# Chapter 12

Arjuna desired to see the unbounded expanse of the Lord's pervasive power, which is realized by commitment to [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn). The Lord showed this power to him in its entirety.

Though the human senses cannot perceive such unbounded power, it was experienced due to the Lord's ability to realize all that He desires. The Lord enabled this experience from His unbroken, unlimited expanse of compassion, generosity, amiable nature and other favorable qualities.

It was also stated that [single-minded devotion with ultimate love](#bhakti_a_defn) is the only way to know and see the Lord in His actual form.

Next, The Lord states that His worship in the form of [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) is superior in comparison to the [quest for the Self](file:///D:\OneDrive\HTMLapp\jnanayoga.html#jnAnayOga_a_defn). The superiority of [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) lies in the speed of realizing its goal, in the ease and in the simplicity of its practice.

Let’s devote ourselves to the Lord

This chapter describes the practice of the Lord’s worship along with its accessories. It also describes the quest of the Self for people who are incapable of worship.

The Lord's worship is indeed superior - this is by virtue of the Lord's superiority, as said in [Chap.6#47](#_47): ‘The person who worships Me, having placed himself within Me with complete trust - I consider him to be the most focused, even in comparison to all those who persevere to realize the Self’.

## 12-1

[

arjuna uvAcha

Evam satatayuktA yE bhaktA: tvAm paryupAsatE |

yE chApi akSharam avyaktam tEShAm kE yOgavittamA: || 1 ||

]

[arjuna uvAcha] Arjuna said- [Evam] In this way, [yE] those who are [bhaktA:] [devoted](#bhakti_a_defn) to You [paryupAsatE tvAm] worship You well. [cha api] On the other hand, there are also people [yE akSharam] who focus on the indestructible, which we know as our Self, [avyaktam] which is not perceptible to our sense organs. [tEShAm kE] Who among them [yOgavittamA:] is closer to realizing their goal?

How do we [realize](#yoga_is_to_realize) our goal? By being devoted to it, or by knowing everything about it?

At the end of the previous chapter, in [Chap.11#55](#_55), the Lord said: ‘The person who dedicates all his actions to Me shall achieve Me’.

In this chapter, Arjuna begins by responding to the Lord-

Your [devotees](#bhakti_a_defn) consider their ultimate goal to be You, in the manner You described- with all Your powers, with vast, unbroken amounts of limitless qualities like beauty, equanimity, all-knowing and always having Your intent fulfilled. These devotees worship You completely.

On the other hand, there are people who dedicate their effort towards the realization of the indestructible, which is evident as the Self inside each of us, which is otherwise imperceptible to our eyes and other sense organs.

Who is closer to realizing their goal: your devotees, or those who pursue the realization of the Self? Who will realize their goal sooner?

As answered further in this chapter ([Chap.12#7](#_6_to_7)) - 'I’ll be there without delay for those who have placed themselves in Me' - the word [yOgavittama] in this Shloka asks about the speed at which the goal is realized.

## 12-2

[

shrI bhagavAn uvAcha

mayyAvEshya manO yE mAm nityayuktA upAsatE |

shraddhayA parayA upEtA: tE mE yuktatamA matA: || 2 ||

]

[shrI bhagavAn uvAcha] Lord Krishna said - [yE] People who [mAm upAsatE] worship Me [mayi AvEshya mana:] by committing their mind in Me [nitya yukta] are always engaged. [upEtA:] They are endowed with [parayA shraddhayA] complete trust and dedication. [mE matA] I consider [tE] them [yuktatamA:] to be closest to Me.

The Lord commences His response-

Being devoted is to trust and be with the Lord, recognizing that He is the ultimate purpose

People who commit their minds to Me do so with complete trust and dedication. They worship Me with extreme affection, with a desire to be with Me always. I consider such people to be closest to Me.

Meaning- they will reach the ultimate goal easily, without delay. I am the ultimate goal.

## 12-3 to 12-5

[

yE tu akSharam anirdEshyam avyaktam paryupAsatE |

sarvatragam achintyam cha kUTastham achalam dhruvam || 3 ||

saMniyamya indriya grAmam sarvatra samabuddhaya: |

tE prApnuvanti mAm Eva sarva bhUta hitE ratA: || 4 ||

klEshO\_dhikatara: tEShAm avyaktAsakta chEtasAm |

avyaktA hi gati: du:kham dEhavadbhiravApyatE || 5 ||

]

[yE tu] Others who [paryupAsatE] pursue [akSharam] the 'perpetual' [samabuddhaya:] have an attitude of equanimity [sarvatra] in every way. [sarvatragam] The object of their focus is present in every body. [anirdEshyam] It is inscrutable. [avyaktam] It isn't evident to our senses. [achintyam] It cannot be deciphered by thought. [kUTastham] It is unchanged like an anvil - [achalam] it is unmoved [dhruvam] and steadfast.

[saMniyamya] By controlling [indriya grAmam] the community of organs in the body, [tE prApnuvanti Eva] they shall certainly attain [mAm] Me. [sarva bhUta hitE ratA:] They are well-wishers of all beings.

[hi] Nevertheless, [adhikatara: klEsha:] it’s extra tough [tEShAm] for them [Asakta chEtasAm] to focus their interest on [avyakta] the 'unmanifest'. [avyaktA gati:] The goal of realizing the unmanifest Self [avApyatE] is achieved [du:kham] with great difficulty [dEhavadbhi:] by those who are predisposed to consider their body as themselves.

Knowing is about deciphering ourselves and our relationship with the Lord

Here, the words ‘perpetual’ and 'unmanifest' refer to the Self, which is self-evident in each of us.

It is inscrutable. Since it’s distinct from the body, it can’t be described by words that are used to describe the body. For instance, being male, female, ordinary or powerful doesn’t describe its properties in any way. Hence, it’s not perceived by sight, speech or any of our senses.

This Shloka states that it is present in every body and cannot be deciphered by thought. Though the Self is present in the body, it doesn’t have any characteristics of the body. Hence, it cannot be deciphered in terms of those characteristics.

By being distinct from the body, it remains unchanged like an anvil, even though its body keeps changing. By this, the characteristics of the Self remain unaffected by all the effects of its body. By virtue of remaining constant, it is termed as being 'unmoved and steadfast' in this Shloka.

Our body is a community of organs. When people focus on the Self, they control the body well. They employ their organs such as sight and hearing, instead of transacting to pursue their satisfaction.

They have an attitude of universal equanimity. While we perceive huge variety in our bodies, they know that the Self inside all bodies is present in the form of pure knowledge - no matter how small, large or powerful the being is.

With this attitude, they wish everyone well. They are free from all intentions that cause harm. That's because the intention to harm is a limitation, which comes by considering inequalities. The Self in each of us is identical.

By focusing on the Self, they will certainly attain Me - in addition to realizing their Self. This is stated in Chap.14#2: ‘Having gained this knowledge, they achieve My characteristics’. It is also stated in the [muMDaka upanishat], 3-1-3: [niranjana: paramam sAmyam upaiti] - 'Devoid of flaws, it attains ultimate equality with the Lord'.

Though the Self is permanent and achieves ultimate equality with the Lord, it remains distinct. This is said in Chap.15#16: 'The Self stays without deforming and is said to be the imperishable’, going on to Chap.15#17: ‘However, the Supreme Person is another one’.

The [mundaka upanishat], 1-1-5 narrates: A sage called Shyavanaka went to another sage called Angirasa and asked to be taught. Angirasa started his teaching with the statement: 'There are two types of learning, the material and the superior. Material science is about observations and creativity in the universe'. He goes on to say: 'Superior learning is the awareness by which the Supreme Lord can be attained'.

This teaching is called [akShara vidya] – ‘The science of the perpetual’. In the [akShara vidya], the word 'perpetual' has been used to denote the Supreme Lord, rather than the Self. The Supreme Lord is described to be the creator of all beings.

The word [akShara] - 'the perpetual' - has been used in the scriptures, to mean the Self in some places and the Lord in others. Even then, the Self and the Lord remain distinct – The Lord creates all beings and the Self does not.

Nevertheless, it’s extra tough to focus interest on the unmanifest Self. The goal of realizing the Self is reached with great difficulty, while being associated with a body. We are predisposed to consider our body as our Self.

Next, the Lord clearly asserts that He is always there for His worshippers.

## 12-6 to 12-7

[

yE tu sarvANi karmANi mayi saMnyasya matparA: |

ananyEnaiva yOgEna mAm dhyAyanta upAsatE || 6 ||

tEShAm aham samuddhartA mr'tyu samsAra sAgarAt |

bhavAmi na chirAt pArtha mayi AvEshita chEtasAm || 7 ||

]

[tu] Further, [yE] those who [mAm upAsatE] worship Me, [dhyAyanta] recollecting Me [saMnyasya] by dedicating [sarvANi karmANi] all activity [mayi] in Me - [matparA:] they have Me as their ultimate goal. [ananyEna Eva yOgEna] Their only motivation is to unite with Me.

[pArtha] Arjuna, [aham] I am [tEshAm] their [samuddhartA] savior [sAgarAt] from the sea [mr'tyu samsAra] of perishable material. [mayi AvEshita chEtasAm] For those who place their consciousness in Me, [bhavAmi na chirAt] I’ll be with them instantly.

Deciphering the Self is tough. Entrust yourself to the Lord – He accepts you directly.

The whole material world engages in activity. Activities such as eating are material activities, which are needed to sustain everyone’s journey in their body. Then there are activities prescribed to everyone - such as charity, rituals and meditation.

Those who dedicate all these activities to Me are the people who worship Me. They do so along with the dedication of their reasoning and intent. They are conscious about the true nature of the Self, desiring nothing but [union with Me](#Moksha), without attachment to other benefits.

They dedicate their thoughts to me with prayer, praise and worship, considering these activities themselves to be extremely enjoyable. Their performance itself is the benefit.

Without any delay, I will save them from all that prevents them from attaining Me. I will save them from the sea of this material world, which is bound by cycles of death.

## 12-8

[

mayi Eva mana Adhatsva mayi buddhim nivEshaya |

nivasiShyasi mayi Eva Ata Urdhvam na samshaya: || 8 ||

]

[Adhatsva] Station [mana:] the mind [mayi Eva] in Me alone. [nivEshaya] Keep [buddhim] your intentions [mayi] in Me. [ata: Urdhvam] After that, [navasiShyasi] you will be [mayi Eva] in Me alone, [na samshaya:] there is no doubt in this.

The Lord continues – I am the ultimate goal. I am achieved easily and quickly. Station your mind in Me. Settle down in My thoughts. Make Me your intent. Resolve that I am the highest among all achievements.

After that, you will be in Me alone - you will enter Me right after you resolve that I am the highest achievement and settle down in My thoughts.

## 12-9

[

atha chittam samAdhAtum na shaknOShi mayi sthiram |

abhyAsa yOgEna tata: mAmichChAptum dhananjaya || 9 ||

]

[dhananjaya] Arjuna, [atha] in case [na shaknOShi] you are unable to [samAdhAtum] contain and place [chittam] your mind [sthiram] firmly [mayi] in Me, [tata:] then [mAm Aptum ichChA] be with the desire to reach Me [abhyAsa yOgEna] through repeated practice, by making it a habit.

You may not be able to settle your thoughts in Me consciously, right at the first attempt.

In that case, do it through repeated practice by making it a habit. Make it a habit to enjoy My thoughts. It’s an enjoyment born out of love.

Enjoy repeatedly, while thinking about My natural, unlimited, unbroken expanse of qualities. Think of My qualities such as being ever-amiable, friendly, adoring, compassionate, delightful, grand, generous, beautiful, brave, being the Lord and the reason for everything. Within Me lies valor and the ability to overwhelm anything. I have all knowledge. My desires and intentions are always realized. I repel all flaws.

Generate love towards the Lord with repeated practice. With this, you fix your thoughts in the Lord and shall be with the desire to [achieve](#Moksha) Him.

## 12-10

[

abhyAsE api asamarthO\_si matkarma paramO bhava |

madartham api karmANi kurvan siddhim avApsyasi || 10 ||

]

[asamartha: asi] If you aren’t able [api abhyAsE] to practice as well, [bhava] be a person [matkarma parama:] who works for Me. [siddhim avApsyasi] You will attain the goal [kurvan] by doing [karmANi] your actions [madartham] for Me.

Even if you’re unable to practice My thoughts, be a person who works for Me. Do all activities out of great love for Me, whether it is construction of temples, gardens, lighting lamps, sweeping, sprinkling water, mopping, offering flowers, conducting prayers, chanting the name of the Lord, traversing a circumference around Him or bowing respectfully.

By doing everything out of great love for Me, you quickly gain the practice of being in My thought. You will station your consciousness in Me and reach the goal of [achieving Me](#Moksha).

## 12-11

[

athaitat api ashaktO\_si kartum madyOgam Ashrita: |

sarva karma phala tyAgam tata: kuru yatAtmavAn || 11 ||

]

[madyOgam Ashrita:] While being devoted to Me, [atha] in case [ashakta: asi] you are unable [Etat kartum api] to do this as well, [tata:] then [tyAgam kuru] leave [phala] the outcomes [sarva karma] of all actions. [yatAtmavAn] Be a person who perseveres.

While being devoted to Me, let’s say you’re unable to do this as well - meaning, you’re unable to work for Me with [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn). Let’s say you’re unable to cultivate unwavering love towards Me, being unable to constantly keep thinking of My qualities.

In case you are unable to do all of this, embrace the pursuit of the Self. This was described in the first six chapters. Such pursuit generates ultimate [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn). As described in those chapters, be without attachment to the outcome of all actions.

Your love towards Me gives rise to the intention of achieving Me, only when all flaws have withered away. Keep persevering, irrespective of your senses and their desires.

Do your activities without attachment to their outcomes. Do them solely as My worship. Such activities enable you to focus on the Self. With this focus, your ignorance and all other obstacles are removed.

You will realize that the Self exists for My purpose alone. With this realization of the Self in you, ultimate [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) comes forth by itself.

Further, this is summarized in Chap.18#46: 'A person achieves the goal by worshipping Him with his actions', going on to Chap.18#53: 'Being free of possessiveness, he gains peace and aspires to [achieve equivalence to the Lord](#Moksha). Once he achieves this equivalence, he gains joy. He is free from desire and sorrow. Considering everyone to be equal, he gains ultimate devotion to Me’.

## 12-12

[

shrEyO hi jnAnam abhyAsAt jnAnAt dhyAnam vishiShyatE |

dhyAnAt karma phala tyAga: tyAgAt shAntiranantaram || 12 ||

]

[jnAnam] Knowledge [shrEyO hi] is certainly superior [abhyAsAt] to mere practice. [dhyAnam] Focus [vishiShyatE] is special [jnAnAt] in comparison to knowledge. [dhyAnAt] Beyond such focus [karma phala tyAga:] lies the ability to leave the outcomes of our actions. [shAnti: anantaram] Tranquility results soon after [tyAgAt] such renunciation.

When it isn’t possible to adore the Lord or decipher the Self, [work without attachment](#karmayoga)

It’s extremely difficult to practice the Lord's thoughts without supreme love for Him. When compared to this difficulty, the quest for the true nature of the Self, followed by its realization is more effective in uplifting the Self.

Realization of the Self is tough as well, since the Self isn’t really evident to us. In comparison, the method of meditation - focusing thought on the Self to realize it - is special.

However, even this isn’t easy. In comparison, [working without attachment](#karmayOga_a_defn) is superior in its simplicity. Such work is a means to achieve the Self and the Lord.

People get rid of all flaws and gain tranquility by working without attachment to outcomes. In such a tranquil mind, they gain the ability to focus thoughts on the Self. With this focused thought, they gain the realization of the Self. Ultimate [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) comes from that realization.

In summary: Focusing on the Self is definitely recommended for those who aren’t capable of ultimate devotion. However, focus isn’t possible without a tranquil mind. In that case, it’s preferable to just work without attachment to outcomes - the knowledge of the Self is embedded in such work. This helps in achieving [the goal](#Moksha).

The next Shloka describes the admirable qualities of a person who is dedicated to [working without attachment](file:///D:\OneDrive\HTMLapp\karmayoga.html#karmayOga_a_defn) to outcomes.

## 12-13 to 12-14

[

advEShTA sarva bhUtAnAm maitra: karuNa Eva cha |

nirmamO nirahankAra: sama du:kha sukha: kShamI || 13 ||

santuShTa: satatam yOgI yatAtmA dr'Dha nishchaya: |

mayi arpita manO buddhi: yO madbhakta: sa mE priya: || 14 ||

]

[advEShTA] Without hatred [sarva bhUtAnAm] towards any being, [Eva] with only [maitra:] friendship [karuNa cha] and compassion, [nirmamO] without possessiveness, [nirahankAra:] without considering the body as the Self, [sama du:kha sukha:] with the same outlook towards comfort and discomfort, [kShamI] ever-forgiving, [satatam santuShTa:] ever content, [yOgI] being in touch with his Self, [yatAtmA] he exercises control over himself. [dr'Dhanishchaya:] Being firm in his conviction, [arpita] he dedicates [buddhi: mana:] his mind and intellect [mayi] in Me. [yO madbhakta:] Such a devotee of Mine [sa mE priya:] is dear to Me.

A devotee of the Lord has no hatred towards any being - including those who hate him and those who are unfavorable. Such a person knows that some will dislike him and be unfavorable sometimes. He considers it to comes from past misdeeds. The Lord wills them to behave this way.

Hence, he is friendly towards all beings, including those who are unfriendly and are seen to cause harm. He has compassion towards those who suffer.

He doesn't have any possessive feeling towards his body, his organs or anything related to them. Since he is without the confusion that his body is his Self, he has the same outlook towards comfort and discomfort - he is without ecstasy and agony in the presence of favorable and unfavorable sentiments that are willed by the Lord.

Even when this devotee encounters unavoidable forms and feelings, he doesn’t get agitated. He has an attitude of tolerance and forgiveness. He is cheerful, being content with whatever is obtained to sustain his body.

He is always in touch with his Self, constantly recognizing that it is different from the environment. He has control over his mind. He believes in scriptures that deal with the Self and Me.

He has dedicated his mind and intellect to Me. He has conviction that I am the One who is worshipped by [working without attachments](#karmayoga), knowing that he will realize the Self by this worship.

This devotee of mine, who worships Me with [karmayOga](file:///D:\OneDrive\HTMLapp\karmayoga.html#karmayoga), is dear to Me.

## 12-15

[

yasmAt na udvijatE lOkA:

lOkAt na udvijatE cha ya: |

harShAmarSha bhayOdvEgai:

muktO ya: sa cha mE priya: || 15 ||

]

[yasmAt] The person due to whom [lOkA:] people [na udvijatE] do not get agitated, [ya:] who [na udvijatE] doesn't get agitated [lOkAt] by this world, [ya: mukta:] who is free [harShAmarSha bhaya udvEgai: cha] from ecstasy, anger, fear and agitation - [sa mE priya:] Such a person is dear to Me.

In this Shloka, the Lord describes another kind of person who is dear to Him-

The world does not get agitated when this person [works without attachment](#karmayoga), simply being [the instrument](#_33) in an action.

This person doesn’t do anything to distress others. This person does not get agitated by the world. The world, having determined that he does no harm to anyone, will not do anything to agitate him.

This comes from the belief that nothing is adverse- everything happens for My purpose. With this, he is free of ecstasy, anger, fear or agitation towards anyone. This type of person is also dear to Me.

## 12-16

[

anapEkSha: shuchirdakSha: udAsInO gatavyatha: |

sarvArambha parityAgI yO madbhakta: sa mE priya: || 16 ||

]

[madbhakta:] A devotee of Mine [anapEkSha:] doesn’t expect anything. [udAsIna:] He is neutral, [shuchi:] clean [dakSha:] and diligent. [gatavyatha:] He is without agitation, [sarvArambha parityAgI] leaving the notion that he makes everything [happen](#happenings)- [ya:] such a person [sa mE priya:] is dear to Me.

My devotee has no expectation in anything other than the Self. He is clean, sustaining his body as per the rules laid down in the scriptures. He is diligent in his duties. He isn't worn out by cold, heat and other harsh experiences, which are unavoidable while discharging his duties. He remains neutral when subject to such experiences.

He doesn’t start any endeavor that is not part of his duty to worship Me.

Such a person is dear to Me.

## 12-17

[

yO na hr'Shyati na dvEShTi na shOchati na kAnkShati |

shubhAshubha parityAgI bhaktimAn ya: sa mE priya: || 17 ||

]

[ya:] Whoever [shubha ashubha parityAgI] leaves favorable and unfavorable experiences [na hr'Shyati] is not ecstatic, [na dvEShTi] doesn’t hate, [na shOchati] is neither sad [na kAnkShati] nor lustful. [ya: bhaktimAn] Such a devotee [sa mE priya:] is dear to Me.

Experiences that normally make humans happy do not affect a person who [works without attachment](#karmayoga). Neither does he experience hate, when deprived of such experiences. He is not saddened even when separated from loved ones or wealth – such experiences normally cause sorrow in humans. Neither does he lust for those experiences when deprived of them.

He has given up the distinction between the favorable and unfavorable, realizing that both good and bad perceptions are binding in nature. Such a devotee is dear to Me.

## 12-18 to 12-19

[

sama: shatrau cha mitrE cha tathA mAna apamAnayO: |

shItOShNa sukha du:khEShu sama: sanga vivarjita: || 18 ||

tulya nindA stuti: maunI santuShTO yEna kEnachit |

anikEta: sthiramati: bhaktimAn mE priyO nara: || 19 ||

]

[sama:] Being unbiased [mitrE] among friendly [shatrau cha] and unfriendly people, [tathA] as well as [mAna] in fame [apamAnayO:] and disgrace; [sama] being consistent [sukha du:khEShu] in comfort and discomfort, [shItOShNa] cold and heat; [sanga vivarjita:] being free of attachments;

[tulya nindA stuti:] treating praise and reprimand in the same way, [maunI] being silent, [yEna kEnachit santuShTa:] satisfied with whatever comes his way, [anikEta:] uninterested in establishing his residence and territory; [sthiramati:] being with conviction - [bhaktimAn nara:] this devotee [mE priya:] is dear to Me.

Starting with Chap.12#13, The Lord described the virtues of leaving hatred towards enemies and attachment to friends, along with other characteristics of a devotee. Though redundant here, the Lord emphasizes the virtue of 'being unbiased', even when in the company of desire.

In this Shloka, the Lord states- A person who has firm conviction in the Self is not bound by needs – such as the need to ‘belong’ to a place of residence. By the same conviction, he is unbiased in situations of fame and disgrace. Such a devotee is dear to Me.

This Shloka described a person who has focus on the Self. Next, the Lord summarizes the superiority of a devotee over this person, just as He did at the beginning of this chapter.

## 12-20

[

yE tu dharmyAmr'tam idam yathOktam paryupAsatE |

shraddadhAnA matparamA: bhaktAstE atIva mE priyA: || 20 ||

]

[tu] While all devotees are dear to Me, [yE bhaktA:] those devotees who [paryupAsatE] diligently practice [idam] this [dharmyAmr'tam] eternal duty of [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn), [matparamA:] considering Me to be the ultimate goal to be achieved [shraddadhAnA] with complete faith, [yathOktam] as described- [tE] they [atIva mE priyA:] are extremely dear to Me.

Adoring the Lord is special. Aspire to adore.

The practice of [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) is a duty that never perishes. This [devotion](#bhakti_a_defn) is equal to the goal it achieves - The Lord Himself. People who practice devotion were described earlier in this chapter, in [Chap.12#2](#_2): ‘Those who commit their mind in Me and worship Me - they are with Me always'.

The Lord concludes this chapter by saying- They are extremely dear to Me.