam 4.9
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-duḥkhair 14.20
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi 13.9
jarā-maraṇa-mokṣāya 7.29
jātasya bi dhrubo mṛtyur 2.27
jayo’smi vyavasāyo’smi 10.36
jhaśāṇāṁ makaraś cāsmi 10.31
jīvīnāsur api yogasya 6.44
jītātmānaḥ praśāntasya 6.7
jīva-bhūtānāṁ mahā-bāho 7.5
jīvanāṁ sarva-bhūteṣu 7.9
jñānāgni-dagdha-karmāṇāṁ 4.19
jñānāgnīḥ sarva-karmāṇī 4.37
jñānāṁ āvṛtya tu tamāḥ 14.9
jñānāṁ jñeyāṁ jñāna-gamyāṁ 13.18
jñānāṁ jñeyāṁ parijñātā 18.18
jñānāṁ karma ca kartāca 18.19
jñānāṁ labdhvā parāṁ sāntim 4.39

jñānāṁ te’haṁ sa-vijñānam 7.2
jñānāṁ vijñānam āstikyāṁ 18.42
jñānāṁ vijñāna-sabitarā 9.1
jñānāṁ yadā tadā vidyād 14.11
jñāna-vijñāna-trptātmā 6.8
jñāna-yajñena cāpy-anye 9.15
jñāna-yajñena tenāham 18.70
jñāna-yogena sāṅkhyānāṁ 3.3
jñānenā tu tad ajñānāṁ 5.16
jñātūrin draṣṭūn ca tattvena 11.54
jñātvā sāstra-vidhānoktāṁ 16.24
jñeyāḥ sa nitya-sannyāsī 5.3
jñeyāṁ yat tat pravakṣyāmi 13.13
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇī 3.26
jyāyasi cet karmaṇas te 3.1
jyotiṣām api taj jyotis 13.18

K

kaccid ajñāna-saṁmobaḥ 18.72
kacchid etac chṛutāṁ pārtha 18.72
kaccin nobhaya-vibhraṣṭāś 6.38
kair liṅgais trīṇi guṇān 14.21
kairmayā saba yoddhavyam 1.22
kālo’smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt 11.32
kalpa-kṣaye punas tāni 9.7
kāma eṣa krodha eṣa 3.37
kāmāḥ krodhas tathā lobhas 16.21
kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ 7.20
kāma-krodha-vimuktānān 5.26
kāma-krodbodhbhavarāni vegāni 5.23
kāmam āśritya duṣpūram 16.10
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya 3.39
kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā 2.43
kāmopabboga-paramā 16.11
kāmyānāṁ karmaṇāṁ nyāsāmī 18.2
kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇān siddhitān 4.12
kāraṇāṁ guṇa-saṅgo’sya 13.22

karanāni karma karteti 18.18
karma brabmodbhavan viddhi 3.15
karma caiva tad-arthiyam 17.27
karma-janī buddbi yuktā hi 2.15
karma-jān-viddbi tān sarvān 4.32
karmaṇah sukṛtasyābuḥ 14.16
karmaṇaiva bi satinsiddhim 3.20
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni 18.41
karmaṇo by-api boddhavyām 4.17
karmaṇy-abhipravṛtto’pi 4.20
karmaṇy-akarma yaḥ paśyed 4.18
karmaṇy-evādhikāraste 2.47
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogam 3.7
karmendriyāṇi satiyamya 3.6
karmibhyaś cādhiko yogi 6.46
kārpanya-dosopahata-svabhāvah 2.7
karṣayantaḥ śarīra-stham 17.6
kartavyānīti me pārtha 18.6
kartūn necbasi yan mohāt 18.60
kārya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve 13.21
kāryam ity-eva yat karma 18.9
kāryate by-avaśah karma 3.5
kasmāc ca te na nameran 11.37
kāśyaś ca parameṣvāsaḥ 1.17
katharin bbīṣṭam abhaṁ saṅkhye 2.4
katham etad vijānīyān 4.4
katharin na jñeyam asmābbih 1.38
katharin sa puruṣaḥ pārtha 2.21
katharin vidyām abhaṁ yogīn 10.17
kathayantaś ca māṁ nityām 10.9
katv-amla-lavaṇyāty-uṣṇa 17.9
kaunteya pratijānīhi na 9.31
kavīn purāṇam anuśāsitaram 8.9
kāyena manasā buddhyā 5.11
kecid vilagnā daśanāntareṣu 11.27
keśavārjunayoh puṇyām 18.76
keṣu keṣu ca bhāvesu 10.17

kim ācāraḥ katharin caitārīns 14.21
kim karma kim akarmeti 4.16
kim no rājyena govinda 1.32
kim punar brāhmaṇāḥ puṇyā 9.33
kim tad-brahma kim adhyātmam 8.1
kīrtiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīnāṁ 10.34
kīrtināṁ gadināṁ cakra 11.46
kīrtināṁ gadināṁ cakriṇāṁ ca 11.17
klaibyām mā sma gamāḥ 2.3
kleśo’dbikataras teṣām 12.5
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kriyate tadiha proktam 17.18
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For more information on the books, articles and lectures of Svāmī Narasiṅgha please visit the following URLs:
www.swaminarasingha.com
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