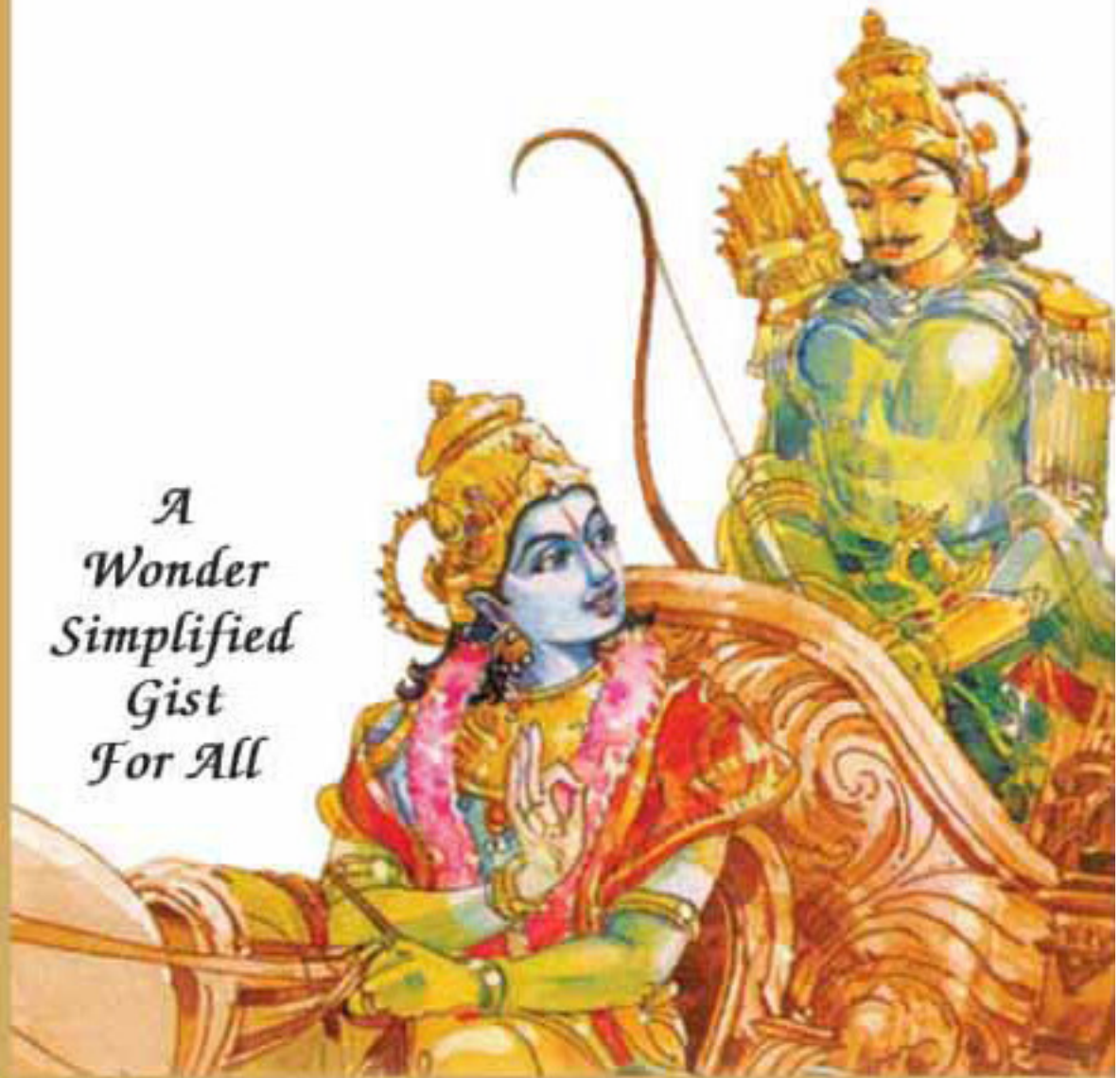


॥ Om Shri Paramatmaney Namah ॥

SAHAJA GITA

*A
Wonder
Simplified
Gist
For All*



ESSENTIAL GITA

॥ Om Śrī Paramātmānamah ॥

Sahaja Gītā

Essential Gītā—Simplified!

*Based on Paramśraddheya Swamiji Shri Ramasukhdasaji Maharaj's
Commentary on Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, 'Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī'*

tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva
tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva,
tvameva vidyā draviṇaṁ tvameva
tvameva sarvaṁ mama devadeva.

[O Lord! You alo-e are my mother, you alo-e are my father, You alo-e are my brother a-d frie-d. You alo-e are my k-nowledge a-d wealth. O Lord of Lords! You are everythi-g for me.]



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page No.
The Sublime Message of the Bhagavad Gītā.....	1
Chapter 1. Arjunaviṣādayogaḥ: The Yoga of Arjuna's Dejection.....	5
Chapter 2. Sāmkhyayogaḥ: The Yoga of Knowledge.....	9
Chapter 3. Karmayogaḥ: The Yoga of (Selfless) Action.....	16
Chapter 4. Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsayogaḥ: The Yoga of Knowledge and Selfless Action through Renunciation.....	21
Chapter 5. Karmasannyāsayogaḥ: The Path of Selfless Action through Detachment.....	26
Chapter 6. Ātmasaṁyamayogaḥ: The Yoga of Self-Discipline.....	30
Chapter 7. Jñāna-Vijñānayogaḥ: The Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom.....	35
Chapter 8. Akṣara-Brahmayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman.....	38
Chapter 9. Rāja-vidyā Rāja-guhyayogaḥ: The Yoga of Royal Mystic Knowledge.....	41
Chapter 10. Vibhūtiyogaḥ: The Yoga of Divine Glories.....	45
Chapter 11. Viśvarupadarśanayogaḥ: The Yoga of Vision of the Universal Form.....	48
Chapter 12. Bhaktiyogaḥ: The Yoga of Devotion.....	53
Chapter 13. Kṣetra-Kṣetraijñāvibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of Discrimination between the Field and the Knower of the Field.....	55
Chapter 14. Guṇa-traya-vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of Division of Three Guṇas.....	59
Chapter 15. Puruṣottamayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Supreme Person.....	62
Chapter 16. Daiva-Asura-Saṁpad-Vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Distinction between the Divine and the Non-Divine Attributes.....	65
Chapter 17. Śraddhā-Traya-Vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of Threefold Faith.....	68
Chapter 18. Mokṣa-Sannyāsayogaḥ: The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation Essence of the Gītā.....	70
Essence of Gita.....	78
Greatness of the Gita.....	82



The Sublime Message of the Bhagavad Gītā

This book is an English translation of the *Sahaja Gītā* which is based on an authoritative commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā* by Swami Ramsukhdasji, entitled ‘*Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī*.’ Drawing directly upon Swamiji’s comprehensive commentary, in the *Sahaja Gītā*, Śrī Rajendra Kumar Dhawanji has marvelously presented the complete message of the *Gītā* in an easy to understand narrative form. It follows the original text of the *Gītā* very closely and succinctly incorporates all the essential elements of Swamiji’s matchless commentary. In this respect at least, its English translation has been entitled as the ‘Essential Gītā.’

Swamiji’s magnum opus—*Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī*—was an undertaking of epic proportions which took more than ten years to commit to writing. It incorporates his key insights gleaned over a lifetime study of the *Gītā*. While narrating his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Swamiji often used to remark that it should be written in such a way that its readers should immediately be able to awaken to the knowledge of the Essential Reality (*tattva-jñāna*). All of Swamiji’s writings and discourses (*pravachans*) are marked by this blessed quality.

Paramśraddheya Swamiji Ramsukhdasji Maharaj was a remarkable saint of the modern era who devoted all his life in discovering how human beings can attain their supreme spiritual welfare (*param-kalyāṇa*) quickly and effortlessly. He delved deep and long into the bottomless ocean of the *Bhagavad Gītā* and extracted many unprecedented gems of rare firmament. He became a *sādhu* at the age of four and lived to the ripe age of past 100 years. His three books, *Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī*, *Gītā Prabodhani*, and *Gītā Darpaṇ*, represent some of the most comprehensive interpretations of the *Gītā* ever attempted. Such was Swamiji’s dedication to the *Gītā* that he kept on pondering over its import endlessly and kept on sharing his new insights till the very last moments of his life. It will not be an exaggeration to say that *Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī* is verily Swami’s Spiritual Testament for the seekers of all generations to come.

Swami Ramsukhdasji was a very unique (*vilakṣana*) saint. He was actually saints’ saint! He ceaselessly devoted all his waking hours pondering over the deep mysteries of the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* permeated in every atom of his body, mind, and soul. In our humble opinion, this kind of dedication to a single scripture has not been seen before! Swami Ramsukhdasji lived all his life utter selflessly, for his self had forever been subsumed in the Supreme Reality of *Vasudevā-Sarvam*. *Iss sant shiromaniji ko koṭī koṭī pranāms*: Hundreds and thousands of obeisances to this Saint Par Excellence!

At the conclusion of *Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī*, Swamiji had only this to remark about the final message of the *Gītā*: "Taking refuge in the Lord (*Śarṅāgati*) is

the quintessence of the entire message of the *Gītā*. In surrendering to the Lord lies the culmination of its teachings. The devotee who has taken refuge in the Lord accepts firmly the belief that **‘I am God’s and God is mine.’** Then the devotee becomes forever free from the pangs of fear, sorrow, and worry."

Three Disciplines-Yogas for Salvation—

There are only three disciplines or paths for the salvation of human beings—the Path of Action (*Karmayoga*), the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*), and the Path of Devotion (*Bhaktiyoga*). Besides these three, there is absolutely no other means of liberation—**‘na upāyah anyo asti kutrचित्’** (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.20.6). All other disciplines are implicit within these three. It is because human beings are endowed with three powers—power to do, power to know, and power to accept (or to believe). For the proper use of these powers, human beings are endowed with a physical body to ‘do,’ an intellect to ‘know,’ and a heart to ‘believe.’ *Karmayoga* is meant for the proper use of the power to ‘do;’ *Jñānayoga* for the proper use of the power to ‘know;’ and *Bhaktiyoga* is meant for the proper use of the power to ‘accept’ or to ‘believe.’ A person with penchant for actions is fit for *Karmayoga*; a person with penchant for discrimination is fit for *Jñānayoga*; and a person with penchant for feelings is fit for *Bhaktiyoga*.

There are verily three entities—the world (*jagat*), the self or the soul (*Ātman*), and God (*Paramātmān*). *Karmayoga* pertains to the world, *Jñānayoga* pertains to the self, and *Bhaktiyoga* pertains to God. Dedicating what we have received from the world—such as physical body, etc.,—in the service of the world without expecting anything in return, is called *Karmayoga* (*Gītā* 3.11; 4.23; 18.45). To sever one’s affinity with the objects that are transitory and fleeting by not identifying with them as ‘I’ or ‘mine,’ is called *Jñānayoga* (*Gītā* 3.27). Considering only God as one’s own and dedicating all undertakings and objects to God—and taking refuge in God—this is called *Bhaktiyoga* (*Gītā* 7.26-27; 18.66). *Karmayogī* severs relationship with the world through service; *Jñānayogī* severs relation with the world through renunciation (of doership); and *Bhaktiyogī* severs relation with the world by establishing relationship with, and surrendering to, the Lord.

The path of action (*Karmayoga*) and the path of knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) only accomplish the severance of affinity with inertness (*jadṭā*); one does not attain anything *per se* besides it. However, in *Bhaktiyoga*, one also attains to the Supreme Love of the Lord who is beyond the ken of inertness. That is why the path of action and the path of knowledge are considered verily to be of the same category—co-equal (*samakakṣa*)—that is, both of these paths are of the ‘worldly’ (*laukika*) nature; while the path of devotion (*Bhaktiyoga*) is beyond both of these paths—that is, it is of the ‘transcendental’ (*alaukika*) nature.

Through *Karmayoga*, one attains fulfillment in actions (*kṛt-kṛtya*)—that is, there remains nothing here for such a person to do. Through *Jñānayoga*, one

attains fulfillment in knowledge (*jñāt-jñātavya*)—that is, there remains nothing here for such a person to know. In *Bhaktiyoga*, one attains fulfillment in attainment (*prāpt-prāptavya*)—i.e., there remains nothing here for such a person to attain. Since God is the source of all, to know Him is to know all, to attain Him is to attain all.

Through *Karmayoga* and *Jñānayoga*, one attains salvation; and through *Bhaktiyoga*, one attains to the Love Supreme. If one is free from insistence on (and bias about) one's own spiritual discipline and one does not condemn other spiritual disciplines, then one verily attains to perfection in all the three paths by following any one of the three *Yogas*. Because after one has attained abidance in one's self, a fragment (*aṁśa*) naturally develops attraction (love) towards the Totality (*aṁśi*) or God. In the attainment of the Supreme Love only lies the fulfillment of human life!

God-realization is independent of instruments (*Karaṇa-Nirapekṣa*) or Inner Faculty (*Antaḥkaraṇa*)—

The spiritual discipline recommended by Swamiji has been termed as '*Karaṇa-Nirapekṣa Śailī*'—discipline independent of doing or creating something new through the use of 'senses' or other 'instruments' (*karaṇa*) of action or perception. God-realization (*tattva-jñāna*) is independent of senses or organs of perception (*karaṇa-nirapekṣa*)—for, it is realized by one's own self through the intense longing of one's own self. It is not a matter of 'creating' something new; it is a matter of 'discovering' something which is already there. To create or produce something new, efforts are required. But to discover something which is already there, one only has to 'turn and look towards it' and 'recognize' it as such. For, if realization of God also depended on creating something new, then it will also be like every other 'object' that is created and will be subject to the six 'modifications,' viz., birth, change, death, etc. Besides, all actions take place within the sphere of material nature (*Prakṛti*). They have a beginning and an end; so their results too are bound to have a beginning and an end. How can then a beginningless and endless God be realized through actions which have a beginning and an end? Thus, God-realization is a matter of 'recognizing' what 'IS,' a matter of attaining the ever-attained (*prāpta ki prāpti*). It is journey from 'here' to 'here.'

The Universality of the *Gītā*'s Teachings*

The message of the *Gītā* is for everyone who is interested in attaining spiritual freedom. The sole purpose of the *Gītā* is the salvation of all of humankind. Regardless of one's race, religion, or philosophical orientation, everyone can attain their spiritual welfare by following its simple teachings. In the following paragraphs, we will explain how one can practice the universal teachings of the *Gītā* while following one's own religious tradition or belief system.

* Based on an essay entitled '*Gītā ka Tātparya*' from Swami Ramsukhdasji's Hindi book, '*Jit Dekhun Tit Tu.*'

All theistic systems subscribe to a three-fold classification of the self, the world, and the Lord. The *Gītā* introduces a unique viewpoint that if someone does not believe in God, they too can seek their highest spiritual welfare by following the teachings of the *Gītā*! The *Gītā* teaches the great art of seeking the Highest Good in the ordinary practical matters (*vyavahār mein paramārath ki kalā*). It teaches us to perform our duties, in the spirit of detachment and sacrifice (*yajña*) for the mutual benefit of each other. By cherishing each other in this manner, we will attain the Supreme Good (BG 3.11). It further assures us that ‘by properly performing one’s duty, one attains perfection’ (*Gītā* 18.45). While many scriptures enjoin to renounce the world to attain God, the *Gītā* states that one can attain perfection by surrendering to God (who is the source of all creation and is all pervading) through the performance of one’s prescribed duty—*svakarmanā tam abhyarcya siddhiṁ vindati mānavaḥ* (*Gītā* 18.46).

The *Gītā* teaches us how to attain the highest spiritual good while interacting with the world. It is through performing all actions, without selfish motive and pride, and surrendering the results to God for the supreme welfare of others. When we fulfill all our allotted duties selflessly, remaining equanimous in success and failure, we attain the same goal (God-realization) that has been attained by sages and seers by undergoing years and years of spiritual regimen. In a seminal verse of the *Gītā* (2.48), Arjuna is advised to perform actions, renouncing attachment, by remaining steadfast in equanimity. This equanimity or even-mindedness is called *Yoga*. This discipline of equanimity, the supreme *Yoga* of the *Gītā*, is equally available to all seekers. Thus through equanimity, service, detachment, and surrender (to the Supreme), the *Gītā* teaches the art of spirituality while being deeply engaged in the worldly conduct.

The *Gītā* is a universally respected scripture. It is not interested in supporting or rejecting a particular philosophy or viewpoint. That is why we find numerous commentaries on it by the followers of various spiritual traditions. The Lord has said, ‘*Gītā meḥ hr̥ḍyaṁ Pārtha:*’ ‘O Pārtha, the *Gītā* is my very heart.’ It is gem of a scripture in which we can find the complete essence of the Path of Action (*Karmayoga*), the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*), and the Path of Devotion (*Bhaktiyoga*). In it, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has revealed the inmost spiritual secrets to his utmost dear friend and devotee, Arjuna. Such matters are not meant to be revealed to all and sundry. It is an endearing dialogue between two friends. It is a most profoundly mysterious scripture.

The spiritual aspirants are humbly requested to study this book perceptively so as to experientially realize the perennial truths enshrined herein.

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Sahaja-Gītā

Chapter 1

Arjunaviṣādayogaḥ: The Yoga of Arjuna's Dejection

After the expiry of twelve years of exile, and subsequent one year's incognito living period (*ajñātavāsa*), the Pāṇḍavas, according to the terms as agreed before, demanded half of their kingdom from Duryodhana. But Duryodhana flatly refused to give back the land even as much as the size of the tip of a needle (let alone half the kingdom) without waging a war! As a result, the Pāṇḍavas made the decision to engage in the battle according to the command of their esteemed mother, Kuntī. Thus the war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas became inevitable and, consequently, both sides began preparation for it.

The sage Veda Vyāsa had great affection for Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Due to that affection, he came to Dhṛtarāṣṭra and said: "The impending war, and the terrible carnage of warriors in it, is now inevitable; no one can avert it. If you want to see the battle with your own eyes, I can grant you the divine sight (*divya dṛiṣṭi*) by which you will be able to watch the battle properly, while sitting right here." Thereupon, Dhṛtarāṣṭra replied: "I have lived as a blind person all my life; now I have no desire to see the slaughter of my own family. But I want to hear the details of the war." Then Veda Vyāsaji said that 'I will grant the gift of divine vision to Sañjaya by virtue of which he will be able to know and relate all the details of the war, all its incidents, and even all the thoughts occurring in the minds of the warriors.' Saying so, Veda Vyāsaji endowed Sañjaya with the divine vision.

According to the fixed time, the war began in Kurukṣetra. Sañjaya remained on the battleground for ten days. When with arrows the great Bhīṣma had been dislodged from his chariot (and was lying on the bed of arrows), then Sañjaya came to Hastināpur where Dhṛtarāṣṭra was reigning and relayed the news. Hearing this, Dhṛtarāṣṭra felt deep sorrow and started bemoaning. Then he asked Sañjaya to narrate all the incidents of the war.

The epic of *Māhabhārata* consists of total 18 Parvas (books). There are many sub-texts within those books and 'Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā Parva' occurs within the 'Bhīṣmaparva.' It starts with the thirteenth chapter of Bhīṣmaparva and ends with its forty-second chapter. Till the twenty-fourth chapter of Bhīṣmaparva, Sañjaya narrates the war-related incidents to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* starts at the beginning of twenty-fifth chapter with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's question.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra asked Sañjaya: O Sañjaya! Gathered on King Kuru's austere soil

of Kurukṣetra, eager to fight, how did my sons and the sons of Pāṇḍu (Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas) engage in war? Tell me this in detail.

Saṅjaya said: When Duryodhana saw the army of the Pāṇḍavas drawn up for the battle, he became terrified and, approaching Droṇācārya, said the following words to him in order to provoke him against the Pāṇḍavas: ‘Master, behold Dhṛṣṭadyumna, who took birth just to kill you, standing right in front of you, as the army chief of the Pāṇḍavas. Therefore, fight with great caution. In addition to Dhṛṣṭadyumna, there are many other warriors arrayed for the battle on the side of the Pāṇḍavas—Yuyudhāna (Sātyaki), Virāta, Drupada, Dhṛṣṭaketu, Chekitāna, Kāśirāj, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, Śaibya, Yudhāmanyu, Uttamaujā, Abhimanyu, and the five sons of Draupadī (Prativindhya, Śrutakīrti, Śrutasoma, Śatānīka, Śrutasena). All of these warriors are *Mahārathāḥs*.*

After this, Duryodhana said: Like the army of the Pāṇḍavas, in our army too there are many *Mahārathāḥs*, such as Yourself, Pitāmahaḥ Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Kṛpācārya, Aśvatthāmā, Vikarṇa, Bhūriśravā, etc. And there are many other mighty heroes who have come to sacrifice their lives for me.† But listening to Duryodhana’s clever talk, Droṇācārya remained silent and said nothing.

Observing Droṇācārya’s silence, Duryodhana thought that even though I may praise my army superficially, in reality, our army is incapable of securing victory over the Pāṇḍavas whereas the Pāṇḍavas’ army is capable of securing victory over our army. [*Because Bhīṣma, the Commander-in-Chief of the Kauravas’ army, had the interests of both the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas at heart and wanted the welfare of both the sides; whereas, Bhīma, the Commander-in-Chief of the Pāṇḍavas’ army, had only Pāṇḍavas’ interest at heart.*] After having such thoughts in mind, Duryodhana, in order to please Bhīṣma outwardly, addressed all the *Mahārathāḥs* of his army, thus: ‘All of you do guard Bhīṣma the grandsire (Pitāmahaḥ) on all sides. And do keep this thing in mind that in no way Śikhaṇḍī• should come in front of Bhīṣma.

When Pitāmahaḥ Bhīṣma saw Duryodhana in such a deep sorrow, he gave forth a lion-roar and blew his conch, to please Duryodhana. Although Bhīṣmaji blew his conch only to please Duryodhana, yet the Kauravas’ army mistook it as an announcement for the beginning of the war. Therefore, in all of the Kauravas’ army, simultaneously, blared forth conches, kettledrums, drums, tabors, and trumpets. These trumpets produced a greatly tumultuous sound. Then, seated in

* The one who is proficient in both the weapons and scriptures (*śāstra aur śāstra*) and who can single-handedly direct ten thousand armed warriors, that brave one is called ‘*Mahārathāḥ*.’

† This is the basic difference between Arjuna and Duryodhana: Arjuna is afraid to kill; whereas Duryodhana is afraid to die.

• Śikhaṇḍī was a woman in the previous lifetime; and even in this lifetime, he was a woman before and became a man later on. Due to this reason, Bhīṣmaji used to consider him woman only and he had taken a vow not to engage in battle with Śikhaṇḍī. Śikhaṇḍī, by virtue of a boon of the Lord Śiva, was born to kill Bhīṣma only.

a great chariot, fastened with white horses, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna blew their celestial conches with great force. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa blew his conch called ‘Pāñcajanya;’ Arjuna blew his conch, called ‘Devadatta;’ Bhīma, his own called ‘Paundra;’ Yudhiṣṭhira, ‘Anantavijaya;’ Nakula, ‘Sughoṣa;’ and Sahadeva blew his conch called ‘Mañipuṣpaka.’ In addition, Kāśirāj, Śikhaṇḍī, Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, Sātyaki, Drupada, the five sons of Draupadī, and Abhimanyu also blew their respective conches. And the sound of trumpets of the Pāṇḍavas’ army created such a tumultuous impression that it rent asunder the hearts of the Kauravas.

[An important point to be noted here is that the sounds of trumpets etc. produced by the Kauravas’ army did not create any impression on the Pāṇḍavas but when Pāṇḍavas’ army blew their conches, their sound rent asunder the hearts of Kauravas. It is because the Pāṇḍavas had righteousness on their side while the Kauravas were fighting a battle of unrighteousness. Those who follow the path of righteousness, their hearts are strong. And those who follow the path of unrighteousness and sinfulness, their hearts are weak.]

When Arjuna saw his army ready with weapons, he too, summoning courage, took up his bow and addressed the following words to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who had agreed to be Arjuna’s charioteer: O, the Changeless One! Take my chariot between the two armies and keep it there until I have carefully surveyed the warriors with whom I have to engage in this battle, and until I have observed those who have come here to help the evil-minded Duryodhana.

Sañjaya said—After listening to Arjuna, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa drew up the chariot between the two armies, right in front of Bhīṣma and Droṇācārya, and told Arjuna: ‘O Pārtha! Behold these Kauravas assembled here [to fight].’* *‘Behold these Kauravas’*—these words of the Lord created a deep impression on Arjuna. Due to this impression, when Arjuna saw arrayed in both the armies, fathers and grandfathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons, friends, fathers-in-law, and well-wishers, it aroused deep pity in him. As a result, he waived from

* In the *Gītā Jñāna Parveśikā*, p. 2, Swami Ramsukhdaṣji says, “If the Lord had not drawn up the chariot in front of the great Bhīṣma and Droṇa, there would not have been any teachings of the *Gītā*!” Arjuna only wanted the chariot to be drawn up between the two armies. Bhīṣma was his grandsire and Droṇa was Arjuna’s teacher. Considering that now he had to fight with them, Arjuna became confused about his rightful duty. Had Śrī Kṛṣṇa drawn up the chariot in front of the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra instead, Arjuna would not have felt the anguish and the war would have started right away since he was indeed ready to fight with the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra! In that case, humanity would have been deprived of the sublime teachings of the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

In placing the chariot right in front of Bhīṣma and Droṇa, the Lord had a deeper purpose in mind: seeing Bhīṣma and Droṇa will trigger Arjuna’s latent sorrow and delusion (*śoka-moḥa*) and, consequently, he might become an aspirant (*jiñāsu*). And, through the medium of Arjuna, the great message of the *Bhagavad Gītā* can be delivered to dispel the delusion of human beings of all times to come. (*Gītā Prabodhani*, p. 9)

So, the 25th *śloka* of chapter one is very important and that is why chapter one, even though it does not contain any direct teachings of the Lord, is included in the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

his warrior-duty and there arose faint-heartedness in him. And with much grief in his heart, he spoke to Śrī Bhagavān: ‘O Kṛṣṇa! At the sight of these kinsmen assembled for war, my limbs give way, my mouth is parching, my whole body is shaking, and my body hair are standing on end. My bow, *Gāṇḍīva*, is falling from my hand, my skin is burning all over, and my mind is getting confused. Not only this, I cannot hold myself steady on the chariot. O, Keśava! I see bad omens that foretell inauspicious results in the future. And I do not foresee any good in killing my own kinsmen in the battle either. O Kṛṣṇa! I do not desire any victory, neither kingdom nor any pleasures. Under such circumstances, O Govinda! Of what use will the kingdom, or luxuries, or even life be to us? Those very persons for whose sake we desire kingdom, pleasures, and comforts are assembled here in the battlefield risking their lives and property. Teachers, uncles, fathers, sons, as well as grand-uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law, and other relatives—though they may kill me, I would not want to kill these kinsmen, even for the sake of sovereignty over the three worlds (heaven, earth, and netherworld); and much less for the lordship of this earth. Even if we achieve victory by killing these Kauravas, even then we will not enjoy peace of mind. Although, according to scriptures, no sin is incurred by killing an aggressor or desperado (*ātātāyee*),* yet, these Kauravas being our kinsmen, we will surely incur sin by killing aggressors such as Duryodhana, etc. Therefore, it does not behoove us to kill these Kauravas. Because, O Mādhava! How can we ever be happy by killing our own kinsmen?

O, Janārdana (Kṛṣṇa)! Although these people (Duryodhana, etc.), with their understanding clouded by greed, do not perceive the great evil in destroying their own race and in violence towards their own friends; yet, why should we, who see clearly the sin involved in the destruction of the family, not think of turning away from such a sinful act. We know very well that with the decay of a family, its agelong family traditions, values, and virtues also disappear. When traditional virtues get lost, vice takes hold of the entire race. When the inner sense or faculty (*antahakarana*) becomes impure and the intellect gets deluded due to the increase of vice (not doing what is worth doing and doing what is not worth doing), the women of the family become corrupt and with the corruption of women, O, Vārṣṇeya (descendent of Vṛṣṇi), there arises a mixing of castes (*varṇasaṅkar*).† There is no virtuous intellect in the offspring born of admixture of blood, damning the destroyers of race and the whole race itself. Due to lack of respect for the ancestors, the spirits of their ancestors, indeed, fall when they are deprived of the offerings of *piṇḍa* (rice-balls) and water. In this manner, due to defects born of admixture of castes, the caste-traditions

* One who sets fire, gives poison, is ready to kill with weapons in hand, is robber of wealth, is dispossessor of land (kingdom), and is abductor of woman—these six are called aggressors or desperados (*ātātāyees*).

† What we get by admixture of two opposing religions is called ‘*saṅkar*.’ An offspring born of parents who belong to different castes is called ‘*varṇasaṅkar*.’

of the killers of kinsmen get destroyed. O Janārdana! Those who have lost their religious traditions have to suffer pain in hell for a very long period of time. Thus we have heard from our respectable elderly teachers. It is a matter of great surprise and pity that we—knowing fully well virtue and vice, sinful and pious—have resolved, like an ignorant person, to commit a great sin (*of killing our own people*) to satisfy our lust for the pleasure of a kingdom! This is utterly inappropriate for us.’

After uttering these words, Arjuna declared his final decision: ‘I will not engage in the battle nor would I carry weapons. Even so if they (Kauravas) kill me, that killing will be very beneficial for me. Because by not engaging in the war, I will be saved from committing a great sin and my race will also not get destroyed.’

Sanjaya said: Having spoken thus, Arjuna, whose mind was completely overcome with grief, firmly resolved not to fight, cast aside his bow and arrows, and sank down on the middle part of his chariot.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 2

Sāṁkhyayogaḥ: The Yoga of Knowledge

Sañjaya said to Dhṛtarāṣṭra: Listen from me what Bhagavān Madhusūdana said reminding the despondent Arjuna, who was overwhelmed with grief and who could not even see properly because his troubled eyes were filled with tears.

Śrī Bhagavān said—‘O Arjuna! It is surprising, on such difficult occasion of war, whence has cowardliness come upon you in lieu of the enthusiasm? Such a cowardliness is not found in noble persons; cowardliness which neither bestows heaven nor any glory in this world. It is not a matter of virtue not to fight; rather it is impotency. And such a feeling of impotency is utterly unworthy for a valiant warrior like you. Not to fight betrays the weakness of your heart. Therefore, O Pārtha! Get up and, abandoning this lowly weakness of heart, get ready for the battle.

When Śrī Bhagavān scornfully commanded Arjuna to fight, Arjuna, all of sudden, said excitingly—O Madhusūdana! How can I shot arrows at Pitāmahaḥ Bhīṣma in whose lap I grew up, and Ācārya Droṇa, from whom I received my education, since both are worthy of our worship? [*The distinctive language of Śrī Bhagavān starts creating an impact on Arjuna and he says again to Śrī Bhagavān—*] ‘Although begging is forbidden for a warrior, yet I consider it

preferable indeed to live on alms rather than to enjoy the pleasures of this world after killing these noble teachers. For, if I kill them, I will not be able to enjoy the pleasures of this world because they will be stained with the blood of these elders. I am not even able to make up my mind whether I should fight or not fight. Nor do we know which will be better for us: whether we shall win in the war, or whether they shall conquer us. Arrayed against us stand the very family members, killing whom we should not even wish to live. Firstly, my warrior-nature has been overcome by faint-heartedness; and secondly my mind is confused about my duty. Therefore, I pray to You to tell me that which is decidedly better for me. I am Your disciple. Please instruct me who have taken refuge in You. Even after gaining an unrivalled and prosperous kingdom (on this earth) and sovereignty over the gods in heaven, I do not see a way out of my grief that is drying up my very senses.'

Sañjaya said—Having spoken thus to the *Antaryāmi* (indweller or inner-guide) Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna clearly said to Him, 'I will not fight,' and became silent. First, Arjuna, having taken refuge under Bhagavān, pleads to Him to instruct him. Then, before Bhagavān would even say anything, declares his verdict that 'I will not fight.' This made the Lord laugh; for, having taken the refuge, there remains no reason to think 'what I should or should not do.' Therefore, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as if smiling, addressed the following words to Arjuna who was filled with sorrow (at this juncture begins the supremely sublime message of the *Gītā*)—

O Arjuna! On one hand you speak words of wisdom while at the same time you have been grieving for those who should not be grieved for. The wise do not grieve for those who are dead nor for those who are living.

There are only two things in the world—the perishable body and the imperishable soul. The perishable has to perish and the imperishable never perishes; therefore, there is no reason to grieve for both of them. I, you, and these kings—our bodies were not there before birth, and (our bodies) will not exist even after death. But, as a soul, we were existent before (birth) and will remain so even after death. As a soul, we never perish. The physical body dies; the soul does not die, because the soul is a part of God. The change is taking place constantly in the body. Just as childhood, youth, and old age are the three states of (the soul experienced through) physical body, even so, attaining another body after death is also a state (of the soul). The 'states' change, but the 'self' or the 'soul' does not undergo any change. The wise person who knows this does not ever get confused about this (relationship between the physical body and the soul). For, the wise person has experienced this truth—that to be born and to die is not my nature, but the nature of the physical body. My life-span is beginningless and endless within which different bodies keep on being born and dying.

O Son of Kuntī! All objects of nature, through their favorableness and unfavorableness, give rise to feelings of pleasure and pain that are transitory and fleeting. O Bhārata (Arjuna)! Bear them patiently; that is, go beyond them since

you are their knower, and, therefore, separate from them. Therefore, you should not feel happy or sad based on their union and separation (*sanyoga-viyoga*). A wise person, who does not become happy or sad due to the presence or absence of the fleeting objects of the world, becomes worthy of immortality while still alive.

The unreal (physical body and the world) has no existence whatsoever; and the real (soul) never ceases to be. The real is ever-existent. Thus, the great Seers of Reality have been able to experience this truth that ‘there is nothing else besides One essential (existent) Reality.’ This whole world is pervaded by that One Essential, Indestructible Reality like the water in the ice. All these physical bodies are subject to destructibility; however, no one is capable of destroying this substance or entity which is immutable. Therefore, our ‘being’ is not dependent upon our physical body. We are not ‘affixed’ to our body. O Arjuna! Understanding the essence of the real and the unreal in this manner (that what is said to perish are the bodies assumed by the eternal, Imperishable spirit), and thereby relinquishing sorrow and worry, you should engage in the battle.

He who thinks the soul to be a killer or he who imagines that the soul is killed—both of them are ignorant of the soul’s true nature. In reality, this soul neither kills, nor is killed. The reason is that the soul is not a doer of any activity. To be born, to appear to be existent, to change, to increase, to decrease, and to die—these six modifications take place within the physical body and not within the soul or the self. Therefore, we lose nothing by losing the physical body. The one who knows thus has no reason (based on attachment or aversion) to kill or cause another to kill. As a person discards old and worn out clothes and takes other new ones, even so the soul, casting off worn out bodies, enters other new ones. We call ‘death’ the casting off of the old body and ‘birth’ the assumption of the new body. As we verily remain the same even after changing different clothes, even so we remain just the same self after assuming different bodies during several life-forms.

This soul can neither be cut by weapons nor burnt by fire; it cannot be made wet by water nor can wind dry it. The reason is that the soul is not an ‘object’ that can be cut, burnt, made wet or dry. No activity ever enters into it. The soul is eternal, all-pervading, immovable, constant, and everlasting. This soul is unmanifest (not capable of being seen with the gross sensory apparatus); incomprehensible (as a subject of thinking by the mind); and utterly immutable (incapable of undergoing any change or transformation under any circumstances). Therefore, knowing the soul to be so, it will be (your) utter ignorance to grieve about it.

O Mighty Armed Arjuna! If you should assume, contrary to the principle of indestructibility of soul as described above, ‘the soul to be subject to continual births and deaths;’ even then you should not grieve like this. For in that case, death is certain for the born and birth is certain for the dead—No one can avert

this law. Like a dream, all beings are unmanifest before birth and become unmanifest after death; they are only perceived as manifest during the intermediate period. It is a law—‘that which is not existent before (the beginning) or after (the end) is also non-existent in the interim.’ Even according to this viewpoint, there is no reason to mourn for any being.

This soul is distinctively marvelous, numinous essence; for it is beyond senses, mind, and intellect. That is why to know it, to describe it, and to hear about it, is unlike any worldly objects (of perception); rather, it (soul or self’s character) is utterly transcendental and marvelous. No one can know it even after hearing from scriptures, teacher, etc. It is verily known through one’s own self alone.

O Bhārata (Arjuna)! Know this to be conclusively certain that the soul can never ever be destroyed in any manner, nor can anyone ever destroy it. Therefore, you should not mourn for any living being.

(Other philosophical classics describe the eternal and the transient by using terms such as Brahman and Jīva, Self and non-self, Prakṛti and Puruṣa; but the Lord, in the above section, instead of using philosophical jargon, has used common terms that are within the range of experience of everyone: such as ‘śarīra-śarīrī,’ ‘deha-dehī’ (body and the indweller). It is because Śrī Bhagavān does not merely want to make us philosophically learned but to help us realize the Truth experientially.)

[Whatever Truth is realized through the discriminating reasoning about the real and the non-real, that very same Truth can also be realized by fulfilling one’s own natural or allotted duty. To explain this, Śrī Bhagavān says—] O Pārtha (Arjuna)! Considering the code of honor laid down for a person of warrior class (*Kṣatriya*), it is verily your innate duty (*svadharma*) to engage in the battle. Therefore you should not waver from your own duty; because for a *Kṣatriya* there is nothing more meritorious than a righteous war. This war has come upon you on its own (without any desire on your part). A warrior who dies fighting valiantly such a righteous war, for such a warrior, it (righteous war) presents an open door to heaven. Therefore, those warriors should consider themselves highly fortunate who happen to come upon this kind of righteous war. If you refuse to engage in this righteous battle, you will incur sin by abandoning your allotted duty as a warrior and lose your fame. Everyone will speak ill of you. For an honorable person, infamy is exceedingly more painful than death. Besides, the great warrior-chiefs will think that you have withdrawn from the battle through fear. Thus, you will fall to disgrace in the eyes of those warriors who once held you in high esteem. And your enemies, disparaging your strength, will say many unbecoming words. What can be more painful and shameful than this for you? Thus, there is only great benefit in engaging in the battle. If you are killed in the war, you will go to heaven; if you attain victory, you will enjoy sovereignty of the earth. Thus, both ways, it is a win-win situation for you. Therefore, stand up, Arjuna, with a definite resolve to fight.

[Śrī Bhagavān, teaching the art of Supreme fulfillment through secular behaviour, told Arjuna—] Fulfill your duty by engaging in the righteous war regarding alike victory and defeat, gain and loss, pleasure and pain. Fighting in this manner, you will incur no sin. This equanimity (*samatā*) can be attained both through the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) as well as through the Path of (selfless) Action (*Karmayoga*). I have already explained this equanimity according to the Path of Knowledge (involving discriminating reasoning regarding the body and the soul) [BG verses 2.11-2.30]. Now I will explain this equanimity (*samatā*) from the standpoint of the Path of (selfless) Action (*Karmayoga*), following which you will overcome completely the fetters of *Karma*. This equanimity has four glories: 1. Performing actions while established in equanimity, a person does not get entangled in the shackles of *Karma*; 2. There is no loss (forefeiture) of efforts directed towards attaining this equanimity; 3. There is no fear of adverse results due to any omission in following this path; and 4. Even a little observance of this practice saves one from the great fear (caused by the unending wheel of birth and death). In other words, even a little practice of this virtue of selfless actions grants liberation.

O Descendent of Kuru (Arjuna)! Equanimity (*samatā*) is the very expression of God. The one-pointed determination, in the form of unalterable equanimity, to attain God is called ‘*Vyavasāyātmikā Buddhi*’—the intellect resolutely directed towards only one entity, *viz.*, God. But those who do not have one-pointed determination, their intellect is ‘scattered’ in many directions, led by worldly desires. Such people remain completely immersed in the worldly desires. They look upon heaven as the goal supreme and regard the purport of the *Vedas* nothing beyond the attainment of the worldly pleasures and the heaven. They sing praises of those portions of the *Vedas* which describe the world and its riches and which lead to birth and death. Due to this, their minds are drawn towards worldly pleasures and such persons are deeply attached to the enjoyment of worldly pleasures and to the accumulation of worldly riches. To say nothing of the attainment of God, such people are not even able to ‘resolve’ one-pointedly for the attainment of God. Therefore, O Arjuna! By relinquishing the desire for the world, which is the function of the three *guṇas* (properties) of material nature, *viz.*, *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*, rise above it transcending the pairs of the opposites (such as pleasure and pain, etc.). Be established in the Eternal Supreme Self or Spirit (*Paramātma-tattva*). Have no desire for *yogaśema** and surrender unto God alone. Like one has little use for small pools of water in the presence of a large reservoir of water, even so the *Brahmajñāni* who has realized the Supreme Self (*Paramātma-tattva*) has as little use of (pious acts described in) the *Vedas*.

Your right is only to perform your allotted duty; that is, your right is for action alone. But you have no right whatsoever to the results thereof; that is, you are not free in this regard. Therefore, let not the fruits of action be your

* The attainment of what is unattained is called ‘*yoga*,’ and the protection of what is attained is called ‘*kṣhema*.’

motive, i.e, do not be the cause of the fruit of your actions through attachment (with the instruments of actions such as body etc.); nor let your attachment be to inaction (carelessness, laziness, etc.). It means that ‘doing’ is under our control; ‘happening’ is under the purview of *prarabdha* (earned destiny). Therefore, one should be ‘careful’ about what one ‘does’ and be ‘happy’ with whatever ‘happens.’

O Dhanañjaya (Arjuna)! By casting off attachment, be equanimous both in success and in failure. Then perform actions (duty) by remaining ever-established in equanimity. Equanimity (*samatā*) is called ‘*Yoga*.’ This even-mindedness in all actions is the superior attitude. Actions performed with a selfish motive are far inferior to this *Yoga* of equanimity. It is because equanimity leads to the attainment of God while selfish actions lead to (the unending cycle of) birth and death. Therefore, O Dhanañjaya! Remain forever established in equanimity since actions that bear fruit (and establish our relationship with body, etc.) are far inferior in nature. Established in equanimity, one becomes free from the bondage of both good and bad actions even during this very lifetime. Therefore, be established in this *Yoga* of equanimity; because this *Yoga* (of even-mindedness) in actions is an art in itself. That is, to remain even-minded both in success and failure of actions and in the attainment and non-attainment of the fruits thereof, is *skillfulness* (*kauśalam*) in actions, the wisdom in actions. Actions are not important; only the *Yoga* (*samatā*) in actions is important. It is because the wise seeker who is established in equanimity (*samatā*), becoming forever free from the cycle of birth and death and being detached from the world, attains to the blissful Abode Supreme (*Anamayam Paraṁpada*).

When your intellect has fully crossed the quagmire of delusion, you will then develop dispassion towards the enjoyments of this world and the next. When your intellect has overcome the bewildering scriptural differences of opinion (such as duality, non-duality etc.), and will become fixed on the thought that ‘I have to attain God only,’ then you will attain to the *Yoga*; that is, you will experience the ever-eternal union (*nityayoga*) with God.

Hearing this, Arjuna asks four questions to Śrī Bhagavān—O Keśava! What are the characteristic marks of a God-realized, steady in wisdom person (*sthitaprajña*). In what manner does that person speak, sit, and walk?

Although, Arjuna’s questions focused mainly on the activities of the person (steady in wisdom), but Śrī Bhagavān replies keeping in mind the feelings behind the questions; because, it is the intention (behind actions) which is the main thing. Śrī Bhagavān replied—

(*Answer to the first question—*) O Pārtha! When one completely casts off all the desires of the mind, content in the Self alone by the Self, then one is said to be established in steady wisdom.

(*Answer to the second question—*) The sage, whose mind remains unperturbed in sorrow; who, upon experiencing pleasures does not have a desire that ‘these

pleasures should remain intact and should continue,' such a discerning sage is said to be of steady wisdom. That person is said to be of steady wisdom who is free from attachment, fear, and anger in everything and who neither rejoices experiencing favorable situations nor laments while experiencing unfavorable situations.

(*Answer to the third question—*) That person is said to be of steady wisdom who withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, like a tortoise draws in its limbs on all sides. But merely withdrawing senses from their sense-objects is not a conclusive mark of a person of steady wisdom. It is because the aspirant, despite withdrawing the senses from their objects, may still have left a subtle relish to enjoy the sense pleasures. But the sage who has realized the Supreme Self or Spirit (*Paramātmā-tattva*), his longing for deriving pleasures from sense-objects disappears forever. It is because, while the subtle relish (for pleasures) remains, the turbulent senses, even of a wise man practicing self-control, forcibly carry off the mind toward sense-objects. Therefore, the aspirant practicing the discipline of selfless actions should, controlling the senses, surrender completely by devoting heart and soul to Me. The one whose senses are under control is said to have a steady mind. The one who is not surrendered to Me, his mind constantly dwells on sense-objects. Dwelling on sense-objects gives rise to attachment for them; attachment begets desires; and obstruction in the fulfillment of desires gives rise to anger. Anger gives rise to delusion; delusion leads to loss of memory (regarding seeking spiritual welfare); loss of memory leads to the destruction of reasoning power (to ponder over new thoughts); and with the loss of reason, one falls from one's status (as a human being). In this manner, led alone by indulgence in sense-objects, one goes to ruin by merely dwelling on the sense-objects.

(*Answer to the fourth question—*) One whose mind and senses are under control, who is free from likes and dislikes, such an aspirant attains tranquility of mind even while experiencing sense objects. It is because such a person, though making use of sense objects, yet does not indulge in them. With the attainment of tranquility of mind, all sorrows of such a person come to an end. And soon that person becomes firmly established in God. But a person whose mind and senses are not under control, such an undisciplined person does not have a resolved, one-pointed intellect directed towards the thought that 'I have to attain God only.' Lacking a determined, one-pointed intellect, such a person also lacks the high sense of duty and selflessness. Lacking a sense of selflessness (*niṣkāmbhāva*), one has no peace (craving being the root cause of lack of peace); and without peace, there can be no happiness. It is because the mind gets carried off by whichever one sense gets attached to its respective sense-object. And when the mind get occupied with the sense of importance of that object, then, like the wind that strays the boat away from its course, it strays the intellect of the aspirant away and turns it towards the indulgence of sense-pleasures. Due to this, the aspirant loses the one-pointed, determined intellect. Therefore, O Mighty-

Armed (Arjuna)! One whose senses are under complete control, in whose mind and senses there remains no attraction for the (conditioned) world, such a person has a steady mind.

One whose mind and senses are not under control, who is attached to sense-indulgence, such a person's night (of turning away from God-realization), is like day-light for a self-controlled person, for such a person is awake (to God-realization). But a person who is engaged in sense-indulgence, such a person's day-light (of transient worldly matters) is like the darkness of night for the contemplative and disciplined aspirant. As the waters of different rivers enter the ocean, which though brimming on all sides remains undisturbed, even so all worldly enjoyments course through a God-realized, disciplined person without producing any disturbance (of happiness and sorrow) in that person. Such a desireless person attains to Peace Supreme. But he who has thirst for enjoyment, no matter how much worldly objects he gets, never attains peace. Therefore, one who has given up all desires, moves about free from longings (*spṛhaḥ**), and who is free from the sense of "I" and "mine," attains peace. This is the *Brāhmī sthitiḥ*, the state of a God-realized person, attaining which one is never deluded again. Even if one is established in this state only during the last moments of one's life (that is, even if one becomes free from attachments and the sense of "I" and "mine" during the last moments), one attains *Brahma-nirvānaṃ*—*Bliss of God—the state of Supreme Peace, free from the cycle of birth and death (Mokṣa)*.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 3

Karmayogaḥ: The Yoga of (Selfless) Actions

This is true that by insisting on keeping one's own viewpoint, one is not able to understand properly the true import of speaker's words. Arjuna too, by insisting on not to engage in the battle, was not able to understand properly the true spirit of Śrī Bhagavān's instruction. That is why, he asks Śrī Bhagavān—'O Janārdana (Kṛṣṇa)! If You consider the Knowledge superior to Action, why then do You, O Keśava, urge me to engage in this dreadful action (instead of exhorting me to follow the Path of Knowledge). My mind is getting confused by listening to your seemingly conflicting words; due to which I am not able

* After abandoning desires, for the maintenance of the physical body alone, there verily remains need for some object, person, thing, etc. This is called '*spṛhaḥ*.'

to determine for sure whether I should engage in actions or, by abandoning actions, take recourse to (the path of) knowledge. Therefore, pray tell me one definite path by which I may obtain my supreme spiritual welfare.’

Śrī Bhagavān said—‘O Sinless One! In the past, two *'laukika'* (worldly) discipline has been taught by me in this world—*Jñānayoga* (the Path of Knowledge) and *Karmayoga* (the Path of Action). *Bhaktiyoga*, the Path of Devotion, is a *'alaukika'* (transcendental) path. In both of these disciplines,* it is necessary to engage in actions. It is because the aspirant does not attain freedom from the bondage of actions merely by giving up actions. In reality, it is not possible to give up actions completely because, as long as the sense of “I” and “mine” remains, no one can even for a moment remain at all without performing actions. That deluded person, who outwardly restraining the senses forcefully, considers himself actionless, while mentally dwelling on the objects of sense, is called a hypocrite. That is, no one can attain actionlessness (*naiṣkarmya*) merely by giving up actions outwardly. But O Arjuna! One who controlling the senses fulfills one’s allotted duty selflessly, such *Karmayogī* is considered excellent. Therefore, you should fulfill your allotted duty according to your status in society and stage in life; because performance of actions is superior to inaction. Without the performance of actions, even the bare maintenance of your physical body will not be possible.

Performance of one’s proper duty is verily a *'yajñā'*—an action performed in a spirit of sacrifice, for the sake of the Divine. One who does not fulfill one’s allotted duty in a spirit of sacrifice (*yajñā*)—in other words, one who does not perform actions for the well-being of others but for one’s own selfish interest, such a person verily gets bound by actions. Therefore, O Son of Kuntī! Perform your proper duty for the benefit of others. Brahmā, the Lord of Creation, at the beginning of the creation, having created persons with ability for dutiful actions and those possessing discriminating reasoning, said to them that ‘You should usher universal prosperity through dutiful actions. This way you will keep receiving the required means for the performance of dutiful actions. Nourish the gods through your actions (performed in a spirit of sacrifice, as *yajñā*) and may the gods bless you with prosperity. By cherishing each other in this manner, you

* Both the disciplines—*Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga*—belong to the same category (*samakakṣa*). Even though in *Jñānayoga*, there is a prominence of discriminating logic (*viveka*); and in *Karmayoga*, there is a prominence of activity (*kriyā*), still both are identical in their results (BG 5.4-5). Here a doubt may arise that, in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, there are only two acceptable disciplines—*Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga*. According to Swami Ramsukhdaṣṭi, “Both *Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga* are disciplines that are of *sādhaka*’s own; whereas *Bhaktiyoga*, rather than being of *sādhaka*’s own discipline, is God’s own—since in *Bhaktiyoga*, the *sādhaka* is dependent upon God.” Swamiji also used to say that both *Jñānayoga* and *Karmayoga* are “*laukika*” (worldly) disciplines in the sense that both of them fall within the sphere of human knowledge. *Bhaktiyoga*, on the other hand, is “*alaukika*” (transcendental) discipline since God is not a matter of knowledge but a matter of faith (*Bhagavān jānaney ke nahin, mānaney ke viṣay hein*).—*Gītā Prabodhani*, special edition, pp. 70-71.

will attain the Highest Good. Fostered (or pleased) by sacrifice (*yajñā*), the gods will surely grant you unasked all the required means for the fulfillment of your allotted duties. One who enjoys the gifts bestowed by the gods without giving them back (in selfless service to all), is indeed a thief. It is because our physical body etc.,—all what we have, we have received it from the world. To use what we have received from the world only for the fulfillment of one's selfish motive, is not honest.

One attains *Yoga*—equanimity (*samatā*) by fulfilling one's duty in a selfless manner. This *Yoga* is verily '*yajñā-śeśa*'—partaking of what is left after performing selfless duty (as an offering to gods—as a *yajñā*). One, who is able to experience this '*yajñā-śeśa*,' gets liberated—having been absolved of all sins. But that sinful person, who does not apply what has been received from the world in the service of the world but uses it for self-gratification instead, such a person earns nothing but sin only.

The *Vedas* emanate from God. The *Vedas* prescribe the procedure for the performance of dutiful actions. Human beings should fulfill their allotted duties in a proper manner. Performance of prescribed duties selflessly for the sake of the Divine leads to *yajñā*. Rain ensues from *yajñā* (sacrifice); food is produced by rain; all living beings are born from food. And out of those very living beings, human beings perform *yajñā* by fulfilling their dutiful actions. In this manner, the wheel of creation is set in motion and world's pattern of mutual dependence is maintained. God, despite being all pervading, is especially present in the *yajñā* (of allotted duty). Therefore, a human being, by selflessly fulfilling his allotted duties, is able to attain God in an easy manner. O Son of Prithā! One who does not fulfill one's duties according to this wheel of creation and remains immersed in sense-indulgence, that sinful person lives in vain in this world. That is, if one does not provide happiness to the creation by fulfilling one's duties, one should at least make sure not to inflict any pain. *[As an entire bullock cart feels the jerk when any one of its wheels is broken, even so the entire Wheel of Creation feels the adverse effect whenever even one human being falls away from his allotted duty. On the contrary, even when one diseased part of the body gets healed, it spontaneously leads to the well-being of the entire body; just so, the entire creation spontaneously benefits even when one person fulfills one's prescribed duty properly.]*

One who has severed his relationship with the world by fulfilling one's duty, such great person (a perfected *Karmayogī*) gets fulfillment and contentment, not from the world, but from the abidance in the real Self (*svarupa*). For such a great person, there is nothing left here that needs to be done, or to be known, or to be attained. In this world, he has no interest whatever to gain by the actions done nor any in the actions not done. Such a person has no selfish relationship whatsoever with any living being or object. Therefore, you too, without attachment, perform always the work that must be done; for man attains to the

Highest (i.e., God) by performing actions without attachment.

The path of self-less actions (*Karmayoga*) is an independent discipline for the attainment of God. By performing actions while remaining unattached (path of *Karmayoga*) and while living the life of a householder, many great individuals, like Janaka,* have attained God; for they reigned to serve others and not for their own happiness or comfort. Therefore you too should act without attachment to set an ideal example for others and to be a role-model. It is because common people look up to with respect and follow the standards set by the noblest persons in a society or a community. O Pārtha, although, in all the three worlds,† there is nothing for me to be done, nothing unattained to be attained, and yet I still do continue to be engaged in performing actions for the welfare of the world. For, O Pārtha (Arjuna), if at any time, I do not continue in action vigilantly, these worlds will fall in disarray; and everyone, following my example, will go astray (i.e., abandon their dutiful-actions) which will lead to their downfall. And I shall become the source of intermingling of castes, and shall be destroying these beings. It means that intermingling of castes (*varṇasaṅkarasya*)• ensues due to non-fulfillment of duties. Therefore, you should also fulfill your duty in a steadfast manner.

O Bhārata! Just as the ignorant (unwise) perform actions, attached to their actions, so should the great enlightened ones act, but without attachment, selflessly for the well-being (welfare) of others. A wise person should not create any disturbance in the minds of the ignorant who are engaged in performing their actions (with attachment); instead, the wise person, diligently performing the allotted duty, should set an example to inspire the ignorant ones to perform their duty (without attachment). Attachment is the cause of bondage, not the actions.

All actions are performed in every way by the interplay of three properties or modes (*guṇas*) of material nature (*Prakṛti*)—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—and by the body, mind, senses, etc., born of material nature. No action or activity takes place within the ever-conscious self or soul. But the ignorant person, by identifying with the ‘ego’ (*ahamkāra*)—a part of the inner organ of perception (*añtāhakarāṇa*)—creates a sense of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ in the body and considers himself to be the ‘doer’ (that ‘I’ am the ‘doer’) of all actions performed through

* Janaka was the king of Mithilā—the legendary sage and philosopher-king frequently mentioned in *Upaniṣads* and other scriptures. He appears variously as *jīvanmukta* (liberated-in-life) in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (organizer of the famous philosophical debate between Gargi and Yajñavalkya) and *Aṣṭavakra Gītā* (as a disciple of legendary sage, Aṣṭavakra). And also as a father of the esteemed Sita, the wife of Lord Rāma. In one of the *Purāṇs*, we also read that the great seer Śukadeva, son of Veda Vayāsa, went to King Janaka to get confirmation of his realization. However, it is hard to determine if it is the same Janaka that appears variously in all these myriad contexts! More likely, Janaka is a designation (*padavi*), an archetype, representing all sages and realized beings.

† That is, the earth, the heavens, and the netherworlds.

• Please see the footnote on page

the body. O Mighty-Armed One! The one who has attained God—that is, who has realized the essential Truth about the modes of nature and action, and what is distinct from them—such an enlightened person has no relationship whatsoever with the body and the activities performed through the body. Therefore, such a person does not get attached (to actions) by realizing that ‘it is the *guṇas* that are acting on the *guṇas*’—that is, all actions are generated within the inert-Matter (*jaḍa-Prakṛti*) through the interplay of the three *guṇas*. Those who are deluded by the *guṇas* born of nature (*Prakṛti-jañay-guṇas*), such ignorant ones remain attached to these modes and actions prompted by these modes (*guṇas*). The enlightened person should not unsettle the minds of the slow-witted, who are engaged in performing wholesome actions motivated by personal gain.

O Arjuna! Having pondered over this diligently with your mind fixed in the Self, dedicate all actions and objects to Me. That is, not considering the actions and objects to be for yourself, consider them to be for Me alone. Then engage in the performance of your allotted duty of war with a mind that is free from desires, egoism, hatred, or excitement. Those who follow My teachings with a non-captious and devout mind—that is, those who do not consider anything such as the physical body etc., as theirs—are released from the bondage of all actions. But those illogical people who are totally immersed in all kinds of worldly knowledge and who, finding fault with my teaching fail to practice it, consider them to be lost. They will remain caught up in the unending cycle of births and deaths.

All living beings act according to their own nature governed by likes and dislikes. Even a wise person also acts in accordance with his own nature; but his nature is ever-pure, free from personal likes and dislikes. All beings follow their nature; what can then restraining one’s nature stubbornly accomplish? Feelings of attraction and repulsion (*rāga-dveṣa*) arise due to senses coming in contact with their objects in an agreeable or disagreeable manner respectively. But a person should not act impelled by the feelings of attraction and aversion; for both attraction and aversion are enemies on one’s way to spiritual freedom.

Howsoever perfect and easy another person’s duty (*dharma*) may seem outwardly, and howsoever imperfect one’s own duty (*svadharma*) may seem outwardly, still one’s own duty is far better and superior to another’s duty. Even death in the observance of one’s own duty leads to one’s spiritual welfare, whereas following another’s duty ultimately leads to fear and (the cycle of) birth and death.

Why doesn’t a person fulfill one’s own duty, knowing well that following one’s own duty leads to welfare and following another’s duty brings fear? Arjuna asks a question regarding this—‘O Descendent of Vārṣṇeya (Śrī Kṛṣṇa)! While a thoughtful person does not want to commit sin, even then one gets involved in the evil, as though, driven by some force. What is it that prompts a person to engage in the evil?’

Śrī Bhagavān said—The desire for accumulation of worldly objects and the

lust for enjoyment of sense-pleasures prompt a person to engage in the evil. This desire (or lust) is born of *rajoguna* (the quality of passion). Desire, when interrupted, leads to anger. This desire is insatiable, no matter how many objects one obtains. It is the root cause of all sins. Therefore, recognize this desire to be your enemy, and not your friend. As fire is covered by smoke, mirror is covered by dust, and embryo by the amniotic sac, even so *viveka* or discriminating wisdom is covered by this desire. O Son of Kuntī! Just as the fire never gets quenched by adding *ghee* (clarified butter) in it but keeps on rising; even so, despite obtaining the sense-objects, the lust for them never gets appeased. Rather, as one keeps on getting the objects such as wealth etc., the desire for them also keeps on increasing simultaneously. Therefore, this desire that overcasts the discriminating wisdom is verily like an eternal enemy of the wise.

To destroy an enemy, it is necessary to know first the places where the enemy lives. Therefore, I will now tell you the places where the desire tends to reside. Desire is said to reside in the senses, mind, and intellect. Through these three, the desire overcasts the wisdom and deludes the embodied soul (the one who considers the body as ‘I’ and ‘mine’). Due to which, such a person is unable to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong. Therefore, O Best of Bhāratas! You must first subdue your senses and then kill this evil thing (desire) forcibly which obstructs the discriminating Wisdom (*vivekajñāna*) and the Knowledge of the True Reality (*tattvajñāna*). The senses are said to be higher (or subtler) than the physical body; the mind is higher than the senses; the intellect is higher than the mind; and the desire is higher than the intellect. This desire resides in the ego-Self. Therefore, knowing the principal seat of desire to be the ‘Self,’ subduing the self (mind/intellect) by the Self (by severing the relationship with the world), O mightly-armed, Arjuna, vanquish this enemy in the form of desire that is hard to overcome with the knowledge of the Self. It is because as long as there remains any relationship with the world, till then only is the existence of desire. As soon as the relationship with the world is severed, all the desires come to an end.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 4

**Jñāna-Karma-Sannyāsayaḥ: The Yoga of
Knowledge and Selfless Action through Renunciation**

Śrī Bhagavān said—The *Karmayoga* that I have taught you (in the second

and third chapters) is not something new. Rather, it is eternal. First, I revealed this imperishable *Karmayoga* to the Vivasvān (Sun-God). Then, the Sun-God taught this to his son, Manu; and Manu taught it to his son, Ikṣvāku. All these kings attained God through *Karmayoga* while leading the life of a householder. Thus, O Parantapa! This tradition of *Karmayoga* was transmitted in succession among the royal sages (*Rājarṣis*). But after a long lapse of time, that *Karmayoga* became lost to the world. You are My devotee and a dear friend; so I have imparted the very same ancient *Karmayoga* to you. For, this (Yoga) is the supreme secret.

After listening to Śrī Bhagavān, Arjuna became curious as to how Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is presently sitting in front of me, could have imparted this teaching at the beginning of creation to Sun-God. Therefore, Arjuna asks Śrī Kṛṣṇa—‘Your birth (*avatār*) took place recently at Vāsudevaji’s house, while the birth of Sun-God is very ancient. How then am I to understand that You taught this *Karmayoga* to Sun-God in the beginning of creation?’

Śrī Bhagavān said—‘O Parantapa, Arjuna! You and I have passed through many births. I know them all, but you do not. But there is a great difference between my birth and yours. It is because I am not subject to births and deaths like common people. Although ‘birthless,’ I manifest Myself; and although ‘deathless,’ I become unmanifest. Though I am the Lord of all living beings, yet, by subduing my own Nature (*Prakṛti*), I manifest myself through my divine potency (*yogamāyā*), and engage in myriad divine sports. O Bhārata! Whenever righteousness is on the decline and unrighteousness is on the rise, I assume physical form (incarnate Myself) to save people from spiritual degeneration. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the proper establishment of righteousness (*Dharma*), I come into being in age after age. O Arjuna! My birth and actions are divine. One who knows in essence the divinity of my birth and actions—that is, accepts them steadfastly—is not born again after leaving the body, but attains to Me. [*Śrī Bhagavān incarnates in human form for the welfare of all living beings and remains unattached even while doing all the activities. Likewise, human beings should cultivate a feeling of well-being toward all beings and perform all actions unselfishly in an unattached manner—to know this is verily to know the divinity of Lord’s birth and actions in their true essence.*]

Not to consider imperishable things as ‘one’s own’ and ‘for oneself’ is (to perform) the penance of wisdom (*jñāna-rupa tapa*). Purified by the fire of Knowledge, and forever free from attachment, fear, and anger, many devotees—totally dependent upon and absorbed in Me—have attained My being even in the past. O Pārtha! In whatsoever manner devotees worship Me—with whatever feeling and relationship they take refuge in Me—in that same manner do I respond them. Verily, all human beings follow My path in every way. Therefore, human beings should approach all relationships in the world in the similar manner:

Whosoever approaches them with whatever relationship in mind, they should respond accordingly and serve them with unselfish motive (*niṣkāmbhāva*). Despite My compassionate nature, not all people take refuge in Me. It is because, in their hearts, there remain hidden myriad worldly desires, for the fulfillment of which they turn to the worship of various deities instead of Me. It is because in the human world, one quickly attains (material) success born of such actions.

In the beginning of creation, based on the division of qualities and actions of human beings, I create a fourfold system of society, *viz.*, the *Brāhmin*, the *Kṣatriya*, the *Vaiśya*, and the *Śūdra*. Even though I am the creator of all this, you should know Me as one who eternally does no act. Since I have no desire for the fruit of actions, I am not bound by actions. ‘That the Lord, having neither the sense of doership nor any desire for the fruit of actions—out of sheer compassion to free living beings from the bondage of actions and for their spiritual welfare—still undertakes the work of creation, etc.,’—he who knows Me thus in essence, relinquishing the sense of doership and desire for fruits (of actions), does not get bound by (the results of) actions. Relinquishing thus the sense of doership and desire for results, the ancient seekers after liberation also performed their dutiful actions and attained liberation (*mokṣa*). Therefore, you too should perform your prescribed actions as they have done in the former times.

What is action? What is inaction?—even the learned are bewildered in determining the truth about this. Therefore, I will tell you the true nature of both (action and inaction), knowing which, you will become free from the cycle of birth and death while engaged in actions. To perform actions while remaining unattached is to know the truth about ‘action.’ To remain unattached while performing actions is to know the truth about ‘inaction.’* To give up both the desire for as well as the actions that are prohibited by the scriptures is to know the truth about ‘*vikarma*’ (forbidden action). In this manner, the truth about action, inaction, and forbidden actions should be known. Even the learned are perplexed in determining the true nature of these three types of actions. Profound indeed are the ways of action. One who sees ‘inaction in action’ (that is, remains unattached while performing actions or not performing actions), and ‘action in inaction’ (that is, performs or does not perform actions while remaining unattached)—that person is indeed wise among all human beings; that person is indeed a *yogī*, and performer of all actions. For such a *Karmayogī*, there is verily nothing left to do, to know, or to attain. He has achieved everything.

All actions performed by the great person perfected in *Karmayoga* are free from self-centered desire and purpose. Actions are related to the physical body and the world, and not to the real self (*svarupa*)—In this fire of knowledge,

* At first reading, these two sentences may appear to be the same. However, there is great difference between them. The first sentence describes the state of a *sādhaka* (seeker) and is marked by the primacy of ‘action.’ The second sentence signifies the state of a *siddha* (perfected being) and is marked by the primacy of ‘*nirliptatā*’ (the state of being unattached).

whose actions have been consumed (since the actions have lost their result-generating, binding power)—even the wise call that person a sage. That is, such a *Karmayogī* is the wisest of the wise. One who gives up attachment to actions and to results thereof; who does not depend upon any object, person, etc.; and who, being desireless, remains ever-content; such a person indeed does not do anything at all even though fully engaged in actions. All actions of such a person become inactions.

That *Karmayogī* aspirant (*nivṛtti-parāyan*: abstention-prone) whose mind and self are properly controlled, and is totally without possessions and have abandoned the desire for objects of sense-pleasures, such *sādhaka*, while doing actions merely for bodily sustenance such as eating and drinking, defecating and bathing, etc., incurs no sin. That *Karmayogī* (*pravṛtti-parāyan*: activity-prone) who is content with whatever comes without any effort; free from jealousy toward any being; beyond the pair of opposites such as happiness and sorrow; even-minded in success and failure—such a person, though acting, is not bound by actions. The *Karmayogī* who is devoid of all attachment in the world, who is liberated with mind always established in Self-knowledge—that is, who has experienced abidance in *svarupa* (Self)—and who performs actions unselfishly for the benefit of others, all actions of that person get dissolved entirely (without producing any result).

[To perform dutiful actions unselfishly for the benefit of others is called sacrifice—‘Yaṁnā.’ By virtue of ‘Yaṁnā,’ all actions become inactions—that is, they do not bind. Now the Lord describes twelve different types of Yaṁnā according to differences in interest, faith, and competence of the seekers—]

1. Brahma Yaṁnā—The ladle (with which the oblation is poured into the fire) is Brahman; the objects that offered as the oblation are also Brahman; the performer of *yaṁnā* is Brahman; the fire in which oblation is given is Brahman; the act of pouring the oblation (into the fire) is also Brahman—one who is in this manner absorbed in Brahman, verily attains Brahman alone. That is, to experience, as Brahman, each action in the form of doer, instrument of action (*karan*), activity, objects, etc., is *Brahmayāṁnā*.

2. Bhagavadarpaṇarūpa Yaṁnā—Considering all activities and objects as God’s only and for God only.

3. Abhinntārūpa Yaṁnā—Merging with God (Supreme Spirit) by forever turning away from untruth; that is, not to have one’s own existence as separate from God.

4. Saṁyamarūpa Yaṁnā—Not letting one’s senses get engrossed in sense-objects during solitude (through self-restraint).

5. Viṣya-havānarūpa Yaṁnā—In practical affairs, when senses come in contact with sense objects, being free from the feeling of attraction and aversion.

6. Samādhirūpa Yaṁnā—Along with mind and intellect, restraining all functions of senses and vital breath, and getting established in meditative

absorption (*samādhi*) kindled by Knowledge.

7. Dravya Yaṅnā—To dedicate all objects selflessly in the service of others.

8. Tapo Yaṅnā—To endure joyfully all difficulties encountered in the fulfillment of allotted duties.

9. Yoga Yaṅnā—To remain even-minded in success and failure and in the receipt or non-receipt of the results of actions.

10. Svādhyāyarūpa Yaṅnā—To study the scriptures and to enshrine their truth in one's heart; and to chant divine names (*nāma-japa*) etc. for the welfare of others.

11. Prānāyāmarūpa Yaṅnā—Practicing *Prānāyāma* in the form of *puraka* (to take the breath 'in'), *kumbhaka* (to 'stop' the breath after breathing it in), and *rechaka* (to breath 'out').

12. Stambhavṛtti (chatūratha) Prānāyāmarūpa Yaṅnā—While taking a regulated diet, stopping the passage of *prāna* and *apāna* at their respective places.

Seekers who engage in the above-mentioned spiritual practices, all of their sins get destroyed and they attain God (Supreme Spirit). O Best of the Kurus, Arjuna! The performer of *yaṅnā* becomes immortal and attains the eternal Brahman. But a person who does not perform *yaṅnā* (sacred sacrifice)—that is, one who does not fulfill one's duties—finds no peace even in this world, let alone in the other world (*parloka*). In addition to the twelve types of sacrifices (*yaṅnās*) as mentioned above, many more different types of *yaṅnās* are explained in detail in the *Vedas*. Know them all to be born of action. But he who has learned the art of remaining unattached while performing actions—that is, he who has learned that it is not the actions that bind, but the *attachment* to actions and results thereof—such a person becomes free from the bondage of actions.

O Parantapa Arjuna! *Yaṅnā* of Knowledge is superior to all the *yaṅnās* requiring actions and material objects because in the *yaṅnā* of Knowledge, relationship with all actions and objects gets severed.* If you consider attaining Knowledge by abandoning actions to be superior, then learn the essential Truth by approaching the wise, by bowing to them humbly, serving them, and respectfully asking them questions. The wise, who have realized the Truth, will teach you that Knowledge. Realizing that Knowledge of Truth (*tattva-jñāna*) experientially, you will not fall into delusion again. It is because the realization of *tattva-jñāna* (or the removal of ignorance) takes place once only and (this realization) lasts forever.

Upon realizing the Knowledge, you will behold all living beings first within (your) self, and then you will behold all living beings, together with (your) self, in Me, the one essential Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*). For, there is nothing else apart from the One Supreme Spirit. Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, still you will surely cross over the ocean of evil with the raft of this Knowledge alone. For, no matter how many sins there may be, they are verily non-real (*Asat*)

* All actions without exception culminate or resolve in the Knowledge (of Brahman).

only; whereas the Knowledge (*tattva-jñāna*) is verily real (*Sat*). O Arjuna! Just as a blazing fire reduces all firewood to ashes, even so the fire of Knowledge reduces (the results of) all actions to ashes utterly. In the human world, undoubtedly, there exists no purifier like Knowledge (*tattva-jñāna*). But he, who has reached perfection in *Karmayoga*, positively attains the same Knowledge on its own within himself. It means that the Knowledge which is attained by living with a guru, by serving the guru, the very same Knowledge is attained through *Karmayoga* on its own. This is the unique significance of *Karmayoga*.

One who has completely mastered one's senses, and is diligently devoted to spiritual practice, only such an exclusively devout person attains the Knowledge. For the delay in attaining the Knowledge occurs only due to lack of devotion (*śraddhā*). Having attained Knowledge, one immediately attains the Peace Supreme (*paramśāntī*). But one who lacks discrimination and is devoid of faith—that is, one who does not know oneself and does not listen to those who know—such a doubting person gets lost on the spiritual path. There is neither happiness nor peace in this world or the next for the doubting soul.

O Dhanañjaya! One who has renounced relationship with actions through the discipline of equanimity (*samatā*), and whose doubts have been completely rent asunder through discriminating wisdom—such *Karmayogī* is not bound by actions since he does not perform any actions for his own self. Therefore, O Descendent of Bhārata! Cutting away, with the sword of Knowledge, this doubt, born of ignorance, residing in your heart (that how would I obtain my spiritual welfare by being engaged in this terrible action of war), establish yourself in the *Yoga* (*samatā*) and stand up for the battle. By engaging in the war while remaining steadfast in the *Yoga* (of *samatā*), you will not incur any sin and will verily attain the Highest Good.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 5

Karmasannyāsayaogaḥ: The Path of Selfless Action through Detachment

After having heard the glory of the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) and the Path of Action (*Karmayoga*) both in the fourth chapter, Arjuna was not able to decide which of the two would be most conducive to his spiritual welfare. Therefore, in order to determine which one of these two disciplines would be definitely better for him, Arjuna asks—O Kṛṣṇa! You first extol the path of

renunciation of actions (*Sāṃkhyayoga*) and then the path of selfless action (*Karmayoga*). Pray tell me for certain which of these two is better.

Śrī Bhagavān said—Although the *Yoga* of knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) and the *Yoga* of selfless action (*Karmayoga*) both lead to the Highest Good, yet, of the two, the *Yoga* of selfless action excels over the *Yoga* of knowledge. O Mighty Arjuna! *Karmayogī* neither hates nor desires; therefore, he should be regarded as a person of constant renunciation. Because one who is free from dualities—likes and dislikes (*rāga-dveśa*)—easily gets liberated from the bondage of *saṃsāra* (cyclic existence).

It is the ignorant, and not the wise, who affirm that the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) and the Path of Action (*Karmayoga*) lead to different results. A person properly established in any one of these two attains the results of both (in the form of the knowledge of Supreme Reality, i.e., *tattva-jñāna*). The essential state that is reached by the *jñānayogī* is also attained by the *karmayogī*. Thus, he who sees that the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayoga*) and the Path of Action (*Karmayoga*) are essentially one in end results, truly sees. However, O Mighty Armed, Arjuna! It is difficult to attain perfection in *Jñānayoga* without first engaging in the discipline of *Karmayoga*. A *karmayogī*, ever attentive to the spirit of unselfishness and the well-being of others, quickly attains to the supreme state of God-realization. The *karmayogī* whose senses and body are under his control, whose inner self is pure, who has experienced his oneness with all beings, is never bound by actions even though fully engaged in performing actions.

All activities verily take place within the material nature (*Prakṛti*), and ‘I have no relation whatsoever with those activities’—in whom such discriminating reasoning has been awakened, such follower of *Jñānayoga*, while seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, grasping, talking, defecating, sleeping, breathing, opening and closing eyes—is *convinced* that ‘all activities are taking place by way of senses moving among the sense objects’ and that ‘I myself verily do nothing at all in my essential nature (*svarupa*).’ It means that the aspirant, while activities are being performed by the physical body, must remain focused on the essential reality of his action-less Self (*svarupa*).

As *karmayogī* and *jñānayogī* remain untouched (*niṣlipta*) by actions, even so the *bhaktiyogī* also remains untouched by actions. The *bhaktiyogī* performs all actions by dedicating them to the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*), and abandoning all attachment. Therefore, he remains untouched by evil, as a lotus-leaf by water.

The *karmayogīs* perform actions with body, senses, mind, and intellect, *without* the feeling of ‘mine-ness’ with regard to them, only for the purpose of self-purification. The complete absence of the ‘feeling of mine-ness’ (*apnāpan*) regarding body, senses, mind, and intellect, is verily self-purification! The *karmayogī* performs actions, abandoning desire for the fruits of actions; therefore, he attains everlasting peace. Whereas, he, who performs actions *desiring* the fruits of actions, gets bound in the unending cycle of births and deaths.

He whose senses and mind are under control, such a *jñānayogī*, while descending all actions to the city of nine gates (the body with nine openings), is of the wise conviction that he neither does anything nor causes anything to be done. Therefore, he experiences everlasting happiness while being naturally established in his essential nature. God, the creator of the universe, does not determine the doership or the actions of any individual. Nor does He connect actions with the results of actions. It is only the individual, led by material Nature (*Prakṛti*), who establishes the association with them. The sense of doership (*kartāpan*) is not created by God but it is an individual's own creation. God does not even create such providence that a person has to do a particular action. Thus, a human being is at liberty to act. Likewise, God does not establish any link with the fruits of action for anyone; rather, it is the individual who himself creates such an association and becomes happy or unhappy accordingly. The Omnipresent Supreme Lord does not take on anyone's deeds or results thereof, nor anyone's merit or demerit. The Knowledge (of the Self or *Ātman*) is veiled by ignorance (sense of 'I' and 'mine'). Thereby all human beings are becoming happy or unhappy by identifying themselves with their deeds and the results thereof. But those who, honoring their sense of discriminating logic (*viveka*), have dispelled their ignorance (sense of 'I' and 'mine-ness')—that *viveka* of theirs, like the sun, illuminates the Supreme Truth. That is, they are able to experience the all-pervading plenitude (fullness) of the Supreme Spirit.

Those whose mind is constantly absorbed in God, in whose intellect there is an unshakable conviction of God's Reality, who constantly abide in God only and are surrendered to God only, such seekers, free of sins through discriminating Knowledge (*viveka-jñāna*), attain that Supreme State from which there is no return to the world of conditioned existence (*saṁsāra*). Such great seers, behaving appropriately in practical matters, see with an equal eye, a learned and humble Brahmin, a cow, an elephant or even a dog or an outcaste. That is, despite the essential differences in practical conduct, there is no sense of difference (*viṣṁtā*) in their mind. In other words, their eye verily remains focused on the Supreme Spirit which pervades uniformly in all and everything. Thus, they have the same sense of self (*ātmeeyatā*) in everyone and have the same feeling of wellbeing in all beings.

Those whose minds are established in equanimity (free from the taint of likes and dislikes), they have verily conquered the entire cycle of births and deaths (*saṁsāra*) even here in this embodied state. That is, they have become 'liberated-even-while-alive' (*jīvanmukta*). Therefore, those great seers whose minds have become taintless and equanimous,* they verily abide in God only; because without being established in the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātma-tattva*), it is not possible

* Since the Brahman (the Absolute, the Supreme Spirit) is without imperfection and equanimous (*nirdoṣam hi samam Brahma*), great seers, whose minds have likewise become taintless and equanimous, also verily reside in the Supreme Spirit.

to attain perfect equanimity. One who does not rejoice on experiencing what is pleasant or favorable (person, object, situation, etc.) and does not get perturbed on experiencing what is unfavorable or unpleasant (person, object, situation, etc.), that great seer of steady wisdom, free from ignorance and knower of Brahman, is verily established in Brahman only; that is, such a great seer becomes one with Brahman.

When the mind is no longer attached to outer contacts (objects), one finds the joy that is in the Self (*sāttvika-sukha*). Then, due to non-indulgence in *sāttvika-sukha*, such a person experiences the eternal, ever-constant, undying Divine Bliss. O Son of Kuntī! Whatever pleasures arise from senses coming in contact with their respective objects such as sound, touch, shape, taste, and odor, are called ‘indulgences’ (*bhoga*). All such pleasures come and go (*āney-jāney-wāley*) and are verily a source of misery only. Therefore, despite appearing to be pleasant in the beginning, they only bring suffering in effect. The one who indulges in the sense-gratification has to suffer (in the end)*. Therefore, the wise do not take any delight (or relish) in them. One who is able to withstand, before casting off this physical body, the force of lust and anger—that is, one who does not let the force to arise in the first place or, after its arising, does not act according to it—he alone is really brave, he alone is a *Yogī*, and he alone is happy.

The *nivṛtti-prāyan sādḥaka* (a seeker who does not find delight in the world)—that is, who finds happiness in God only—who even during the period of practical conduct remains absorbed in God only, in whom the Knowledge of the Supreme Self or Spirit remains stirring constantly all the time, such a *jñānayogī*, experiencing constant abidance in Brahman alone, verily becomes one with the Brahman. Those *pravṛtti-prāyan sādḥaka* (aspirants) whose body, senses, mind, and intellect are spontaneously under control, who rejoice in the well-being of all beings, whose all doubts have been rent asunder, and all sins have been wiped out, such discerning *jñānayogīs* become one with the Brahman. Those who have become utterly free from lust and anger, who have conquered their mind, and have realized their Self (*svarupa ka sākṣātkāra*), such austere souls, while alive and upon casting away of the physical body, remain established in the eternal Brahman. The Truth or *tattva* (Brahman) which is attained by *karmayogī* and *jñānayogī*, that very same Truth can also be realized by *dhyānayogī* (a practitioner of meditation). Shutting out all thoughts of external objects, with the gaze fixed between the eyebrows, having controlled the senses, mind, and intellect, stabilizing the *prāṇa* (outgoing breath) and *apānavāyu* (incoming breath), ever devoid of desires, fear, and anger, such a person of contemplation is indeed always free.

The devotee who knows Me to be the enjoyer of all auspicious sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all worlds, the Friend (*suhṛdam*) of all beings (i.e., lovingly-compassionate without motive), such a devotee attains to the Supreme Peace.

* It is common experience that though we indulge in sense-pleasures willingly, we have to suffer their effects, unwillingly.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 6

Ātmasaṁyamayaḥ: The Yoga of Self-Discipline

Śrī Bhagavān said—He is the true renouncer (*sannyāsī*) and (*karma*) *yogī* who performs his duties renouncing dependence on the world, i.e., without relying on objects, persons, and activity. One who merely renounces the (sacred) fire is not the true renouncer (*sannyāsī*) and one who has merely given up activities is not the true *yogī*. O Arjuna! What people call *sannyāsa* (*Jñānayoga*), know that to be really *Yoga* (*Karmayoga*), because both involve renouncing volition (*saṅkalpa*).* No one can become any type of *yogī* without giving up *saṅkalpa* (or without the cultivation of a detached mind free from attachments, hopes, and expectations). One who wants to attain *Yoga* (*samatā*—equanimity), such a wise *yogī* attains to *Yoga* (equanimity) only by performing allotted duties in a detached manner. Because without performing dutiful deeds—i.e., without dedicating the objects received from the world in the service of the world—one cannot be established in the *Yoga* (discipline of *samatā*). When the seeker does not relish even the bliss born of being steadfast in *Yoga*, he attains to God. When one does not get attached to sense-objects or to actions, and has renounced all purposes (*saṅkalpas*), then, he is said to have ascended the heights of *Yoga* (*yogārūḍha*).

Responsibility for one’s spiritual welfare and downfall lies within oneself and no one else. Therefore, one should uplift oneself by one’s own self (efforts) and not degrade oneself; for one’s own self alone is one’s friend, and one’s own self alone is one’s enemy. One who has conquered oneself by oneself—that is, one who relies solely on oneself and has forsaken all dependence on perishable objects—such a person is one’s own friend. But one who has not conquered oneself—that is, one who feels the need for perishable things—such a person is one’s own enemy.

One who has achieved mastery over oneself—i.e., one who does not admit one’s relationship with any person or object—and who remains untainted and equanimous while experiencing favorableness and unfavorableness, joy and sorrow, honor and dishonor, such a person should be considered to have attained the Supreme Self. A *Karmayogī* who is content with the ‘*Jñāna*’ (knowledge about performing actions) and ‘*Vijñāna*’ (remaining equanimous in success and

* Of the various desires that arise in the mind, the ones that our mind gets attached to become *saṅkalpas*.

failure), who is changeless like an anvil* (*kuta* or *aharna*), who has control over the senses, and for whom a lump of clay, stone, and gold are the same (i.e., perishable), such a person is said to be established in *Yoga* (*samatā*). He who looks with equal regard (and with the same sense of well-being) toward all—a well-wisher, a friend, a foe, an indifferent person, a mediator, the hateful (detrimental to others), relatives, the virtuous and the sinful—such a person is indeed the most excellent of all.

The equanimity or evenness of mind (*samatā*—*samabuddhi*) that is attained through *Karmayoga*, the very same equanimity is also attained through the *Yoga* of Meditation (*Dhyānayoga*). A seeker-meditator (*Dhyānayogī*) should constantly engage his mind and thoughts in meditation upon God, living alone in seclusion, having subdued his mind and body, and having got rid of the fetters of desires and possessions for personal enjoyment. Its technique is as follows—On a clean and pure land, place a seat (*āsana*) and cover it with *kuśa*-grass first, then cover it with a deer skin and place a soft cotton cloth on the top. The seat should be firm and stable and should neither be too high nor too low. While seated on it, restraining the activities of the mind and senses and concentrating the mind, the aspirant should engage in the practice of *Yoga* of meditation for the purpose of self-purification (i.e., only for the purpose of God-realization). For meditation, one should hold the body, head, and neck straight and still—sitting motionless like a portrait—fixing the gaze on the tip of the nose, without looking in any other direction.

(*Description of Meditation on the One with Form and Attributes [Saguna-Sākār]*—) With a serene mind, free from likes and dislikes (*rāga-dveṣa*), fearless, with life that is disciplined and chaste like that of a *brahmacāri*, such a vigilant *Dhyānayogi* should sit with the mind exclusively fixed and absorbed in Me alone, as the Supreme Goal. Thus always keeping the mind steadfast on Me, the *Dhyānayogī* of disciplined mind attains everlasting Peace, the Supreme Bliss abiding in Me (*Nirvāṇaparamām*)—attaining which there is nothing more that remains here to be attained.

O Arjuna! Success in this *Yoga* of meditation is neither attained by one who either eats too much or does not eat at all, nor by one who either sleeps too much or does not sleep at all. This *Yoga* (of meditation), which destroys sorrows, is accomplished only by him who is temperate in diet and recreation, who is disciplined (and detached) in the performance of actions, and is temperate in sleep and waking.

(*Description of Meditation on the Self [Svarupa]*—When the mind is absorbed in the Self alone, completely free from longing for worldly objects and desires, then is one said to be ‘really’ steadfast in the *Yoga* (of meditation). As the flame of a lamp that is placed in a spot sheltered from wind does not flicker even slightly, even so the disciplined mind of the one who practices the *Yoga*

* An anvil is a basic block, generally made of hardened steel, on which another object is struck.

of meditation remains established in the Self (*svarupa*) and does not think about anything other than the Self. When the mind of the *Dhyānayogī* becomes indifferent even towards the profound meditative absorption (*Nirbīj-Samādhi*: trance without seed)—that is, when the *yogī* does not revel even in the bliss of deep meditative absorption—in that state the *yogī* remains content within the self by realizing the Self within his *svarupa*. There is no bliss greater than the bliss experienced by the *Dhyānayogī* in which he beholds the Self through the self and rejoices in the Self. This bliss is not dependent upon the senses, and, in this bliss, the intellect remains fully awake (and alert). It means that this bliss (*sukha*) is utterly distinct from *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika* and *Tāmasika sukha*—all three types of happiness.* Established in such bliss, the *Dhyānayogī* never deviates from it. To have attained this bliss is the touchstone (litmus test) of all spiritual practices—a sure proof of Spiritual Plenitude.

There is no bliss or gain whatsoever higher or greater than this bliss, wherein established the *yogī* is not shaken even by the greatest sorrow. The state in which there is forever severance (*viyoga*) of assumed connection with pain (the sorrowful world)—only that state should verily be known by the name of ‘Yoga.’ This yoga must be practiced with determination and with an undistracted mind.

(*Description of Meditation on the Attributeless-Formless [Nirguṇa-Nirākār]*—) All desires arise from *saṅkalpa*—subtle hankerings and self-centered purposes of the world. Renouncing entirely all such desires, and withdrawing, by strength of mind, all senses from their respective objects, the aspirant should, with an unhurried intellect set in firmness, gradually become detached (*uparām*) from the world. The aspirant (*sādhaka*) should then focus his mind on the Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*). That is, the aspirant should firmly resolve that ‘everywhere there is only One all-pervading Supreme Spirit (God), and there is nothing else except God.’ Having determined thus, he should think of nothing else whatsoever—neither of the world nor of God. If the aspirant is not able to practice this ‘silent method’ (*chup-sāadhan*), then he should bring his unsteady and wavering mind back, wherever it wanders, and practice concentrating it on God properly. An aspirant whose sins have been destroyed through this spiritual practice, whose *rajoguṇa* (passion that promotes activity/movement) and its modes (tendencies) have become still, and whose mind has become forever peaceful and pure, such a *Dhyānayogī*, whose very self has merged with Brahman, certainly attains to the *Sāttvika-sukha* (pure bliss). Abiding constantly in this manner in the Supreme Spirit, the *yogī*, who is free from all sins, peacefully experiences the infinite bliss of the attainment of Brahman.

(*Experience of the aspirant who meditates on the Real Self [Svarupa]*—) The

* *Prakṛti* or Primordial Nature is constituted of three modes or qualities or *Guṇas*: *Sattva* (equilibrium or purity or goodness), *Rajas* (passion or activity), and *Tamas* (dullness or inertia). The ‘three types of happiness’ referred to here signify the three different types of pleasures arising from these *guṇas*.

dhyānāyogī who meditates on his Self (*svārūpa* or *Ātman*) existent absolutely and uniformly everywhere, beholds the Self as present in all beings and all beings as present in the Self.

(*Experience of the aspirant who meditates on the One with Form and Attributes [Saguṇa-Sākār]*—) The devotee who sees Me everywhere at all times, in all objects, persons, etc., and sees everything (places, objects, persons, etc.) in Me, to him I am never lost (invisible), nor is he ever lost to Me. It is because such a perfected devotee has become one (*abhinna*) with Me and perceives all world verily as My Being (*Svarūpa*) only. Established in the unity of all existence, a *yogī* who adores Me as present in all beings, verily abides in Me—in whatever condition he may be. O Arjuna! As an ordinary person seeks the well-being of all parts of his body equally, even so a devotee, who sees God in all beings equally, seeks the well-being of all beings equally. As an ordinary person acts quite naturally to eradicate the pain in his body (and to seek his pleasure); even so, the devotee acts quite naturally to eradicate the pain of others and to provide them pleasure. Such a devotee is deemed to be the supreme *yogī* in my estimation.

After hearing about attaining equanimity by the *Yoga* of meditation, Arjuna said—O slayer of Madhu, due to wavering mind, I find it very difficult to attain perfection in equanimity through *Dhyānāyoga*. O Kṛṣṇa! The mind is verily restless, turbulent, unyielding, and strong. I regard it quite as hard to achieve its control as capturing the wind in the palm of hand.

After listening to Arjuna's viewpoint, Śrī Bhagavān said—O Mighty Armed! You are very right: The mind is restless and hard to control. O Son of Kuntī! It can be controlled by constant practice and detachment (or dispassion). However, I am of the conviction that this *Yoga* is very difficult to attain by one whose mind is not fully under his control (that is, whose mind is attracted or attached to sense-objects or pleasures). It is because in the perfection of *Yoga*, the restlessness of mind is not as great a hindrance as an uncontrolled mind. Therefore, one, who strives steadfastly in the *Yoga* of meditation and whose mind is under control, is able to attain success in the *Yoga* (of equanimity).

Arjuna asked again—O Kṛṣṇa! What end (at the time of death) does one meet who has faith in the efficacy of this *Yoga* but fails to attain perfection by not being steadfast in the spiritual practice? What will happen of him? O Mighty armed (Kṛṣṇa)! Having relinquished dependence upon the world, but without attaining God—and not being able to remember God at the time of death—will such a person perish like a torn cloud, fallen from both worlds (this one and the next)? O Kṛṣṇa! Only You can dispel this doubt of mine completely; indeed, there is no one except You who can destroy this doubt.

To dispel Arjuna's doubt and to assure all aspirants, Śrī Bhagavān said—O Son of Prithā! There is no fall for such a person, either in this life or the next (after death). Because, O dear Arjuna! No aspirant who is engaged in spiritual welfare ever meets with ill fate. It is because the *saṃskāra* (impressions) of spiritual

practice, once having taken root, never get destroyed.

The aspirants who have fallen from the *Yoga* (*yoga-bharaṣṭa*) are of two types—those who have lust for sense-gratification and those who are free from desires (dispassionate). A *yoga-bharaṣṭa* whose desires have not been quelled obtains higher worlds such as heavens, etc. And after residing there for a long time (after developing dispassion for sense indulgence), he then again takes birth in this world in the house of the pious and the noble. But if an aspirant who is dispassionate falls from the *Yoga* for some reason, he, instead of going to heaven, etc., is born directly into a family of the wise, liberated *yogīs*. Such a birth is indeed very rare to obtain in this world. O Descendent of Kuru! In the family of *yogīs*, that person naturally regains the spiritual capital acquired in the previous birth. The spiritual tendencies (*saṃskāras*) that had been established in his mind from the previous birth induce that person again to strive in the spiritual practice in a special way. But the one who takes birth in the noble family, such aspirant, despite being attached to the sense-pleasures, gets drawn towards God, as if by force, on the strength of the spiritual practice undertaken in the previous birth. When even the inquirer after *Yoga* is able to transcend the actions performed with motive and fruits thereof, how can then the *yoga-bharaṣṭa* who is engaged in *Yoga* suffer a downfall? His spiritual welfare is certain. Such an aspirant (the one born in the family of noble and pious) gets engaged in God-realization, in a special way, striving harder than ever. In this manner, through persevering effort, completely purged of sins, and perfected through many births (*anekajanmasaṃsiddhaḥ*),* such a *yogī* achieves the Supreme State (*parāṃgatiḥ*).

Those who undergo various types of severe austerities to attain *siddhīs* are called ascetics. The *yogī* is superior to the ascetics and even to a scholar of scriptures. The *yogī* is also superior to those who engage in sacrifice (*yajñā*), donation, pilgrimage, etc., with interested motive. This is my conviction. Therefore, O Arjuna! You too be a *yogī*.

My devotee is superior to all possible types of *yogīs*—*Karmayogī*, *Jñānayogī*, *Dhyānayogī*, *Haṭhayogī*, *Layayogī*, *Rājyogī*, etc. Even among all the *yogīs*, he who worships Me devoutly with his inmost self abiding in Me, he is considered by Me to be the best of the *yogīs*. [*Due to God's protection, the devotee never falls from Yoga.*]

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



* First, through spiritual practice during human birth, one attained purity; then having fallen from *Yoga*, one attained further purity through dispassion towards sense-pleasures while having gone to heavens etc.; and then, having born in the family of noble ones, through steadfastness in spiritual practice, one attained purity—to get purified in this manner during “three” births is to be purified in “many” births.

Chapter 7

Jñāna-Vijñānayogaḥ: The Yoga of Knowledge and Wisdom

Just as the devotees become enraptured (*masṣṭ*) in Divine Love upon remembering God, even so the Lord becomes enraptured upon remembering, and hearing the reference (*prasāṅga*) of, the devotees; and, without even being asked by Arjuna, started saying on His own—O Pārtha! Hear now from Me how, while practicing the *Yoga* (of devotion) with the devout mind that is utterly absorbed in Me and surrendered to Me, you will know Me in full (*samagrāṁrupa*) as ‘God is all.’ In order for you to know Me in entirety (both with and without form), I will tell you in full this all-embracing ‘Knowledge-with-Transcendental Wisdom’*—having known which, nothing more remains here to be known. When there is nothing else besides Me, what is left to be known, after all, having known Me in full?! But not everyone knows this transcendental wisdom, because hardly one among thousands of human beings strives to realize Me. And even among those striving *yogīs* who succeed (i.e., who have become liberated), only some rare one knows Me in essence as ‘All is verily God.’

Earth, water, fire, air, ether (space), mind, intellect, and ego—this is the eightfold division of My (lower) material nature (*aparā-Prakṛti*). O Mighty Armed One! Apart from this inert (*jada*), changeable *aparā-Prakṛti*, is My very own part, the *Jīva*—the conscious-unchangeable principle—My higher nature (*parā-Prakṛti*). In reality, the world (i.e., *aparā-Prakṛti*) has no existence separate from Me;† only this indwelling spirit or *jīva* principle (*parā-Prakṛti*) has accorded existence to the world—due to which, it has become bound (in the cyclic existence called *saṁsāra*). All living beings have evolved from a combination of My twofold lower and higher nature. I am the origin of the entire universe and its dissolution as well.

O Conqueror of Wealth (Dhanañjya)! There is no being higher than I am in this whole universe; that is, the whole creation is strung on Me like a row of beads threaded on a string. I am the source and the root-cause of all that is visible in the world. For example, (O son of Kuntī!), I am the ‘taste’ of water, the ‘light’ of the sun and the moon; I am the sacred ‘syllable’ ‘Om’ in all the *Vedas*; I am the ‘sound’ in space, ‘manliness’ in men, sacred ‘fragrance’ in earth, and ‘brilliance’ in fire. I am also the life-giving principle—the ‘*prāṅśaktī*’ in all

* The world is born of God and subsides in God only—to ‘know’ thus, is ‘Knowledge’ (*Jñāna*). Everything is verily God and God Himself manifests as the world; and there is nothing else except God—to ‘experience’ God as such, is ‘Transcendental Knowledge/Wisdom’ (*Vijñāna*). Thus, all is verily God, including the ego, is ‘Knowledge-with-Transcendental Wisdom.’

† That is, the world has no separate existence, *independent* of God.

living beings, and I am the ‘penance’ of all ascetics. O Pārtha! I am the eternal (indestructible) ‘seed’ of all beings. The implication is this: There are infinite beings in infinite universes. However, I alone am the sole ‘source’ of all the infinite beings. I am the ‘intelligence’ of the intelligent, and the ‘glory’ of the glorious. O Best among Bhāratas! Of the brave, I am the ‘strength’ devoid of desire and attachment; and in living beings, I am virtuous ‘desire.’ What more can I say, whatever emanations (qualities, objects, and activities) there are, born of *Sattva* (goodness/purity), *Rajas* (activity/passion), and *Tamas* (inertia/dullness), know them all to have evolved (or proceeding) from Me alone. But neither do I exist in them, nor do they (*guṇas*) exist in Me.* It means that these modes (*guṇas*) have no independent existence apart from me—that is, I alone am everything. Therefore, the mind of the aspirant should be directed towards Me and not towards the three modes. However, accepting the independent existence of the objects evolved from these three modes (*guṇas*), the individual self (*jīva*) gets attached to them, and consequently, becomes subject to repeated births and deaths. That is why the *jīva* does not know Me as the Eternal One, standing beyond these three *guṇas*, and does not turn towards Me.

Although it is extremely difficult to break free from this Divine Veil (*Māyā*) of Mine, consisting of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas guṇas*, yet those, who take refuge in Me alone, are able to cross over this *Māyā*. Those whose sense of discrimination (*viveka*) has been clouded by accepting the being and importance (*sattā aur mahattā*) of *Māyā*, such foolish, deluded, evil-doers, and lowest of humans do not take refuge in Me. O Greatest of Bhāratas! There are four kinds of devotees of virtuous deeds (such as chanting-singing Divine Names) who worship God or take refuge in Him—

1. Arthārthī—When a legitimate desire arises in them, they want to fulfill it from God only, and not from anyone else—such devotees are called ‘*arthārthī*.’

2. Ārta—When afflicted by any calamity, they call upon God only to relieve their sorrows—such devotees are called ‘*ārta*.’

3. Jijñāsu—Those who want to know from God only about God in full (*samagramrupa*)—that is, those who want to have Knowledge-with-Transcendental Wisdom—such devotees are called ‘*jijñāsus*.’

4. Jñāni—Those who have realized God in full, that ‘All is verily God only;’ those who have no desire whatsoever and revel in God’s love only—such devotees are called ‘*jñānis*’ or ‘divine lovers.’

Of these four types of devotees, the *jñāni-bhakta* (the wise-devotee), ever-

* I do not exist in them, nor they (*guṇas*) exist in Me—this is the understanding of the aspirants. And all *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika* modes are Divine only—this is the understanding of the perfected beings. By understanding that ‘*guṇas* do not exist in Me nor do I exist in *guṇas*,’ the *sādhaka* is able to turn towards God—[as the One beyond all *guṇas*]—instead of being drawn towards various objects proceeding from these three *guṇas*.—Swami Ramsukhdasji, *Gītā Prabodhani*, pp. 191-192.

steadfast with devotion in Me, is the highest. It is because *arthārthī* has desire for the wealth; *ārta* has the desire to dispel sorrow; *jijñāsu* has the desire to know the reality (*tattva*), the truth of God. But *jñāni* has no desire whatsoever of any kind. Therefore, I am exceedingly dear to the wise devotee (*jñāni-bhakta*) and he is most dear to Me. Although all of these four devotees (*arthārthī*, *ārta*, *jijñāsu*, and *jñāni*) are noble indeed, yet the wise one (*jñāni*) is my very Self; such is my view. It is because *jñāni* is non-different from Me. With a steadfast mind, he is established in Me alone as the Highest Goal, for there is no reality higher than Me. In the very last of all the births, *viz.*, in this human form, one who has experientially realized the truth '*Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam*'—that is, everything is verily God—only that devotee is truly wise and great. For such a devotee, there is no reality apart from one God—this is the divine refuge (*Śarṇāgati*) for him. Such a great-souled *bhakta* is very rare indeed to find in this world.

[*Just like, in a field of wheat, even when only wheat grass is seen everywhere—and not even a single grain of wheat to be seen anywhere—the knowledgeable farmer will see wheat only. An ignorant person from city will say that this is grass only and not wheat at all, and the farmer will say that this is not the same grass that animals use as a fodder; this is verily wheat. Similarly, what is seen in the form of the world by a worldly person, the same is seen as godly by the great-soul (bhakta)—Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam. Like, in the field of wheat, there was wheat in beginning, there will be wheat in the end, and despite the appearance of green grass in between, it is verily wheat only; even so, there was God at the beginning of the creation (world) also, there will be God at the end of the creation also, and God is verily all there is, in-between also.*]

Whose reasoning (*viveka*) has been clouded by worldly desires, such human beings, led by their nature to fulfill their desires, seek refuge in different deities instead of taking refuge in Me. And they observe many practices and follow many rules to fulfill their desires. But I do not take away the freedom granted to the human beings. Rather, whatever deity a person chooses to worship with loving faith (*Śraddhā*), I strengthen their faith towards that particular deity. Endowed with faith made strong by Me, people worship that deity with interested motive (*sakām-bhāva*) and their desires get fulfilled also. But actually the fulfillment of desires occurs as ordained by Me alone. Because (in reality) it is only My power that operates through the deities, and they fulfill desires as ordained by Me alone. But the fruit accruing to these people of little understanding is limited and perishable. The worshipers of deities (*devatās*) go to the deities, while my devotees attain to Me alone. Still, people devote themselves to the worship of the deities led astray by various selfish desires. Such unwise people do not know My highest, imperishable, and Supreme Nature. That is why they regard Me as subject to birth and death like an ordinary human being. It is because, despite being unborn and eternal, I assume a finite form and engage in the divine sport of becoming unmanifest—the unwise do not know this. That is why,

remaining veiled by My Divine Power (*Yogamāyā*), I am not revealed (manifest) to all in the divine form.

O Arjuna! I know all beings of the past, present, and future but none except devotees (*bhaktas*) know Me. O Descendant of Bhārata and valiant (Parantapa) Arjuna! Deluded by the spell of the pairs of opposites arising from attraction and aversion (*rāga-dveṣa*) and not knowing Me in truth, all beings (in this world) keep on falling prey to this cyclic existence of birth and death (*samsāra*). But those who are free from the delusion of dualities—who have recognized their goal that ‘I have to realize God only’ and whose sins have come to an end due to turning towards Me—such devotees worship Me with firm resolve.

Those who, having taken refuge in Me, strive for release from old age and death, by My Grace, come to know Brahman (attributeless and formless), the whole of *Adhyātama* (infinite beings of infinite life-forms), and *Karma* (the entire gamut of creation and dissolution, etc.)—that is, they come to know this classification of ‘Knowledge’ (*Jñāna*); as well as the *Adhibhūta* (the entire field of creation of five elements); *Adhidaiva* (Brahma, demi-gods, etc.); and *Adhiyajñā* (Visnu and His all other forms)—that is, they come to know this classification of ‘Transcendental Knowledge/Wisdom’ (*Vijñāna*). In this manner, they come to know My Integral Universal Form (*samagrānrupa*) in all aspects and essence. The devotees who know me thus, whatever may they be thinking at the time of death, do not get strayed from *Yoga* (*yoga-bharaṣṭa*); rather, with their minds harmonized, they attain to Me alone. [*In whose view, there is nothing else whatsoever except God, where else would their mind dwell except God? Why would their mind dwell on anything else except God? How would their mind dwell on anything else except God?*]

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 8

Akṣara-Brahmayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman

In order to understand the teachings of Śrī Bhagavān clearly, Arjuna asked, O Best of Puruṣas! What should be understood by the word ‘Brahman’ (Absolute)? What is meant by the word ‘*Adhyātama*’ (sphere of Spirit or Self)? What is ‘*Karma*’ (action)? What is meant by ‘*Adhibhūta*’ (domain of matter and its elements)? What is meant by ‘*Adhidaiva*’ (domain of demi-gods)? How should one understand the word ‘*Adhiyajñā*’ (presiding Lord of sacrifices) and how does It dwell in the physical body? O Slayer of demon Madhu (Kṛṣṇa)! How are you to be known, at the time of the death, by those of controlled mind?

Śrī Bhagavān said—The Supreme Imperishable, *Nirguṇa-Nirākār Paramātmā* (Attributeless and Formless Supreme Being), is called ‘Brahman.’ The higher Nature (*parā-Prakṛti*) or the *Jīva-Ātman* (individual soul) is called ‘*Adhyatma*.’ The creative power which brings forth the existence of beings is called ‘*Karma*’ (action). All perishable creation is ‘*Adhibhūta*.’ *Hiranyagarbha* Brahmā is the ‘*Adhidaiva*.’ I alone am ‘*Adhiyajñā*’ (the Lord of sacrifice), in the form of an indwelling spirit in the human body. As the single water element, appearing as separate in the form of particle, vapor, cloud, rain, snow, etc., is in reality water only; in the same manner, One Supreme Spirit or God essence, though appearing as separate in the form of Brahman, *Adhyātama*, *Karma*, *Adhibhūta*, *Adhidaiva*, and *Adhiyajñā*, is in reality One only.

One who has not been able to attain Me while living, at the time of death, leaves the body thinking of Me, attains to Me alone; regarding this, there is no doubt. O Son of Kuntī! It is a law that the thoughts at the time of death determine the future of the soul. Depending upon the thoughts at the end, the ‘mental body’ (*mānsīk śarīr*) is formed, and one attains another body based on the mental body. The end-time can come upon anytime, for there is no such time when the end-time (death) cannot befall. Therefore, if you want to attain Me by remembering me at the time of death, then dwell on Me constantly at all times, and carry out your allotted duty (of fighting). Surrendering your mind and intellect to Me, by not identifying with them, you will always dwell on Me only. As a result, you will undoubtedly attain to Me only.

O Son of Prithā! One who, keeping equanimity, constantly dwells his mind on the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*)—that is, one who does not think about anything else other than God—such aspirant (*sādhaka*), dwelling on God (Formless and with attributes), attains the Divine. That Supreme Spirit, Formless (with attributes), is omniscient, beginningless, Lord of all; subtler than the subtle, whose form is beyond conception; the sustainer of all, far beyond ignorance, and self-luminous like the sun. He who devotedly meditates on the Primal Being, even at the time of death, with a steadfast mind, and through *yogic* power focusing the vital breath in the middle of the eyebrows—such a person verily reaches the Resplendent (formless-with-attributes) Supreme Divine Being (*Saguṇa-Nirākār Paramātmā*).

I shall now briefly (and clearly) describe for you That Ultimate Reality, the attributeless and formless (‘*Nirguṇa-Nirākār*’) Supreme State described by the knowers of the *Vedas* as the Imperishable, which ascetics free from passion achieve, and, desiring to attain which, the aspirants lead a life of celibacy (*brahmacārya*). Having closed all the doors of senses, having resolved the mind in the heart, having restrained the life-breath in the head (tenth gate—*dasam dwār*), and remaining steadfastly established in the *yogic* concentration, the aspirant (*sādhaka*) who leaves the body mentally uttering the One Imperishable Om, and remembering the attributeless and formless, attains the Supreme Goal of realizing the Absolute (the attributeless and the formless, Brahman).

O Pārtha! It is very difficult for everyone to attain to the *Nirguṇa-Nirākār* (Brahman) as described above. But it is very easy to attain to My ‘*Sagūṇa-Sākār*’ *Svarupa* (with attributes and with form). I am easily attainable (*sulabhaḥ*)* by the ever steadfast *yogī*, who, thinking of none else except Me, remembers Me constantly (from now till death and from waking till falling sleep deeply). Having attained Me, by being fully established in supreme devotion (*param-prem*), the great souls are no longer subject to rebirth in this world, which is the abode of sorrow, and is constantly subject to change. O Son of Kuntī (Arjuna)! All the worlds extending from the earth to the realm of Brahma are subject to rebirth; having gone there, the embodied soul (*jīva*) has to come back again to *saṃsāra* (the mortal world, the realm of unending cyclic existence). But, O Son of Kunti! After attaining Me, there is no return to birth again.

Satya, *Tretā*, *Dvāpara*, and *Kali*—together these four great cycles (*Yugas*) are called a *Caturyugī*.† When one thousand such *Caturyugīs* expire, it constitutes one day of Brahmā, and the same number of years constitute one night of Brahmā. According to this calculation, after the completion of 100 years of Brahmā—i.e., after the completion of Brahmā’s life span, Brahmā also gets merged into the Lord. Those who know the true measure (secret) of Time in this manner, considering all the sense enjoyments extending to the realm of Brahmā to be momentary and perishable, do not give importance to them. At the approach of the day of Brahmā, the bodies of all the creatures come forth from the unmanifested (subtle) body of Brahmā, and at the approach of the night of Brahmā, they merge again into the subtle body of Brahmā. O Pārtha! The multitude of beings, caught in the cycle of births and deaths since the beginningless time, coming forth again and again during the day of Brahmā, merge helplessly at the approach of the night of Brahmā. It means, that which arises and subsides again and again, is the body and the world. And that which remains the same (changeless), is *jīva*’s true self (*svarupa*). But the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*), which is beginningless and ever-existent, and is immensely more superior and distinctive than the subtlest form of Brahmā, that Eternal Being does not perish when all beings perish. The same Supreme Spirit has been variously called as the Unmanifest, the Imperishable, the Ultimate Goal, attaining which the *jīvas* do not return to this mortal world of cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*). That is my Supreme Abode. O Pārtha! That Eternal, Supreme Being (*Puruṣa*), in whom all beings abide, and by whom the entire universe is pervaded, is attainable only through unswerving and exclusive devotion

* According to Swami Ramsukhdaṣṭi, the word ‘*sulabhaḥ*’ (easily) is used by the Lord only once in the context of spiritual practices to attain God. In all the 574 *ślokas* spoken by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the word ‘*sulabhaḥ*’ occurs only once in the entire *Gītā*! Hence, its great importance.

† *Satya Yuga* lasts for 1,728,000 years, *Tretā* for 1,296,000 years, *Dvāpara* for 864,000 years, and *Kali Yuga* for 432,000 years. In this manner, 43,20,000 years constitute one ‘*caturyugī*.’ One thousand such *caturyugīs*, i.e., 4,320,000,000 years constitute one day of *Brahmā*; and the same number of years constitute one night of *Brahmā*. passage of 100 such years (311 trillion and 40 billion earth years), *Brahmā* also gets subsumed in the Great Dissolution (*Mahāpralaya*).

(*ananyā-bhakti*).

Description of the Bright Path [Śukla Mārga]— The path directed by the deities presiding over all luminous fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight of the lunar month, and the six months of the Northern passage of the sun—proceeding along this path after death, the knowers of Brahman, first live in the abode of Brahmā (*Brahmaloka*). And then, upon the arrival of the Great Dissolution (*Mahāpralaya*), they, along with Brahmā, finally attain the Supreme Spirit (*Paramātmā*).

Description of the Dark Path [Kṛṣṇa Mārga]— The path directed by deities presiding over smoke, night-time, the dark fortnight, and the six months of the Southern passage of the sun—proceeding along this path after death, the *yogīs* with interested (*sakām*) motive enjoy the celestial pleasures in heaven, etc. And after reaping the fruits of their meritorious deeds, they come back again to the mortal world to satisfy their unfulfilled desires.

In this manner, these two paths—the bright and the dark—have been a part of all living beings since the beginningless time. Of these two paths, following the Bright Path, one does not come back to the mortal world; and following the Dark Path, one has to return (reincarnate). O Pārtha! The *Yogī* who understands (the effects of) these two paths becomes motiveless (*niškām*) and is never deluded again. Therefore, O Arjuna! You too, at all times, be motiveless and be steadfast in the *Yoga* of equanimity.

The *yogī* who understands (the essence of) the subject-matter of this chapter, does not get entangled in the worldly enjoyments, and becomes steadfast in My devotion. Therefore, such a *yogī*, transcending all the rewards of meritorious deeds assigned to the study of the *Vedas*, pious sacrifices (*yajñās*), austerities and charities and attains to the Supreme Primal Abode.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmane Namaḥ II

Chapter 9

Rāja-vidyā Rāja-guhyayogaḥ: The Yoga of Royal Mystic Knowledge

Śrī Bhagavān said—I will indeed explain to you, who do not cavil, the most profound ‘Knowledge combined with realization,’ by knowing which you will be released from worldly bondage. This sovereign Knowledge is the highest of all forms of learning because, after knowing this, nothing more remains here to be known. It is the greatest of all mysteries because there is no mystery higher

than this. This is profoundly holy and the most excellent. It is realizable by direct experience. It is imperishable and very easy to practice. O Scorcher of foes Arjuna! Those who have no faith (*Śraddhā*) in the profoundness of this Knowledge do not attain Me, but return to the path of the mortal world.

This whole universe is pervaded by My unmanifested form or Divinity (*Nirākār-rupa*). All beings exist in Me, but in *reality* I do not exist in them nor do they exist in Me. This is My divine mystery! Though I am the source of all things and support of all beings, yet, I do not dwell in them—that is, I am ever-devoid of any attachment (to them). As the mighty wind, blowing everywhere ever abides in the space, and cannot exist apart from the space, even so all beings roaming in various life-forms and worlds, abide in Me and cannot exist apart from Me. Accept this truth with a steadfast mind.

O Son of Kuntī! At the time of Great Dissolution (i.e., upon the completion of 100 years of Brahmāji's lifespan), all beings, along with their *karmas* and material nature, enter into Me. At the beginning of next cycle (*kalpa*), I bring them forth again, all this multitudes of beings, according to their '*karmas*'. Thus, until these beings, who are under the sway of their respective (material) nature, do not become liberated, till then I, subjugating My Material Nature (*Prakṛti*), bring them forth again and again at the beginning of every *kalpa*. O Dhanañjaya! These actions do not bind Me, for I remain unattached to them, as one unconcerned. O Son of Kuntī! Really speaking, My *Prakṛti*, under My direction, brings forth the whole creation of the moving and the unmoving. It is due to this very reason that the change is taking place in the world in myriad ways. 'That I am the Great Lord of all beings'—not knowing My Supreme nature (Divinity) in this manner, the deluded ones disregard Me. Such deluded people are of three types of nature—**1. Āsuri** (demonic)—Those who are engaged in fulfilling their vain self-interest; **2. Rākṣasi** (devilish)—those who destroy others in order to fulfill their self-interest; and **3. Mohinī** (deluded)—those who hurt others for no reason. All vain desires, vain expectations, pious acts, and vain knowledge (devoid of discrimination) of such people are futile, because of the perishable nature of their results.

O son of Prithā! The great-souled devotees (*mahātmā-bhaktas*), who abide in divine nature, worship me exclusively with an undistracted mind, knowing Me to be the Origin of all beings and the Imperishable. Ever-glorifying Me, with their mind constantly and always absorbed in Me, they steadfastly strive for My realization. Such devotees constantly worship Me sometimes by lovingly chanting My names and singing My glories, and sometimes by bowing to Me. All their activities are meant verily (to glorify Me or) to please Me. Other *jñānayogī sādhakas* (who follow the Path of Knowledge), through the sacrifice of knowledge (*Jñāna-yajñā*)—that is, by sacrificing the untruth, discriminatively—worship My formless and attributeless nature, regarding Me as non-different from themselves [i.e., with the sentiment of non-difference (*abheda-bhāva*) from Me]. While other

Karmayogī sādhakas, considering the world as My Universal Manifestation—and regarding themselves as My humble servant—devote themselves in the service of all beings with body, mind, and wealth [i.e., through service, they worship My diverse forms *as divine forms* manifested in the universe in the form of manifold creation].

All aspirants, following diverse forms of spiritual practices, verily worship My all-encompassing Universal Form (*samagrāmṛupa*) alone, according to their interest, competence, and faith. For I am verily the ‘*kratur*,’ i.e., oblation (*havan*) performed as self-sacrifice as per the custom of the *Vedas*; I am the ‘*yajñāh*,’ i.e., sacrifice performed in the manner prescribed in the *Purānas*. I am also the food offering (‘*svadhā*’) and the healing herb (‘*auśadham*’). I am also verily all the articles of oblation (*ājya*) related to *yajñā* such as mantra (*vedic* chant), *ghee* (clarified butter), *agni* (sacred fire), and the activities in the form of *havan* (oblation). I am the One worth knowing, the purifier, the sacred syllable Om, and also the *Rigveda*, the *Sāmveda*, and the *Yajurveda*. I am the ‘sustainer’ (*dhātā*) of this entire universe; I am also its father, mother, and grandfather (the one who formed *Brahmā*, the creator). I am the Goal (‘*gatiḥ*’), the supporter (‘*bhartā*’), and also the great Lord of the universe (‘*Prabhuḥ*’). I am the Witness (‘*sākṣi*’) who knows everyone properly; everyone’s Abode, Refuge, and Well-wisher (*suhṛt*). The entire universe originates in Me and gets dissolved in Me only. Therefore, I am the Origin and the Dissolution. Whether it is Great Dissolution (*mahā-pralayaḥ*) or the Great Creation (*mahā-sarga*), the entire universe abides or rests in Me. That is why I am the substratum, the ground (‘*sthānam*’) and the store-house, the resting-place (‘*nīdhānam*’). The worldly seed is born of the tree, and gets destroyed after producing the tree. But I am the Unborn and, after even bringing forth infinite universes, still remain the same as ever; therefore, I am the Imperishable Seed (‘*avyayam bījam*’). O Arjuna! For the welfare of the world, I radiate heat as the sun; and, after receiving the water, I send it forth in the form of rain-water. What more need I say, I am immortality and also death; and I am also being (*sat*) and non-being (*asat*). There is nothing else whatsoever besides Me.

Those who have lust for sense gratification (*bhoga*) and hoarding (*saṅgraha*), they, turning away from Me, undertake the practice of sacrifices with the selfish motive to obtain the pleasures of heaven as described in the three *Vedas*. Through *vedic*-hymns, they drink the *somarasa* (sap of branch called *somavalli*) and, through sacrifices, etc., they worship My *Indira-rupa* (My form as the Lord of *devas*) and pray for the attainment of heaven. Purified of sin by virtue of these meritorious deeds, they attain to heaven and enjoy divine pleasures (*divya-bhoga*). When the effect of their meritorious deeds (that helped them attain to heaven) gets exhausted, they again return to this world of mortals. In this manner, engaged in actions driven by interested motive as described in the *Vedas*, these people keep going back and forth like the ox that turns the oil-press (*kolhu kā bail*).

But those who rely on Me alone and, meditating on Me alone, worship Me alone—to those constantly engaged (in My thoughts), I provide what they lack and preserve what they already have (*yoga-kṣemam*). In others words, I Myself take care of all the burdens and the cares of such devotees.

O son of Kuntī! Since, in essence, there is nothing else besides Me, all the deities (*devatās*) are my own different forms only. Therefore, those who devoutly worship the deities, they also, in reality, worship Me alone. But, due to ignorance, they consider deities as being separate from Me. Although I alone am the enjoyer of all pious (and dutiful) acts as well as the Lord of the entire universe, yet, these worshipers of deities, not knowing My true nature (as the Supreme Lord of lords), mistakenly assume themselves as the enjoyer and the owner (of these sacrifices). As a result, they fall (i.e., come back into the world of mortals). This is certain that those who worship deities with interested motive (*sakām-bhāva*) go to the deities after death; those who worship the ancestors go to the ancestors after death; and those who worship the spirits, go to the spirits, after death. But those who worship Me come to Me. After coming to Me, my devotees do not again return to the mortal world.

My worship is very easy also as compared to that of the deities. Whosoever makes an offering to Me, with devotion, of any object (that is spontaneously received) such as a leaf, a flower, a fruit or (even) water, I gladly accept that devout offering of the pure in heart, because I value the sentiment (*bhāva*) and not the object. Therefore, O Son of Kuntī! Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you give as donation, whatever you offer as sacrifice, and whatever austerities you perform, do that as an offering unto Me. By offering all objects and activities to Me, you will become free from the bondage of actions and from the pleasurable and the sorrowful results of good and bad actions performed during countless births. By offering everything, including yourself, to Me, you will become free from all bondage and will thereby come to Me.

I am the same (impartial) toward all beings; there is none hateful or dear to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion—those who regard only Me as their own—they are in Me, and I too am in them. I am revealed in them in a special way.

Even if a person of vilest conduct worships Me exclusively as—‘I am God’s and God is mine’—he must be reckoned as righteous, as a *sādhu*. Because such a person has formed the right resolution that, from now onwards, I have to stride towards God only. Due to this firm and right resolve, such a person becomes saint-like (*dharmātmā*) very quickly and attains everlasting peace. O son of Kuntī! take a vow that ‘My devotee never perishes.’ Because you are My devotee and even I Myself cannot disregard a devotee’s resolve (*pratijñā*). It means that an unrighteous person can become My devotee but My devotee cannot become an unrighteous person (*durāchārī*). O son of Prithā! Those who take complete refuge in Me, be they of vilest birth such as animals and birds, demons and devils;

be they women, *Vaiśyas* (business class), and *Śūdras* (labor class), even they attain the Supreme Goal. How much more so then holy *Brāhmins* and royal, sage-warriors devoted to Me who attain to the Goal!

[Howsoever may be the birth, whatever may be the caste or social status, and how so many may be the sins from previous births, all human beings are verily entitled to engage in God's devotion. Unrighteous, vilest, women, business class, labor class, priests, and warriors—all these seven categories become identical in devotion and there remains no difference among them. As there is no restriction for any child to go to the mother's lap—because the children are mother's only; even so, all human beings, being a part of God, have no restriction (from God's side) to strive towards God. Therefore, no one should ever feel disheartened in striving towards God.]

Be My devotee—regard Me as yours in this manner: ‘I am only God's’—fix your mind on Me, worship Me with all your activities, and bow to Me in reverence. That is, be happy in each Dispensation/Providence (*vidhān*) of Mine. exclusively surrendering to Me, you will verily come to Me.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 10

Vibhūtiyogaḥ: The Yoga of Divine Glories

As the devotee never feels content listening to the glories of the Lord, even so the Lord never feels content sharing His heart's desire with His dear devotee, Arjuna. Thus, Śrī Bhagavān, even without having been asked by Arjuna, graciously started telling Arjuna on His own—O the mighty-armed, Arjuna! Hear once more My supreme word, which I will tell you for your spiritual welfare since you are so greatly devoted to Me. Neither the gods nor the great sages know the mystery of My origin in full for I am the source of the gods and the great sages in every way. He who knows Me as the unborn, the beginningless, and the Supreme Lord of all the worlds—that is, *accepts* Me without any doubt—he, among mortals is undeluded and liberated from all sins.

Intelligence, knowledge, non-delusion, patience, truth, self-control, calmness, pleasure and pain, birth, death, fear and fearlessness; non-violence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and ill-fame—all these twenty different qualities of being proceed from Me alone. I am at the very root of all these qualities. Not only these qualities, but also those who have faith in Me and who

govern this world—the seven great sages (*ṛshis*) and, even before them, their four elders (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, and Sanatkumāra) as well as fourteen Manus were born of My mind; and from them have come forth all these creatures in the world. Whatever uniqueness (*vilakṣantā*) or distinctiveness (*viśeshatā*) is observed in the world, that is verily because of My ‘yoga’ (power or potency). And the distinctiveness that emanates from this *Yogīc* power of Mine is My Divine Glory. He who knows in truth My *Yogīc* Power and Divine Glory—that is, accepts Me with a doubt-free mind—will be firmly established in My unshakable devotion; of this there is no doubt.

I alone am the prime source of all; from Me the whole creation proceeds. Knowing this, the wise devotees worship Me with all their heart. With their thoughts fixed on Me, their vital breath surrendered to Me, enlightening one another about Me, ever conversing of my divine qualities, influence, divine play, etc., such devotees remain constantly contented and rejoicing in Me alone. To them, ever-devout, worshipping Me with whole-souled love constantly, I grant that *Yoga* of wisdom (*buddhī-yoga*) by which they come to Me. Out of pure compassion for these devotees, dwelling in their heart, I destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the luminous lamp of wisdom—that is, I accord them the knowledge of the essential Reality (*tattva-jñāna*). It means that to devotees who rely on Me, bestowing My grace on them, I myself grant both the *Karmayoga* in the form of equanimity (*samatā*) and the *Jñānayoga* in the form of knowledge of Reality (*tattva-jñāna*), so that they do not feel any lack whatsoever.

After listening about the Lord’s unique compassion for devotees, Arjuna became over-joyed and started singing hymns in praise of Śrī Bhagavān—O Lord! You verily are the Supreme Brahman (Attributeless-Formless), the Supreme Abode (Formless, with Attributes), and the Supreme Purifier (with Form and Attributes). All the sages, like the divine sage (*deva-ṛshi*) Nārada, sages Asita, Devala and the great sage Vyāsa, regard You as the Eternal Divine Being, the Primal Deity, the Unborn, and the All-pervading; and You Yourself also proclaim this to me. O Keśava! I accept as true all this that you have told me. O Lord! Neither the gods (with celestial power) nor the demons (with deception power) know the mystery of Your manifestation. That is, human beings, deities, demons, etc.,—none of them, through their power, competence, intelligence, etc., can come to know You. O Source of all beings, O Lord of all beings, the God of all gods, the Lord of the universe, O Supreme Person! You alone know Yourself by Yourself. Therefore You alone can explain in full Your divine glories, by which, pervading all these worlds, You are existent in them. O Supreme *Yogī* (Kṛṣṇa)! Through what process of continuous meditation may I know you? O Lord! In what different forms should You be contemplated upon by me? O Kṛṣṇa! Kindly please tell me once more in detail about Your *yogīc* Power and Your divine Glories, for I am not satisfied with hearing Your nectarine words.

Acceding to Arjuna’s prayer, Śrī Bhagavān said, I will however describe my

Divine Glories only briefly for there is no end to the extent of My glories. O Conqueror of sleep! I am the Self seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all beings. I am Viṣṇu among the (twelve) sons of the Ādityas; I am the radiant sun among luminous objects; I am Marīci of the ‘Maruts;’ and the moon among twenty-seven stars (*nakṣatras*). I am the ‘*Sāmaveda*’ among the *Vedas*; Indira among gods; among senses, I am the mind; and I am life-energy in living beings. Of the eleven Rudras, I am (Lord) ‘Śiva;’ among *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas*, I am the Lord of wealth, ‘*Kubera*;’ among the eight *Vasus*, I am ‘Agni;’ and of the mountain peaks, I am verily the ‘Sumeru.’

O Pārtha! Among the priests, Know Me to be the chief, ‘Bṛhaspati;’ among the warrior-chiefs, I am ‘Skanda’ (Kārtikeya); and among reservoirs of water, I am the ocean. Among the great seers (*rshis*), I am ‘Bṛghu’ and among words, I am the one sacred syllable ‘OM’ (*Pranava* or *Om̐kāra*—recitation of OM).’ Among all the *yajña* (sacred sacrifices), I am the *Yajña* of *Japa* (recitation/repetition of Holy Names) and among immovable things, I am the ‘Himālaya.’ Among the trees, I am Aśvattha (‘Pipal,’ the holy fig-tree); among divine sages, ‘Nārada;’ among celestial musicians (*Gandharvas*), ‘Chitraratha;’ and among the naturally perfected sages, I am the sage ‘Kapila.’ Among horses, know Me to be the ‘Uchchaiśravas,’ produced during the churning of the ocean for the nectar of immortality; among mighty elephants I am ‘Airāvata;’ and among men, know Me to be the King who rears, protects, and rules all the people. Among weapons I am ‘thunderbolt’ (made of the bone of rishi Dadhīci); among cows, I am ‘Kāmdhenu’ (the cow produced during churning of the ocean); and I am Kāmdēva—the cause of legitimate offspring. Among serpents, I am Vāsuki; of water creatures, I am chief ‘Varuṇa.’ Among the ancestors, I am ‘Aryamā;’ and among the rulers over creatures, I am ‘Yamarāj’ (the Lord of Death). Among the Daityas (sons of Diti who fought with gods), I am ‘Prahāda’ (devotee of Lord Viṣṇu), and among reckoners, I am Time; among animals, I am the lion; among birds, ‘Garuḍa’ (vehicle of Lord Viṣṇu); of the purifiers, I am the wind; among warriors, I am Sri Rāma; among the sea creatures, I am the shark; and among rivers, I am the Holy river Ganges.

O Arjuna! I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all creations. Of all the types of knowledge, I am knowledge of the Supreme Self (the knowledge that liberates); and among the disputants, I am the ‘*Vāda*’—the right type of reasoning (the one that determines the essential truth). I am the letter ‘A’ (*akāra*) among letters; and among all compounds (in grammar), I am the dual compound (*dvandvaḥ sāmās*). I am the Inexhaustible Time, the Great devourer of Time, and I alone am the sustainer of all—facing in all directions. I am the all-devouring Death and I am the cause of all that are to be born. Among the women and the feminine qualities, I am Kīrtiḥ, Śrī, Vāk, Smṛti, Medhā, Dhṛtiḥ, and Kṣamā (the goddesses presiding over glory, prosperity, speech, memory,

intelligence, patience, and forgiveness). Among the hymns (*srutis*) that sung in the *Sāmveda*, I am the ‘Brihatsāma;’ among the Vedic meters, I am the sacred hymn ‘Gāyatrī;’ among the twelve months, ‘Mārgaśirṣa’ (the period corresponding to mid-November to mid-December); and among seasons, I am the spring season. I am the gambling of the fraudulent; the splendor of the splendid; victory of the victorious; the resolve of the resolute; and the piousness of the pious. Of the Vṛṣṇis, I am Vāsudeva; of the Pāṇḍavas, I am Arjuna (i.e., you); among sages, I am ‘Veda Vyāsa;’ and among the scholars who properly know the doctrines of the scriptures, I am the sage ‘Sukrācārya.’ I am the sceptre of those that punish and the statesmanship of those that seek victory. Of things secret, I am the silence; and I am the wisdom of the wise. What more can I say, I am verily the seed (root-cause) of all beings. There is no being, whether moving or unmoving, that can exist without Me.

[Śrī Bhagavān has described His eighty-two glories (vibhūtīs). Whatever distinctiveness, uniqueness, greatness, prominence is seen, it is not of itself but of God’s and has stemmed from God. Therefore, wherever any special quality is observed in the universe, instead of viewing it as the personal quality of the object, person, etc., it should be seen as God’s glory and should direct our attention towards God. Really speaking, the purpose of describing the glories (of the Lord) is to do away with (the attraction of) the (assumed) reality, significance, and dearness of the world so as to help us experience the reality of ‘Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam’ (All is Vāsudeva only!), which is the main goal of the Gita.]

O Arjuna! There is no end to my Divine glories. Whatever I have told you by way of my glories is but a brief indication by way of mere examples of the extent of My glory. Whatever opulence, brilliance, or strength is seen in any object or person in the entire universe—know all that to have sprung from but a spark of My *Yogīc* Splendor. What need is there to know all this, when I, who support the entire creation (infinite universes) pervading it with a single fraction of Myself, am sitting right in front of you?

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 11

Viśvarupadarśanayogaḥ: The Yoga of Vision of the Universal Form

In whose infinitesimal fraction of the Divine Form reside infinite universes, that very same Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is sitting right in front of me as my charioteer

holding the reigns of the horses—thinking thus, Arjuna, perceiving Śrī Bhagavān’s profound compassion, exclaimed—Due to the supremely mysterious spiritual knowledge (that ‘I am verily the primal source of all’) which you have spoken out of Your sheer kindness for me, my delusion has been dispelled. O Lotus-eyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa! I have heard in detail the origin and the dissolution of all beings, and also of Your Imperishable majesty, O Supreme Person! What you have described as your Divine Splendor, I accept it to be verily so. O Supreme Lord! Now I desire to see that Divine Form of Yours, in which permeate infinite universes. O Lord! If You think me capable to behold Your Divine Form, then, O Lord of *Yogas*, pray reveal to me Your Imperishable (eternal) Form.

Upon hearing Arjuna’s plea (and granting him the permission to behold the universal form), Śrī Kṛṣṇa said—O Pārtha! Behold My manifold, hundreds-thousands of divine forms, of various colors and numerous shapes. O Bhārata! Behold in Me the twelve sons of Aditi, eight Vasu, eleven Rudra, and two Aśvinīkumāras—these thirty-three types of demigods and forty-nine Marut-gaṇas (wind-gods). In addition, witness also many other wondrous forms never seen before. O Gudākeśa! Behold at once right now in this very form of Mine, the whole universe centered in one part—including the moving and the unmoving (objects). Besides, witness also anything else (such as the outcome of this battle) that you may desire to see.

[The Lord repeatedly granted the permission to Arjuna to see His universal form, but Arjuna was not able to see anything at all. Therefore, Śrī Bhagavān said—] But you will not be able to see My Divine Form with these (physical) eyes of yours; therefore, I bestow on you the divine vision with which you will be able to see my divine majestic power.

[Having said so, Śrī Bhagavān granted Arjuna the divine vision, i.e., bestowed the divine power on Arjuna’s physical eyes. Sañjaya too had been granted the divine vision by the great sage Veda Vyāsaji; so, he, along with Arjuna, was also able to witness the divine form of Śrī Bhagavān. Now, Sañjaya tells about the vision of the same Universal Form to Dhṛtarāṣṭra.]

Sañjaya said—O King! Having granted Arjuna the divine vision, the Great Lord of *Yoga*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, revealed to him His supremely glorious Divine Form. Then the Lord showed His ever-wondrous Form, having faces on all sides, with numerous mouths and eyes, with numerous wondrous forms, holding numerous celestial uplifted weapons, wearing numerous divine garlands around neck, wearing celestial apparel, and anointed on forehead and all over the body with divine sandal-paste. Even if a thousand suns were to rise up simultaneously in the sky, still that brilliance would not equal the splendor of the universal Form of that exalted Being.

Arjuna saw, resting in a fraction of the body of the Lord of lords, the whole universe, with its manifold divisions. Wherever Arjuna casts his vision on the Lord’s form, there only he witnesses countless universes. Seeing such a majestic

form that he could have never imagined, Arjuna became wonder-struck, his hair standing on end. He reverentially bowed down his head and, with folded hands, started adoring Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Arjuna said—(*The vision and description of Lord's gentle godly Form*—) O Lord! I behold within Your body, all gods and hosts of particular types of beings; the Lord Brahmā, throned on lotus-seat; the Lord Śiva, seated on mount Kailāsh; all the ṛṣis and celestial serpents living in the netherworlds. O Lord of the universe! O universal Form! Extended in all directions, I behold Your boundless Form with numerous hands, stomachs, mouths and eyes. I neither see Your beginning, nor the middle, and nor also the end. I behold you crowned and endowed with diadem, club, and discus. Besides I see You with infinite splendor, a mass of radiance shinning all around, having the brilliance of blazing fire and sun, very hard to look at, and immeasurable on all sides. It is my belief that You are verily the Supreme Imperishable Brahman (formless-attributeless-absolute Self) worthy to be known; You verily are the ultimate support (formless-with attributes) of the this whole universe; and You are the Eternal Imperishable Being (with form and with attributes).

(*The vision and description of Lord's dreadful Form*—) I see You without beginning, middle, or end; infinite in power, with countless arms, having the moon and the sun as Your eyes; with a mouth blazing with fire. O Great-souled One! The space betwixt heaven and earth and all the quarters as well as the ten directions are filled by You alone. All the three worlds are getting scared by seeing Your marvelous and dreadful Form. Hosts of gods, which I saw when I went to Heaven, are seen to be entering in Your Form. Many among them, being afraid, extol Your names and glories with folded hands. Groups of great sages and perfected ones, by means of excellent hymns, extol You saying 'May there be peace.' The eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas, eight Vasus, twelve Sādhyas, ten Viśvadevas, two Aświns, forty-nine Maruts, seven Piṭars and multitudes of Gandharvas, Yakṣas, Asuras, and Siddhas are all beholding You, struck with wonder.

(*The vision and description of Lord's utmost dreadful Form*—) O Mighty Armed! Seeing Your numerous mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, feet, stomachs, and many terrible tusks, all the beings (of the worlds) are terrified and so am I. O Viṣṇu! Seeing your frightful Form touching the sky, effulgent in various colors, with mouth wide open and great fiery eyes, my mind is terrified, and I find neither courage nor peace. Seeing Your faces, frightful with tusks blazing like the all-consuming fire of cosmic destruction (*pralaya*), I lose sense of the directions and find no peace. Be gracious, O Lord of lords! O Abode of the Universe! All the warrior chiefs of our side along with Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and Karṇa, with hosts of monarchs together with all yonder sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra—all are entering speedily into Your mouths set with dreadful tusks. Some of them are found stuck up between your teeth, with their heads crushed to powder. As the many torrents

of rivers flow towards the ocean quite naturally, so do those great warriors (who have engaged in the battle righteously, such as Bhīṣma, Droṇa, etc.) enter into Your blazing mouths. As the moths, out of their folly, swiftly rush into the blazing fire only to perish, even so do these people (who have engaged in the war out of greed for kingdoms such as Duryodhana) speedily rush (towards their destruction out of folly) into Your mouth, only to perish. Having devoured all the worlds with your blazing mouths, You are seen licking them up on all sides. O Viṣṇu! Filling the whole universe with Your fierce brilliance, Your fiery radiance is scorching the whole creation!

(After witnessing the fiercely dreadful Form of the Lord, Arjuna became so terrified that he started asking his very own friend, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus—) O Supreme Lord! My salutations to You! Be Gracious to me! Pray tell me who You are with Form so frightful. I want to know Your essential nature (reality); for I know not Your purpose.

Śrī Bhagavān said—I am the mighty world-devouring Time (*Mahākāla*), grown mature, engaged here to wipe out the world. Even without your action (i.e., engaging in the battle) all these warriors, standing arrayed in the rival armies, shall not survive; for by Me alone have they been slain already. Therefore, arise, win glory, and, conquering the enemies, enjoy the kingdom filled with wealth and prosperity. O Savyasācin (one who could shoot arrows with both hands) Arjuna! You be merely an instrument (in killing these warriors); that is, engage in the battle with all your might, but do not be proud (because you are only an apparent cause, a mere instrument—*nimitamātra*). Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Jayadratha, Karṇa and all other brave warriors have already been killed by Me; (therefore) kill these warriors who have already been slain by Me. Do not be distressed with fear. Fight and you will surely conquer your enemies in the battle.

Sañjaya said—Hearing these words of Śrī Bhagavān Keśava (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), the crowned one (Arjuna), prostrated to Him with folded hands; and bowing again, overcome by great fear, started chanting, in an ecstasy of adoration and anguish, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glories.

Arjuna said—O Lord—the Indwelling Spirit—This whole world rejoices and delights in glorifying You, chanting your divine names and glories by your devotees and is filled with love by becoming one with You. All the demons (*Rākṣasas*) flee in fear in all directions, and all the hosts of the perfected ones (*siddhas*), saints, and great-souls are bowing to You in reverence. You are the Primal Teacher and You are the Primal Cause—the creator of even the Lord of creation, Brahmā. And why should they not bow down to You, O Infinite Being! O Lord of all gods! O Abode of the Universe! You are the Imperishable One! You are also the Existent (*Sat*), the Non-existent (*Asat*), as well as that which is beyond both the Existent and the Non-existent. You are verily the Primal Lord of all gods, and the Eternal, the most Ancient Person. You are verily the Supreme Resting Place of the universe. You alone are the Knower of everyone and the

One worthy to be known by everyone and the Ultimate Goal. You are the Supreme Abode. O Boundless Form! You verily pervade in every particle of the universe. You are *Vāyu* (god of wind), *Yamarāja* (god of death), *Agni* (god of fire), *Varuna* (god of water), Moon-god, *Daksha*, etc.; *Prajāpati* (lord of creatures), *Brahmā* (god of creation) and also the Great-grandsire of even Lord *Brahmā*. Salutations to You a thousand times! Salutations to You! Again and again also, Salutations to You! O Soul of All! Salutations to You from the front and from the behind, and salutations to You on every side! O Lord of Infinite Power! You are of immeasurable might. You pervade all and everything in the universe—therefore, *You are verily all and everything!*

O the Unwavering One! Being unaware of Your unique greatness and nature before and presumptuously considering You merely as a friend, I have, carelessly or out of affection, addressed You simply as “O Kṛṣṇa,” “O Yādava,” “O friend;” regarding You as my equal and merely a friend, in whatever way I may have been disrespectful to You, in jest, while playing, or resting, while sitting or dining, either alone or in the presence of others—I beg You, O the Immeasurable One, kindly please do pardon me for all those transgresses.

You are verily the Father of all the moving and the unmoving creation; You are worthy of utmost veneration, and You are verily the greatest Teacher of all teachers. O Lord of incomparable power, in all the three worlds, there is no one even equal to you, how then could there be one greater than You? Therefore, O Adorable Lord, prostrating my body in adoration at your feet, I seek Your Grace. As a father (bears with and) forgives his son, a friend forgives a dear friend, and a husband forgives his dear wife, even so You kindly forgive me (for all the disrespect I may have presumptuously shown to You). I am overjoyed to see your wondrous Cosmic Form, which was never seen before; at the same time, my mind is distressed with fear. Be gracious, O Lord of gods, O Abode of the universe, pray show again your (previous) felicitous divine form—the form of Viṣṇu—the one I saw in the very beginning. I want to see You, as before, with your crown, mace-discus-conch-lotus flower in Your hands. Therefore, O Lord with a thousand arms, O Universal Form, kindly assume Your same four-armed shape (of Viṣṇu).

Śrī Bhagavān said—O Arjuna! Do not be afraid. Pleased with you I have shown to you, through My own *Yogīc* power, this Supreme, effulgent, primeval, infinite, universal Form of Mine, which none other than you has ever seen before. O Best of the Kurus! In this world of humans, neither by the study of *Vedas* and scriptures, nor by sacred sacrifices (*yajñas*), nor by charities, nor by severe austerities, nor by elaborate (sacred) activities, can I be seen in this universal Form. This Form can only be seen by a humble recipient of My benevolent Grace like you! Seeing such an awe-inspiring Form of Mine, you should not be afraid or bewildered. Now with a fearless and cheerful (tranquil) mind, behold again the same four-armed Form of Mine.

Sañjaya said—Saying thus Bhagavān Vāsudeva first showed His four-armed Form to Arjuna. Then, to console the frightened Arjuna, the Great-souled One, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, again assumed His genial human form.

Arjuna said—O Janārdana! Seeing this graceful human form of Yours, I have regained my composure and natural state.

Śrī Bhagavān said—Extremely difficult indeed it is to see this (four-armed) Form of Mine that you have seen. Even the gods are ever eager to see this Form. Neither by the study of the *Vedas*, nor by penances, nor by charities, nor by (sacred) sacrifices can I be seen in this Form (with four-arms). O Scorcher of Foes (Arjuna)! But by unswerving devotion (*ananyayā bhakti*) alone it is possible to know Me in this (*sākār*) form, to realize Me in very truth, and so to enter into Me. He who does work for My sake (pleasure) only, he who entirely depends on Me, who lovingly worships Me, who is free from attachment (to worldly things) and from enmity to all beings, that devotee verily comes to Me.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 12

Bhaktiyogaḥ: The Yoga of Devotion

After hearing about the significance of devotion (*Bhakti*) from the Lord, Arjuna asked—‘The devotees who, ever steadfast, constantly worship You as possessing form and attributes (*saguna-sākār*) and those who worship You as formless and attributeless (*nirguna-nirākār*)—which of these two types of devotees are the best?’

Śrī Bhagavān said—‘Those who fixing their mind on Me, with the thought that ‘I am verily God’s and God alone is mine’—who are constantly devoted to me; who, with supreme faith (*Śraddhā*), continuously worship Me (as *saguna-sākār*), I consider them to be the most perfect *yogīs* (devotees). Those who are delightfully devoted to the welfare of all beings, even-minded towards all, with senses subdued, worship the Imperishable, the Ineffable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the Immutable, the Constant, and the Eternal—they also come to Me indeed. Because the attributeless and the formless are verily My Form only; they are not any different from My Integral Form in its entirety. But devotees who lack dispassion and have body-conceit (*dehābhimān*) are not able to merge their minds in the Attributeless-Essence (*nirguna-tattva*). Such devotees find it difficult to worship the Attributeless.

But O Arjuna, those who worship Me, renouncing all actions in Me, rely

exclusively on Me as the Supreme Goal, meditate on Me with single-minded devotion—to them, whose minds are thus absorbed in Me, I Myself deliver swiftly from the death-fraught ocean of the world. Therefore, fix your mind on Me only, let your thoughts rest on Me alone; then in Me alone you will live thereafter. Of this there is no doubt.

O Arjuna! If you are unable to fix your thought steadily on Me, then seek to attain Me by the *yoga* of constant practice (*abhyāsa-yoga*).* If you are unable to practice even *Abhyāsa-Yoga*, then try to perform all actions only for My sake (i.e., in order to attain Me); even by performing actions for My sake you will attain perfection. If you consider yourself incapable of even performing all actions for My sake, then renounce the desire for fruits (results) of all the actions. Better indeed is knowledge (of scriptures) than practice; better than (mere) knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is the renunciation of the (desire for) fruit of actions; for peace immediately follows renunciation.

[Thus, Śrī Bhagavān has described here four means to spiritual welfare for human beings—(1) Surrender Yoga, (2) Abhyāsa Yoga, (3) Performing actions for God’s sake, and (4) Renunciation of the fruits of action (karmaphalatyāga). Depending upon one’s interest, faith, and competence, one can seek one’s spiritual welfare by following any one of these four practices. Now Śrī Bhagavān describes the characteristics of devotees perfected by all these four methods in the following five sub-sections (prakaranas)]

(First Section—) My devotee who *sees* Me in all beings has no ill-will towards any being. Rather, such a person has a feeling of friendliness and compassion towards all beings. He is free from the feelings of “I and mine,” even-minded in pleasure and pain, and is forgiving. He is ever content under all circumstances and constantly experiences oneness with Me. His body, mind, and intellect remain naturally under his control. He is of firm conviction in Me alone and has dedicated his mind and intellect to Me. Such devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

(Second Section—) My devotee does not cause agitation to anyone and is not agitated by anyone. He is always free from such feelings as joy and anger, fear and anxiety. When, in one’s view, there is no Reality besides Me, then who would one feel anxious, envious, and afraid of and why. Such devotee of Mine is dear to Me.

(Third Section—) He who has no expectations for any object, person, etc.; who is pure in body and mind; who has accomplished what is worth accomplishing (i.e., has realized God); who is unconcerned and unattached in all circumstances; whose mind is untroubled by pain, worry, sorrow, etc.; and who does not initiate any new undertaking for the sake of sense-gratification and hoarding—such a

* To try to repeatedly concentrate the mind on one object is called ‘*abhyāsa*’ (repeated practice). And the evenness of mind (*samatā*) is called *Yoga*. To engage in the practice (*abhyāsa*) while maintaining *samatā* (equanimity) is verily called ‘*Abhyāsa-Yoga*.’ Chanting (*bhajan*), repetition/remembrance of Divine names (*namajapa*) etc., performed with the sole purpose of God-realization is ‘*Abhyāsa-Yoga*.’

devotee is dear to Me.

(*Fourth Section*—) He who is ever free from four *vikāras* (mental modifications)—attachment/attraction (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*), joy (*haraśa*), and sorrow (*śoka*)—and has no attachment to good actions and aversion to evil actions—such a devotee is dear to Me.

(*Fifth Section*—) He who is alike to friend and foe; equanimous in honor and dishonor, in pleasant and unpleasant, joy and sorrow; who is free from attachment whatsoever (to persons and objects); who regards praise and blame alike; who constantly contemplates on My essential nature; who is ever content with whatever way body’s sustenance comes about or not; who is free from the sense of ownership and attachment with regard to his body and his dwelling-place; and whose mind is steadfast in My Devotion—such a devotee is dear to Me.

[The reason for describing different characteristics of devotees in five sections is that, due to differences in mode of practice, circumstances, etc., there is also some variation in the nature of devotees. Even then, as far as relinquishing the relationship with the world and love for God is concerned, all devotees are verily alike.]

But those who have full faith (*śraddhā*) in Me, who regard Me as the Supreme Goal, and who diligently follow the qualities of perfected devotees as described above—such aspirant-devotees are exceedingly dear to Me. It is because, despite having not attained Me yet, they still have full faith in Me and are exclusively devoted to Me.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 13

Kṣetra-Kṣetrajña vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of Discrimination between the Field and the Knower of the Field

In response to Arjuna’s question at the beginning of chapter twelve, Śrī Bhagavān explained in detail the *yoga* of devotion of His Divine Form with attributes (*saguna-sākārsvarupa*). Explaining now the *yoga* of devotion of His attributeless and formless Divine Form (*nirguna-nirākār svarupa*), Śrī Bhagavān said—O Son of Kuntī! The (physical) body which is referred to as ‘This’ is called the ‘field’ (*kṣetra*); and the one who knows this field, and has relationship with it, the discerning sages call that ‘self’ or ‘soul’ (*Jiva-ātman*) the “Knower of the Field” (*kṣetrajña*). O Descendent of Bhārata (Arjuna)! Know Me verily as the Knower (*kṣetrajña*) in all Fields (*kṣetras*). It means that, in essence, your oneness

is not with the body (*kṣetra*) but with Me (*kṣetrajña*)—you should know this to be so. The ‘*kṣetra*’ (the ‘field’ of activity, i.e., the ‘body’) has oneness with the world and ‘*kṣetrajña*’ (the ‘knower’ of the body, i.e., the ‘soul’) has oneness with Me—I consider *this* knowledge of the ‘field’ and the ‘Knower of the Field’ (*kṣetra-kṣetrajña*) verily to be the *real* Knowledge (*jñānam*). Hear from Me in brief what this ‘*kṣetra*’ is, what its nature is, what its modifications are, and whence does it spring forth.

And also hear from Me briefly what ‘*kṣetrajña*’ is, and what are its glory (or powers). The essential truth of all this (‘*kṣetra-kṣetrajña*’) has been expounded by the sages (*ṛṣis*) in many different ways; in various *vedic* chants; and also in the well-reasoned and conclusive aphorisms of *Brahma-sūtras*.

The Primordial Matter (*mūla-Prakṛti*), the totality of Intellect (*samaṣṭi-buddhi* or *mahātattva*), the totality of Ego (*samaṣṭi-ahamkāra*), the Five Great Elements (earth, water, fire, air, and space), the ten senses, the mind, and the five objects of the senses (sound, touch, form, taste, and smell)—these twenty-four elements constitute the ‘*kṣetra*’ or the ‘Field.’ Desire, hatred, pleasure and pain, the physical body, consciousness, and will—these seven are the modifications of the Field.

[*The modifications by way of desire, hatred, etc., arise only when we identify with the body. Then these modifications start affecting us. Thus, Śrī Bhagavān describes twenty means of true knowledge for ending our deemed identification with the body or dehābhīmān (body-conceit)—*]

1. Absence of self-importance, 2. unpretentiousness, 3. non-violence (not causing any injury to anyone through one’s body, mind, and speech), 4. forgiveness, 5. simplicity of body, mind, and speech, 6. service of the teacher (who is liberated-in-life), 7. purity of body and mind, 8. steadfastness of purpose, 9. self-restraint, 10. dispassion toward sense-objects, 11. (and also) absence of ego (absence of the sense that ‘I am body’), 12. perception of pain and misery inherent in birth, death, old age, and sickness, and, by developing dispassion, to end the root cause of misery (i.e., the desire for pleasure), 13. abandonment of worldly attachment, 14. detachment from property and family members and non-identification with them and their fortunes, 15. evenness of mind in favorable (desirable) and unfavorable (undesirable) situations, 16. relying exclusively on God as the sole support/refuge by relinquishing dependence on the world, and, through unswerving devotion (*avyabhicārīṇi bhakti*), contemplating on Me as one’s ‘own,’ 17. resorting to solitary places, 18. lack of interest (or liking) in a crowd of people (who are immersed in the enjoyment of worldly sense-objects), 19. contemplating always and constantly on the unreality of the world and on the reality of God, and 20. seeing God everywhere and in everything.

All these twenty means (*sādhana*), capable of eradicating the body-conceit (*dehābhīmān*), are declared to be ‘Knowledge;’ and what is opposite to it—all faults such as self-pride, hypocrisy, violence, etc., since they boost the body-conceit (*dehābhīmān*)—is all ‘ignorance.’ I will now describe that Essence of

Supreme Self (*Paramātmā-tattva*) which is to be known and by knowing which one attains to Immortality (*yat jñātvā amṛtam aśnute*).

This *Paramātmā-tattva* is the Supreme Brahman, the Eternal Being who cannot be described either as existent (*Sat*) or non-existent (*Asat*)—in the manner sense-bound objects are described—for It is beyond these dualities. It has hands and feet everywhere, eyes, heads, and mouths everywhere, with ears all-around; thus, It is not distant from any being. It abides constantly enveloping all and everything. It is the source of all senses though It is free from all senses. It is unattached to any being; yet It verily sustains all beings. Though Itself without any attributes, It is the enjoyer of all attributes (three modes of *Prakṛti*). It is present inside and outside all the beings, and exists verily in the form of moving as well as unmoving—that is, there is nothing besides God in the universe. From the standpoint of place, time, and objects, That Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*) is verily farthest of the far and yet nearest of the near. Being subtle, It is beyond the comprehension of senses, mind, and intellect. Though Itself undivided (One), yet It appears as if divided (many) in all beings. That One Supreme Self—the only object worth knowing—is the creator (as *Brahmā*), the sustainer (as *Viṣṇu*), and the destroyer (as *Śiva*) of all beings. That Supreme Being is the Light of all lights; utterly beyond darkness (ignorance)—because It is of the nature of Knowledge Itself. That Supreme Self alone is the object and goal of knowledge, knowing which, there is nothing else that remains here to be known. It can only be realized through the true knowledge of Essential Reality (*tattva-jñāna*), and not through any activity, objects, etc. That Supreme Being (*Paramātmā*) eternally resides in the hearts of all beings. Thus, the aspirant should know all three—the Field (*viz.*, the physical body and the material Nature), Knowledge (i.e., the twenty means), and the Object of all knowledge, the Supreme Self—which have been briefly explained by Me. Realizing the essential truth of all three, My devotee verily attains a state of non-separation (oneness) with Me.

Know both *Prakṛti* (Nature) and *Puruṣa* (Supreme Spirit or Being) to be beginningless, eternal entities. Though both are beginningless, there is a great difference in their respective nature. All modifications (*vikār*) and attributes (*guṇas*) are born of *Prakṛti*; but *Puruṣa* is beyond all modifications and attributes. The effects (five great elements and their five objects such as sound, etc.), the instruments (ten senses and mind-intellect-ego)—and whatever activities are performed by these—all proceed from *Prakṛti*. But the experience of pleasure under favorable conditions and of pain under unfavorable conditions—this experience of pleasure and pain takes place within the *Puruṣa*. In fact, the *Puruṣa* becomes the ‘experiencer’ (*bhogatā*) only by identifying with the body which is born of *Prakṛti*. Association with the *guṇas* (modes of *Prakṛti*)—that is, regarding the body as ‘I’ and ‘mine’—is the source of its good and evil births.

As a man becomes a ‘father’ in relation to son, a ‘husband’ in relation to wife, and ‘brother’ in relation to sister, even so this *Puruṣa* (Supreme Being),

by identifying with the body, becomes the unconcerned ‘Witness’ (*upadraṣṭā*); by sanctioning activities, becomes the Overseer and the ‘Permitter’ (*anumantā*); by considering itself to be the provider of sustenance, becomes the ‘Sustainer’ (*bhartā*); by experiencing pleasure and pain due to attachment with the body, becomes the ‘Enjoyer’ (*bhogtā*), and considering itself to be the owner of the body, becomes the ‘Great Lord’ (*Maheśavara*). But in its essential reality, this *Puruṣa* is referred to as the ‘Supreme Self’ (*Paramātmā*). Despite dwelling in the physical body, It is utterly free from its association with the body. He who thus knows the *Puruṣa*, free from attributes (*guṇas*), and the *Prakṛti*, along with its effects (*guṇas* or modes of Nature)—such a person, even though performing all duties prescribed by the scriptures, is never born again. That is, such a person becomes free from the cycle of births and deaths. Some by the path of meditation, others by the path of knowledge, and still others by the path of actions realize the Supreme Spirit within themselves by themselves. Those not knowing the path of meditation, knowledge etc., but who have great longing to know the essential reality, such persons too, after steadfastly following the teachings of great souls who are liberated-in-life, attain to the liberating knowledge of the essential reality.

O the Best of Bhāratas! Whatever being is born, moving or unmoving—know that it has sprung from the union of the Field (‘*kṣetra*’—*Prakṛti* or matter) and the Knower of the Field (‘*kṣetrajña*’—*Puruṣa* or the Supreme Spirit). The *assumption* of relationship of “I”-and- “Mine” with the *kṣetra* (Matter) by the *kṣetrajña* (Spirit) is verily the ‘union of *kṣetra* and *kṣetrajña*.’ He who sees the One Supreme Spirit abiding equally as imperishable in all perishable beings, that person truly sees the essential truth. One who considers himself non-separate from the body, and assumes to be born with the birth of the body and to be dying with the death of the body, such a person destroys one’s Self by the self—that is, augurs his own downfall by becoming prey to the cycle of births and deaths. But one who perceives the Supreme Lord present equally everywhere—i.e., one who experiences non-separation from the Supreme Spirit—such a person does not destroy one’s Self by the self, and attains to the Highest Goal (the Supreme Self).

There is constant movement/activity taking place in the *Prakṛti* (matter or Nature); whereas the Self is free from any activity or action. By identifying with this ever-changing *Prakṛti*, one starts perceiving the actions, that are being performed by the (physical) body, to be taking place within one’s own self. But he who sees all actions everywhere as being performed by the material nature (*Prakṛti* or its *guṇas*) alone—and sees one’s self to be actionless witness—that person really sees the essential truth. When one sees the separate existence of all beings in a single source, the One eternal material nature, and their emanations from that (One) alone, at that time one’s relationship with the material nature is severed and one attains to Brahman.

O Son of Kuntī! This Self or Soul (*Puruṣa*), being without beginning and

beyond the influence of the three *guṇas* (*Sattva-Rajas-Tamas*), is verily the Imperishable Supreme Spirit. That Supreme Self, though dwelling in the body, neither acts nor is tainted. Just as the all-pervading space (*Ākāśha*), due to its subtlety, is not tainted in any way (by any object, person, etc.); even so the Self, though present everywhere in its fullness, is never affected by the attributes of the body. O Descendent of Bhārata! Just as one sun illumines this whole universe, so does One Self (*Puruṣa*) illumines the whole Field (or bodies). In other words, just as all the activities of the world are carried out in the sunlight, but the sun does not partake any responsibility in the performance or happening of those activities; similarly the activities of all fields (*kṣetras*) take place on account of the verve of the indwelling Spirit (*Puruṣa*), yet the Supreme Spirit does not become the cause of performance or happening of those activities. Those who perceive thus by their eye of wisdom the distinction between *kṣetra* (material nature or physical body) and *kṣetrajña* (the Knower of field or the indwelling spirit)—as also the freedom of spirit from the hold of material nature—they attain to the Supreme Spirit. Then, in their view, there exists nothing apart from God.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



॥ Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ ॥

Chapter 14

Guṇa-traya-vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Division of the Three Guṇas

The individual self (*Jīva*) feels itself in bondage on account of two things—due to *Prakṛti* (material nature) and due to the effects of *Prakṛti* in the form of the three modes (*guṇas*) of material nature, i.e., *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. In the thirteenth chapter, Śrī Bhagavān explained how to be free from the influence of material nature. Now the Lord starts the fourteenth chapter to explain how to be free from the bondage of the three modes born of material nature. Śrī Bhagavān said—I will now expound to you once again that knowledge which is the highest and the most exalted among all worldly and spiritual forms of knowledge—knowing which all sages have passed from this mortal world (*saṃsāra*) to the highest perfection—the Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*). Having realized this knowledge, those, who have attained to My State (of *Satchitanandaghana*—Being-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute), are not born again even at the beginning of a new cycle of cosmic creation (*mahāsarga*), nor are they distressed at the time of great cosmic dissolution (*mahāpralaya*). They become forever free from the cycle of birth and death.

O Bhārata! My Primordial Nature (*Mūla-Prakṛti*) is the womb, in that I cast

the germ by way of conscious (*chetan*) principle or soul, out of which everything comes into being. O Son of Kuntī! In this manner whatever forms of beings are born in all life forms, the Primordial Matter is their conceiving Mother—the source of their origin, and I am the Father who casts the seed (providing conscious element by way of individual soul).

O Mighty Armed (Arjuna)! *Sattva-Rajas-Tamas**—these three *Guṇas* (modes or qualities) are born of material nature. But by identifying with the body through ‘I’-‘Mine’ relationship, these qualities (*guṇas*) bind the Imperishable soul to the perishable, inert body. Of these three *guṇas*, the ‘*sattvagūṇa*’ is pure—compared to *rajogūṇa* and *tamogūṇa*—as it is luminous and free from sorrow. It binds the soul through attachment to happiness and knowledge. In other words, it conditions the soul and does not let it transcend the three *guṇas* (*triguṇātīta*). O Son of Kuntī! Know the ‘*rajogūṇa*’ to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to desire (for unattained objects) and attachment (for those one already possesses). It binds the soul by entangling it in actions (through the feeling ‘I am the doer.’) O Bhārata! *Tamogūṇa* is ignorance-born and deludes all embodied beings by covering their sense of discrimination (*viveka*). It binds the soul to the body through negligence (*pramād*),† sloth, and sleepiness and does not let a person progress in worldly and spiritual matters.

O Bhārata! *Sattvagūṇa* rules over the embodied soul by causing attachment to happiness and *rajogūṇa* dominates it by causing attachment to actions, while *tamogūṇa* rules over the embodied soul by clouding discrimination and by inclining it to negligence. O Bhārata! ‘*Sattvagūṇa*’ prevails by overpowering the tendencies of *rajogūṇa* (activity) and *tamogūṇa* (dullness); ‘*rajogūṇa*’ prevails by dominating the tendencies of *sattvagūṇa* (goodness) and *tamogūṇa*; and likewise, ‘*tamogūṇa*’ grows by dominating *sattvagūṇa* and *rajogūṇa*. Accordingly, one *guṇa* (mode or quality) prevails by empowering the (other) two and the dominating quality rules over the embodied soul and binds it.

When ‘*sattvagūṇa*’ is on the rise, at that time all the senses and *antaḥakāran*• become free from slumber, sloth, and slackness, and one experiences clarity and discernment. When ‘*rajogūṇa*’ is on the rise, at that time greed, activity, undertaking of ever new actions for the purpose of sense gratification (*bhoga*) and hoarding (*saṅgraha*), restlessness, and longing—these tendencies arise. When ‘*tamogūṇa*’ is on the rise, at that time there remains no purity in the senses and

* *Sattva* refers to qualities such as purity, goodness; *Rajas* denotes such qualities as activity, passion etc.; and *Tamas* refers to qualities such as inertia, dullness, etc. According to the *Sāṃkhya* system, ascribed to sage Kapila, *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* represent two principles, the spirit and the matter. Both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* are eternal and unmanifest. *Prakṛti* contains three constituent strands, called *guṇas*. There is nothing in the material world that is free from these three *guṇas* (*Gītā* 18.40).

† *Pramād* means not doing what is worth doing and doing what is not worth doing—i.e., engaging in smoking, playing cards, sports entertainment etc.

• *Antaḥakāran* is the inner (psychic) organ/faculty of perception/conception that includes *mann* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect), *chit* (memory), and *ahaṃkāra* (ego).

antaḥkaran and one does not feel like doing anything. One becomes negligent and one's *antaḥkaran* is overcome by delusion.

If one dies when 'sattvaguna' is prevailing, then one attains to the pure worlds attained by virtuous persons. If one dies when 'rajoguna' is predominant, one is reborn again in the mortal world of humans. If one dies when 'tamoguna' is prevailing, then one is born in the wombs of creatures without reason, such as beasts, birds, insects, moths, trees, creepers etc. *Sāttvika* action leads to purity, *Rājasika* action leads to sorrow, and *Tāmasika* action leads to delusion (or lack of discrimination). From *Sattva* arises knowledge (discernment); from *Rajas*, greed; and from *Tamas*, ignorance and delusion. Those established in 'sattvaguna' evolve to higher regions, while those abiding in 'rajoguna' remain in the middle region (i.e., they are reborn again in the mortal world of human beings). Those steeped in 'tamoguna' sink downwards upon death (i.e., they are born in lower regions as well in lower life forms).

There is no doer other than the three *guṇas* (modes); i.e., all activities are performed by the modes (*guṇas*) of material nature (*Prakṛti*)—understanding thus, a discerning aspirant, who knows who knows himself beyond the *guṇas*, attains to My Being. Such a discerning aspirant, transcending the three *guṇas* from which the body has sprung, becomes free from the sorrows of birth, death, and old age and attains eternal life (*amṛtam aśnute*).

After listening about the attainment of immortality by one who has gone beyond *guṇas* (*guṇātīta*), Arjuna, yearning to know the qualities of such a person, asks Srī Bhagavān—O Lord! I want to know the marks of one who has transcended these three *guṇas*. How does such a person behave? And how does one rise above the three *guṇas*?

Srī Bhagavān said—(*Signs that characterize the transcendent sage*, i.e., one who has transcended the *guṇas*) O Son of Pāndu! *Sattvaguna* is marked by 'illumination,' *rajoguna* is marked by 'activity,' and *tamoguna* is marked by 'delusion'—the transcendent sage (*guṇātīta*) does not hate when these tendencies arise (that 'these tendencies may come to pass') nor longs for them (that 'these tendencies may appear again') when they cease. Such a person remains naturally unattached (*niṛlipta*) to these tendencies. Such a person lives like an unconcerned witness (*udāsīn*) and does not get perturbed by the tendencies or modes arising in the mind. Realizing that 'modes (of material nature) alone are operating upon the modes, i.e., all activities verily are taking place only within the *guṇas*,' the transcendent sage remains ever established steadfastly as the pure Self and does not initiate any action whatsoever.

(*Conduct of the one who has transcended the guṇas*—) The transcendent sage behaves with equanimity (*samatā*). Alike in pleasure and in pain, who is ever established in the eternal Self, regarding a clod of earth, a stone, and a piece of gold as of equal worth (without any attraction or aversion—for they are perishable); who is equanimous in the success and failure of actions, the same

in blame and praise, honor and dishonor; who is same to friend and foe; and who has abandoned all initiative of new undertakings prompted by selfish desire and attachment—such a person is called a transcendent sage. [By means of *Sattva*, one overcomes *Rajas* and *Tamas* and then gets beyond *Sattva* itself].

(*How to transcend the guṇas*—) He who serves Me through the communion of unswerving and exclusive devotion (*avyabhicāreṇa bhakti-yogena*), such a person, transcending the three modes, is fit for becoming one with Brahman. For, I indeed am the sole support of Brahman—the Immortal and the Imperishable—and of the Eternal Dharma (righteousness) and Absolute Bliss.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 15

Puruṣottamayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Supreme Person

Śrī Bhagavān said—They speak of the eternal *aśvattham* (*Pīpal*) tree with its roots above and branches below. The Supreme Spirit (God) is indeed the root (support, cause) of this cosmic tree; and Brahajāi, is verily its principal branch (stem) from which several branches have sprung forth in the form of cosmic creation. Since it does not endure till the next day, it is called '*aśvattha*.*' Since no one knows the beginning or end of this cosmic tree—and being of the nature of an eternal flow—it is called 'immutable.' Actions prompted by selfish motive as described in the *Vedas* are called its leaves. One who knows this cosmic tree in its essential reality is the knower of the truth of the *Vedas*.

Nourished by the three *guṇas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—the branches of this cosmic tree (in the form of creation) extend widely in all lower, middle, and higher regions. Sound, touch, form, taste, and smell—these five sense-objects are the shoots (buds) of these branches. Thinking about these sense-objects is indeed the sprouting forth of new buds. In the human sphere, roots of bondage resulting from fruitive actions—identification ('I am the body'-idea), attachment, and desire—extend pervading all regions, lower and higher. For, indeed the fruits of actions performed in human form have to be experienced in all the regions.

The apparent form of this cosmic tree—as true, beautiful, and pleasure-some—does not turn out to be so in reality upon mature reasoning. For, from the standpoint of time and place, this tree neither has a beginning, nor an end; nor any independent reality of its own. The aspirant should first cut asunder the roots of this tree—characterized by identification, attachment, and desire—with the strong

* It denotes *saṃsāra*, the ever-changing, mundane world of impermanence.

weapon of non-attachment (*asaṅgaśastreṇa*). That is, the aspirant should first sever affinity with this mundane world. After that, the aspirant should set about to seek that Supreme Self, the very root of this comic tree—which is the Supreme Abode and the Supreme Architect of this universe—attaining which, there is no more return to this mortal world. For this, the aspirant should take refuge in that Primal Being from whom this eternal cosmic process has streamed forth.

The aspirants who have surrendered to the Lord become free from delusion and pride (honor and dishonor of the physical body). Being free from attachment, they are able to overcome flaws born of false attachment such as the ‘sense of mine,’ etc. They abide constantly and always in the Supreme Self; they become free from all worldly desires, and from the dualities such as pleasure and pain. Such devotee-aspirants, freed from pride and delusion, desires and attachments, attain to the Imperishable, Highest Abode of the Supreme Being (*Avīnāśī, Paramapada Paramātmā*). That Supreme Abode is illumined neither by the sun, nor the moon, nor fire. For the sun, the moon and fire, etc., illumine the physical universe by receiving the illumination from that Supreme Abode only. That is My Abode Supreme, after reaching which one never returns to the mortal world.

[We are indeed a fragment of God (Īśvara-aṁśa). Therefore, the Abode of the Supreme Self is verily our true abode. That is why, attaining that Abode, one does not return to the world of conditioned existence (saṁsāra). Until we attain to that Abode, till then, like a traveller, we will keep drifting in myriad life-forms and various regions and will not find repose. For this whole world is a foreign land and is not our homeland. This is someone else’s home (parāyā ghar) and not our home. Our drifting in various life forms and regions will come to an end only when we will reach our true home.]

Having become the embodied soul (*jīva*) in this world of living beings, this *jīva* is eternally a fragment of My very own Self. That means, it essentially remains ever-established in Me and can never be separated from Me. But mistakenly turning away from Me, it considers mind and five senses (born of *Prakṛti*, the material nature) to be its own and establishes its relationship with them. Just as the wind carries the fragrance from its source, even so the embodied soul, as the controller of the body, carries the five senses and mind (subtle and causal body) from one body to another. Identifying with the mind, the embodied soul, through its five senses, *viz.*, ear, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose, enjoys, indulgingly, the sense-objects, *viz.*, sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell. In this manner, despite its being identified with the *guṇas* and enjoying the sense pleasures while living in or leaving the present body or residing in another body, *the embodied soul remains essentially unattached*. The ignorant ones do not know this mystery; rather, it is known to the discerning individuals endowed with the eye of wisdom. The *jñāna-yogīs* striving steadfastly realize this Supreme Self as residing within themselves. But those whose mind is not pure—i.e., those in whose mind worldly enjoyments and hoarding (*bhoga-saṅgraha*) are important—such irrational individuals,

despite being engaged in spiritual practices, are not able to realize this essential truth.

The splendor that proceeds from the sun and illumines the entire world, the same brilliance that is in the moon and fire, know that radiance to be Mine. Shinning as the luminosity in the sun, the moon and the fire, I verily illuminate the entire universe. Entering the earth, I sustain all living beings through my vital energy; and becoming the watery *soma** (moon), I nourish all plants and herbs. Abiding in the bodies of all living beings as the digestive fire of life (*vaiśvānara*), and associated with *prāna* (inhaling) and *apāna* (exhaling), I digest the four kinds of foods (that are chewed, swallowed, sucked, and licked). I dwell in the hearts of all creatures in a special way. From Me arise memory, wisdom, and reasoning (to dispel doubts, delusion, etc.) as well as their loss. I am indeed He who is to be known by all the *Vedas*. I am the deciding authority of the true essence of the *Vedas* and I am the knower of the *Vedas* too.

There are two types of *Puruṣas* in this world—the Perishable (inert) and the Imperishable (conscious principle). The bodies of all creatures are called ‘perishable’ while the embodied soul (*jīvātman*) is called ‘imperishable.’ But there is yet another Being, the Highest, called the Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*), who, as the Imperishable Lord, pervades and sustains all the three worlds. I am verily the Supreme Personality of Godhead (manifested in the personal form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa). I am beyond the perishable and also higher even than the imperishable. In the scriptures such *Purāṇas*, *Smṛtis*, etc., and also in the *Vedas*, I am celebrated as the ‘*Puruṣottama*’ (Supreme Person). [*akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ puruṣaḥ*: The Supreme Being higher than that which is even higher than the Imperishable—Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, II.i.2] O Bhārata! The wise devotee, who, knows me as the ‘Supreme Person,’ and turns towards Me, for such a devotee there remains nothing else here to be known. That person worships Me in every way with all his being (in all states of mind and activities), for in his view there is verily no one else other than Me and higher than Me.

O Blameless One (Arjuna)! Thus, the utmost secret *śāstra* (scriptural doctrine), the most profound of all in the entire sacred lore, has now been revealed by Me. Understanding this, a person becomes truly enlightened. For such a person, there remains nothing else here whatsoever to be known, to be done, or to be attained. His human birth becomes fulfilled for he has achieved the Highest Goal of human life.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



* Here the word ‘*soma*’ denotes to the region of the moon (*chanderloka*), which is higher than the region of sun. What we are able see with our eyes is the sphere of moon (*chandermanḍal*) and not *chanderloka*.

Chapter 16

Daiva-Asura-Sāmpad-Vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of the Distinction between the Divine and the Demoniatic Attributes

Those who are turned towards God, whose sole purpose is to attain God, such persons are the bearers of a “divine heritage.”* And those who are turned towards the world, whose purpose is to revel in sense-pleasures and to hoard objects, they are the bearers of “demoniac heritage.”† Describing the marks of both, Śrī Bhagavān said—

1. Fearlessness; 2. Perfect purity of mind; 3. Steadfastness in *Yoga (samatā)* to attain knowledge; 4. Charity; 5. Control of senses; 6. Sacrifice (as *yajña*); 7. Study of scriptures; 8. Undergoing hardships (for the sake of duty), 9. Straight-forwardness of body, mind, and speech; 10. Non-violence (non-injury by thought, word, and deed); 11. Truthfulness; 12. Freedom from anger; 13. Renunciation (of worldly desires); 14. Tranquility of mind; 15. Abstaining from slandering others; 16. Compassion towards all beings; 17. Absence of attraction towards worldly objects/enjoyments; 18. Gentleness of heart; 19. Sense of shame in deeds that are against scriptures and worldly propriety; 20. Absence of fickleness (or lack of excitement about frivolous pursuits); 21. Vigor; 22. Forgiveness (even when one has the power to punish); 23. Fortitude under all circumstances; 24. Purity of body; 25. Freedom from malice (or the feeling of revenge); and 26. Absence of craving for honor or esteem from others.

O Descendent of Bhārata! All these are the marks of those who are born with the divine nature (or properties/endowments).

1. Hypocrisy; 2. Arrogance (regarding one’s wealth, property, family, etc.); 3. Self-conceit (regarding one’s status, prestige, caste, education, etc.); 4. Anger; 5. Harshness of mind, body, and speech; and 6. Lack of sense of discrimination, i.e., lack of knowledge (ignorance) regarding real and unreal, duty and non-duty.

O Pārtha! These are the marks of those who are born with the demoniac nature (or properties/endowments).

[The root flaw is one only, from which arise all the demoniac properties; and the root quality is also one only, from which arise all the divine properties.]

* ‘*Deva*’ is the name of God. Thus, all the good qualities and good conduct conducive to God-realization are referred to as ‘Divine properties/capital.’

† ‘*Asu*’ is the name of *prāna* (vital breath/life). That is, those who are attached to their life and who are engaged in nourishing their lives (physical bodies), they are called ‘*asuras*.’ And their qualities are called ‘demoniac properties/capital.’ Being a particle of God, the ‘Divine properties’ are naturally present in the embodied soul (*jīva*); but the ‘demonic properties’ come about by identifying with the perishable objects such as physical body, etc.

The fundamental error is this—identifying with the body and the world by accepting their (independent) reality and importance. The basic quality is this—establishing relationship with God by accepting God’s reality and glory. This basic defect or basic quality is perceived in myriad forms due to the difference in the ‘degree’ of its presence.]

The divine attributes are conducive to liberation (*muktī*) and demoniac attributes lead to bondage (i.e., the cycle of birth and death). But, O Son of Pāṇdu! You should not worry in this regard for you are of divine nature (or heritage). O Pārtha! There are only two type of beings in this world—the one possessing a divine nature and the other possessing a demoniac nature. I have described (above) in detail the divine disposition; now hear in detail from Me about the demoniac type.

Persons possessing a demoniac disposition do not know exactly ‘what to do and what not to do.’ Neither is purity (external), nor good conduct, nor truthfulness is found in them. They say that in this world, all virtuous actions such as sacred sacrifice (*yajña*), charity, penance, holy places, fasting, etc., are false. According to them, the world is unreal, without any moral basis, and there is no sanctity to righteousness or unrighteousness, sacred acts or sins, etc. There is no creator of this universe and it has been brought forth only from the mutual union of male and female. They consider lust as the sole cause of all living creatures and no other cause besides this (lust). Holding fast to this atheistic view, these lost souls of feeble understanding do not accept the reality of soul. Their intellect does not function in the domain of spiritual matters. In absence of the fear of God or the next world, they (perforce) engage in cruel deeds such as killing and remain absorbed in harming the general well-being of others. Their strength is good only for the destruction of the world. Filled with insatiable desires, they remain forever engrossed in hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance. They undertake vows that harm others. Due to demoniac mind, they remain attached to impure resolves. Beset with cares and worries that end only with death, they are engrossed day and night in hoarding the objects for the gratification of their desires. They remain convinced that, in this world, there is nothing higher than sensual enjoyments and hoarding the objects—feeling certain that this is all there is to human life. They are held in bondage by a hundred ties of their hopes and expectations, which never see any fulfillment. Their life is solely devoted to the fulfillment of selfish desires and to hurting others wrathfully. Their sole purpose in life is sense gratification and amassing hoards of money, for which they adopt several unjust means such as dishonesty, deception, and theft.

Due to greed, anger, and pride, persons of demoniac nature keep thinking that ‘today I have gained this object through my cleverness; tomorrow I will achieve more; I already have this much wealth, and much more will be mine hereafter; this enemy has already been slain, the others too I will soon destroy. I am the master and no one else is equal to me in power. I am the enjoyer (of sense-pleasures); I

am the successful one; therefore, I can do whatever I wish. I am very powerful and happy; I have lots of wealth and friends. Who else can there be like me? I will perform great sacrifices, I will give great donations, and I will rejoice greatly.

In this manner, persons of demoniac nature, deluded by ignorance, entertain myriad fancies. Bewildered by numerous thoughts, entangled in the meshes of delusion, and ever given to the gratification of lust and hoarding—they fall into states that are loathsome and full of suffering.

Persons of demoniac nature regard themselves as superior and consider no one equal to them. Therefore, they always expect others to honor them. And they have lot of self-conceit, vanity, and arrogance and are always intoxicated with the pride of wealth. Whatever nominal sacrifices, charities, austerities, etc., they perform, they do for mere show (for the benefit of their own name and fame) disregarding the sacred rules. In whatever they do, they are given to egoism, stubbornness, arrogance, lust, and anger. These malicious people violate Me (the inner-controller of all), dwelling in them and also in others. They perceive faults in My virtues and in the virtues of others. These cruel haters, vilest of men, vicious, and oppressive as they are, I always hurl down these evil-doers into demoniacal life-forms in life after life, in the unending cycle of births and deaths. O Son of Kuntī! How sad that, despite receiving the rare opportunity of attaining Me during this human birth, these deluded ones, instead of attaining Me, rather keep descending to lower states life after life. When their sins do not get fully exhausted even while going through these demoniac life-forms; they descent into still lower states of degradation in order to reap the results of their left-over sins.

Lust, anger, and greed—this is the triple gate to hell destructive of the self (*tri-vidham dvāram nāśanam ātmanah*). Therefore, one should abandon these three. O Son of Kuntī! One who strives for one's spiritual welfare by abandoning these three, the gateways to hell, attains to the Supreme Goal. But he who, ignoring the scriptural injunctions—being under the sway of lust, anger, and greed—acts only as his desires prompt him, attains neither spiritual perfection, nor worldly happiness or peace, nor the Supreme Goal. Therefore, let the scriptures be your norm in determining 'what should be done and what should not be done.' Thus, you should do your work in this world according to the rules prescribed in the scriptures. [Acting in this manner, you will be gradually elevated.]

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



Chapter 17

Śraddhā-Traya-Vibhāgayogaḥ: The Yoga of Threefold Faith

Arjuna said—O Kṛṣṇa! Those who are unaware of the scriptural rules and yet worship gods, etc., with faith, what is the status of their Faith? Is it one of *Sāttvika* (goodness) or of *Rājasa* (passionate) or of *Tāmasa* (dull) nature?

Śrī Bhagavān said—Threefold is the faith (*śraddhā*) of embodied beings: *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika*. Hear about these three described separately from Me. O Descendent of Bhārata! Everyone’s faith is rooted in their natural disposition, depending upon the *Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, or *Tāmasika* nature of their (inherited) tendencies (*saṃskāra*) of past births. A person is virtually constituted of his or her faith. Therefore, what one’s faith is, that verily one is; i.e., the nature of one’s faith shapes one’s state (*sthiti*) according to itself.

The *Sāttvika* (good) person worships gods; the *Rājasika* (passionate) worships the demi-gods and demons; and the *Tāmasika* (dull) worships the spirits of the dead and ghosts. Those who, led by hypocrisy, egoism, and obstinate desire, engage in severe austerities not enjoined by scriptures, they torture their bodies as well as Me, dwelling in their hearts. Know them to be demoniac in their resolves.

Those who do not perform worship, austerities, etc., their faith can be recognized based on their food preference, since everyone eats food. Therefore, even the food which is dear to all is of three kinds. In other words, one likes the type of food according to one’s innate disposition (*Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika*). Likewise, based on one’s liking or preference, there are three kinds of sacrifice, penance, and charity. Hear from Me the distinctions of these.

(*Three Kinds of Food*—) The foods which promote longevity, virtue, vitality, health, happiness, and cheerfulness; and are firm, nourishing for the heart, savory, smooth (*ghee*, butter, almonds, etc.)—such foods are agreeable to a person of ‘*Sāttvika*’ (pure) disposition. The foods which are bitter, sour, salty, hot, pungent, harsh and scorching are liked by a person of ‘*Rājasika*’ (unduly active) disposition, and are ultimately productive of pain, grief, and disease. The foods which are half-baked or burnt, tasteless; foul-smelling such as wine, onion, garlic, etc.; stale, polluted (left over), and highly impure such as meat-fish-eggs, etc.,—such foods are liked by a person of ‘*Tāmasika*’ (impure) disposition.

(*Three Kinds of Sacrifice*—) A sacrifice (*yajña*) performed as a matter of duty without any expectation of reward, in the manner prescribed by the scriptures, is ‘*Sāttvika*’ in nature. O Best of the Bhāratas! A sacrifice (*yajña*) offered in expectation of reward and for vain display, is of ‘*Rajasika*’ nature. A sacrifice (*yajña*) performed without conforming to the scriptural rules, without donating food, without chanting of sacred *mantras*, without giving gifts (to priests as

dakṣīna), and without sincere faith, such a sacrifice is of ‘*Tamasika*’ nature.

(*Three Kinds of Austerities*—) Appropriate worship, service, obedience, respect of gods, priests (*Brahmins*), teachers, sages, seers, and self-realized persons; purity of the body, straight-forwardness (absence of haughtiness and arrogance), celibacy, and non-violence—these are considered the penances of the body. Not causing any mental anguish (disturbance) to anyone; speech that is truthful, agreeable, and beneficial; study of the scriptures, and practice of chanting God’s name (*namajapa*)—these are considered the penances of speech. Cheerfulness of mind, kindness, contemplation of God, control of the mind, and purity of motive—these constitute the penances of the mind. All these three types of penances (of the body, speech, and mind) performed with sincere devotion, without selfish motive, and without any desire for reward, are said to be of ‘*Sāttvika*’ (pure) nature. A penance which is performed ostentatiously with the object of gaining recognition, honor, and worship—such a penance is considered to be of ‘*Rajasika*’ nature (marked by passion) and is transitory and uncertain in its results. A penance performed obstinately with deluded notions, by torturing oneself or with the intention of causing harm to others, such a penance is called ‘*Tāmasika*.’

(*Three types of Charity*—) A charity given with a sense of duty, in a proper place, at a proper time, and to a worthy person, without expectation of any service in return (i.e., with unselfish motive), such a charity is considered to be ‘*Sāttvika*.’ A charity that is given expecting to receive some future service in return or looking for some reward—grudgingly and as a matter of compulsion—such a charity is said to be of ‘*Rajasika*’ nature. The charity that is given without respect, disdainfully, at the wrong place or time to an unworthy person, such a charity is said to be of the nature of ‘*Tamasika*.’

‘Om Tat Sat’—These syllables have been declared to be the threefold symbolic designations of Brahman—the Supreme Self (*Paramātmā*). In the beginning of creation, the *Vedas*, the *Brāhmaṇas*, and the *yajñas* were created by that very *Paramātmā*. That is why the followers of *Vedic* doctrine begin their scriptural acts of sacrifice, penance, charity, etc., with the utterance of the sacred syllable Om.

Those who seek their liberation perform their acts of sacrifice, penance, charity etc.,—relinquishing desire for results and selfish motive—only for the pleasure of the Absolute Self denoted by the designation ‘Tat.’

O Pārtha! The use of God’s name ‘Sat’ is made while referring to the essential reality and goodness (virtues and good conduct). The word ‘Sat’ is also associated with noble or laudable deeds. Steadfastness (sincere faith) in acts such as sacrifice, worship, penance, charity, etc., is also referred to as ‘Sat.’ Also, whatever worldly or spiritual action is performed for the sake of the Lord, it is verily regarded as ‘Sat.’ Due to their relationship with the Lord which is of the nature of Truth, the result of all such actions also becomes ‘Sat;’ i.e., they result in the realization of the Lord.

O Pārtha! Whatever worship, charity, penance, or other scriptural act is performed without sincere faith, it is declared to be ‘*Asat*.’ It is of no significance in this life or the next, i.e., its effect is not imperishable. In matters of God-realization, sincere faith and feelings matter the most, and not the activity.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari OmTat Sat!!



II Om Śrī Paramātmāne Namaḥ II

Chapter 18

Mokṣa-Sannyāsayogaḥ: The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation

Arjuna said—O Mighty Armed One! O Conqueror of the Senses (*Hṛṣīkeśa*)! O Slayer of Demon Keshin! I desire to know separately the true nature of renunciation (*Jñānayoga*) and relinquishment (*Karmayoga*).

Śrī Bhagavān said—On this topic, the learned philosophers have four perspectives: 1. Some philosophers regard renunciation (*sannyāsa*) to be the giving up of all actions prompted by selfish desire or motive; 2. Some philosophers declare relinquishing the fruits of all actions as relinquishment (*tyāga*); 3. Some declare that all actions contain a measure of evil and should be given up completely as such; and 4. Other philosophers say that (pious) acts of sacrifice, charity, and penance should not be given up. O Best of the Bhāratas (Arjuna)! Of renunciation (*sannyāsa*) and relinquishment (*tyāga*), first hear My conclusive view on this subject of relinquishment. O Best of Men (Arjuna)! Relinquishment is of three kinds—*Sāttvika*, *Rājasika*, and *Tāmasika*.

The acts of sacrifice (*yajña*), charity (*dāna*) and penance (*tapa*) should not be relinquished; rather, if they are not performed already, they should indeed be performed; for sacrifice, charity, and penance are indeed purifiers of the wise. O Pārtha! But even these pious actions (sacrifice, charity, and penance) and other prescribed actions ought to be performed, giving up attachment and desire for fruits (*karmaphalatyāga*). This is my decisive and best view.

(*Three types of Relinquishment (Tyāga)*—) Relinquishment of obligatory (*niyat**) action is not proper for anybody. Its abandonment due to delusion (*moha*)

* All actions which have been ‘ordained’ by the Scriptures are called ‘*Vihit Karma*’ (ordained actions). But out of those ordained actions, the essential actions (related to earning livelihood and for sustenance of body) that ought to be done according to one’s social order, stage of life, and circumstances, are called ‘*Niyat Karma*’ for that person. A person has a greater responsibility regarding obligatory or prescribed actions (*niyat karma*) than ordained actions (*vihit karma*). For example, a person charged with the responsibility of a watch man or as the provider of water will have these as his prescribed duties (*niyat karma*) and will be responsible as such in a special way. Therefore, there is a greater fault in abandoning one’s obligatory duties.

is declared as ‘*Tāmasika*.’ Giving up prescribed actions considering that they are verily painful or from the fear of physical suffering is called ‘*Rājasika*’ relinquishment. Such a person does not gain the reward of true renunciation (i.e., peace); but surely suffers pain, the fruit of attachment. O Arjuna! When prescribed actions are performed only as a matter of duty, giving up all attachment and also the fruit, such relinquishment is deemed to be ‘*Sāttvika*.’

Rāga-dveṣa (attraction and aversion)—both result in establishing affinity with the world. Therefore, a wise person gives up prohibited actions without any sense of aversion and performs prescribed actions without any sense of attachment to them. Such a wise relinquisher (*tyāgī*), casting away all doubts, remains ever established in his essential self (*svarupa*). For it is indeed impossible for any embodied being to give up actions entirely. Therefore, one who relinquishes the desire for the fruit of actions is said to be the true ‘relinquisher.’ It means relinquishing actions externally is not true relinquishment; only internal relinquishment is true relinquishment. Those who perform actions prompted by desire for the results certainly receive here or hereafter three types of fruit for their actions—agreeable (pleasant situation), disagreeable (painful situation), and mixed (partly agreeable and partly disagreeable situation). But those who relinquish the desire for the fruit of actions do not reap the fruit of their actions, here or hereafter.

O Mighty Armed (Arjuna)! In *Sāṅkhya* system, the doctrine by which all actions get resolved, the following five causal factors are stated for the accomplishment of all actions—1. the body, 2. the ego claiming to be the doer or agent, 3. the several instruments, i.e., internal instruments/organs (mind, intellect, and ego), external instruments/organs (ten senses), 4. the various kinds of efforts made by these instruments/organs, and finally 5. *daivam* or the impressions (*saṃskāra*). Whatever right or wrong action one initiates with one’s body, speech, and mind, these five factors are its contributory causes and not the self (*Ātman*). Despite this fact, a person of perverse mind, who, on account of his imperfect understanding, considers the pure self to be the doer, verily does not see (truly). Such a person’s understanding is not pure (or developed), for he has not given importance to his discriminating faculty (*viveka*). But he who is free from the egoistic notion—that ‘I am the doer’—and harbors no desire for the fruit of actions, such a (great-souled) liberated person, though he kills these people, he kills not really because he has no sense of doership (*kartāpan*); nor does he get bound (by actions) because he has no notion of enjoyership (*bhogtāpan*). It means that such a person has no affinity either with the activities or their fruit. [*Sin accrues only when there is egoistic notion and desire for fruits of actions. For example, if someone gets drowned in Ganges and dies, the Ganges accrues no sin; and if anyone drinks its water or irrigates farm with its water, the Ganges does not earn any merit; for the Ganges is free from the egoistic notion and also from the desire for the fruits of its actions.*]

Knowledge, the known, and the knower—these three motivate all action; the

instruments of action (senses), the action, and the agent (doer) are the three constituents (bases) of action (*karam-saṁgraha*) or fruit of work. The (*Sāṁkhya*) scripture, that enunciates the distinctions of various objects based on the differences in their modes (*guṇas*), declares three kinds of knowledge, action, and doer according to the preponderance of each of each *guṇa* of the three *guṇas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. Hear of them also as they are.

(*Three Kinds of Knowledge*—) The knowledge by which the aspirant perceives one undivided Imperishable Reality in all beings, *as undivided among the divided* (not separate in separate beings)—know that knowledge to be of the nature of ‘*Sattva*’ (good, pure, and true). The knowledge by which the aspirant perceives the Imperishable Reality as if divided as varied beings in different bodies, — know that knowledge to be ‘*Rajas*’ (of the nature of passion). However, the knowledge by which one remains completely attached to one (physical) body—i.e., considers this perishable body as one’s real self—knowledge which lacks reason, discrimination, and is trivial, that knowledge is said to be born of ‘*Tamas*’ (dullness). Really speaking, ‘*Tāmasika*’ knowledge is no knowledge; it is ignorance only.

(*Three Kinds of Actions*—) An action which is ordained by the scriptures, which is performed without a sense of doership, without attachment or aversion, and without seeking any reward—such an action is said to be ‘*Sāttvika*.’ An action that is performed to gratify one’s desires, with egoistic feeling and with much effort is said to be born of ‘*Rajas*.’ An action which is undertaken through delusion, without regard to consequences, loss or injury to others, and to one’s capacity, such an action is said to be of the nature of ‘*Tamas*’ (dullness).

(*Three Kinds of Doers*—) The doer who is free from attachment, and sense of pride and self-importance, who is endowed with firmness and enthusiasm, and who is unaffected by success or failure—is called ‘*Sāttvika*.’ A doer who is attached to actions and fruits of actions, who is greedy, violent and impure, and is easily affected by joy and sorrow, such a doer is called ‘*Rājasika*.’ A doer who is undisciplined, indiscriminate (lacking discrimination about proper and improper duty), arrogant, stubborn, ungrateful, indolent, despondent, and procrastinating (taking long time in completing something that could be completed in a short time), such a doer is called ‘*Tāmasika*.’

O Conqueror of Wealth! Now hear the triple distinction of intellect (*buddhi*) and determination (*dhṛti**) according to the three modes of nature.

(*Three Kinds of Intellect*—) O Pārtha (Arjuna)! The intellect which knows properly the paths of action and renunciation, of duty and non-duty, of fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, that intellect is ‘*Sāttvika*.’ O Pārtha! The intellect by which one cannot properly distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, such

* The faculty of resolutely maintaining one’s conviction, principles, aim, feelings, activity, inclination, and ideas etc., is called *dhṛti* (determination or steadfastness or firmness).

an intellect is called ‘*Rājasika*.’ O Son of Prithā (Arjuna)! Shrouded in darkness of ignorance, the intellect by which one misperceives wrong to be right and right to be wrong, and other things in a perverted, up-side down manner—that intellect is ‘*Tāmasika*.’

(*Three kinds of firmness*—) O Pārtha (Arjuna)! The *avyabhicāriṇyā** (unswerving) firmness with which, established in equanimity (*samatā*), one controls the functions of one’s mind, vital breath, and senses—that firmness is called ‘*Sāttvika*.’ O Son of Prithā (Arjuna)! The firmness by which one who is extremely attached to the world, holds fast to one’s duty and sense objects (and hoards wealth) for the fulfillment of one’s desires, such firmness is called ‘*Rājasika*.’ O Pārtha! The firmness by which a deluded person does not give up (and remains immersed in) excessive sleep, fear, anxiety, grief, and arrogance, such firmness is called ‘*Tāmasika*.’

O Best of Bhāratas (Arjuna)! Now hear from Me about three types of happiness.

(*Three Kinds of Happiness*—) The happiness which is experienced through long practice of disciplines, attaining which the sorrows come to an end, which springs from serenity of soul born of merging one’s mind in God, and which initially appears (painful) like a poison, but is blissful like a nectar at the end—such happiness is called ‘*Sāttvika*.’ The happiness which is derived from the contact of senses with their objects (such as sound, touch, form, taste, and smell), which feels like nectar in the beginning but is like poison in the end—such happiness is called ‘*Rājasika*.’ The happiness which is derived from sleep, sloth, and negligence, and which deludes the self (by eclipsing discrimination) both at the beginning and at the end†—such happiness is called ‘*Tāmasika*.’

[*Out of Sāttvika, Rājasika, and Tāmasika, the ‘Sāttvika’ objects, by severing affinity with the actions, lead to the realization of the Supreme Self; the ‘Rājasika’ objects contribute to the cycle of birth and death; and the ‘Tāmasika’ objects lead to one’s downfall, i.e., they lead to lower states/regions and abject life-forms. Therefore, having read their respective description, one should try to adopt ‘Sāttvika’ objects and give up ‘Rājasika’ and ‘Tāmasika’ objects.*]

There is no creature either on earth, in heaven and among humans, gods, and among all movable and immovable creatures, that is free from the three *guṇas*; in addition, nowhere, in the countless universes, is there any being who is free from the three modes (*guṇas*) born of material nature (*Prakṛti*). It means that the entire creation is of the nature of three *guṇas* (*triguṇātamak*).

* Along with desiring God, having an inclination about mundane or heavenly sense pleasures also is ‘adultery’ (*vyabhicāra*); and not desiring any sense pleasures here or hereafter and only desiring God is unadulterated (unswerving) firmness.

† Swamiji clarifies further in the *Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī* (p. 1166) that ‘in seeking happiness, relishing the pleasures in the beginning is ‘*Bhoga*’ (sense-indulgence) and perceiving the consequences is ‘*Yoga*’ (equanimity).

O Scorcher of Foes (Arjuna)! Based on the impressions formed according to the actions performed during many births, the tendencies (*vr̥ttis*) for the three modes of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* arise. Based on the qualities born of their natural disposition, the duties of *Brāhmins*, *Kṣatriyas*, *Vaiśyas*, and *Śūdras* have been divided. Under this classification of duties, one does not have to strain in performing actions that are germane to one's own disposition because one performs actions quite naturally according to the qualities of one's *own nature*.

(*Natural Duties of Brāhmins*—) 1. Serenity; 2. Self-control; 3. Austerity (happily enduring hardships in the observance of one's sacred duties); 4. External and internal purity; 5. Forgiveness; 6. Uprightness of body, speech, mind, etc.; 7. Proper grasp of the meaning of the *Vedas*, scriptures, etc.; 8. Proper experience of sacred sacrifice (*yajñā*); and 9. Firm belief in God, *Vedas* etc.,—these are the natural duties of 'Brāhmins.'

(*Natural Duties of Kṣatriyas*—) 1. Valor; 2. Vigor; 3. Steadiness; 4. Resourcefulness; 5. Not fleeing even in a battle; 6. Generosity; and 7. Leadership—these are the natural duties of 'Kṣatriyas.'

(*Natural Duties of Vaiśyas*—) 1. Agriculture; 2. Cattle-rearing and protection of cows; and 3. Honest trade—these are the natural duties of 'Vaiśyas.'

(*Natural duties of Śūdras*—) Rendering service to members of all the four *varṇas* (fourfold order of the society) is the natural duty of 'Śūdras.'

By being devoted to one's natural duties selflessly and scrupulously, a person attains to the highest perfection (God-realization). It means that whatever spiritual welfare the *Brāhmins* obtain by observing the nine natural duties such as self-control, etc., the very same spiritual merit is obtained by the *Kṣatriyas* by observing the seven natural duties such as valor, etc., also by the *Vaiśyas* by observing their natural duties such as agriculture, cow protection, and honest trade, and the same spiritual merit is received by the *Śūdras* by the rendering of the service only.*

Now hear from Me the way one attains to the Supreme state (God-realization) while being engaged in one's natural (allotted) duties. He from Whom all beings proceed and by Whom all this is pervaded—by worshiping Him through the performance of one's own natural duties, one attains the highest perfection. [*Performance of actions for one's own sake is 'bondage;' performance of actions for the sake of the world is 'service;' and performance of actions for the sake of God is 'worship.'*]

Better is one's own duty even if inferior and difficult to perform than the duty of another which may be apparently superior and easy. For no sin is incurred by performing one's prescribed duty in consonance with one's own nature.

* Swamiji clarifies that the study of the *Gītā* reveals that one can achieve liberation by fulfilling one's natural duties—by remaining free from attachment and aversion and the desire for fruit of actions. *Sādhaka-Saṅjivani*, p. 1183.

Therefore, O Son of Kuntī! One should not give up the natural duty even though it may be flawed; for as fire is beset with smoke in the beginning, even so all undertakings are beset with some form of blemish in the beginning. There is certainly some blemish inherent in performing ordained actions* (*vihit karma*); but one who is free from the desire and attachment to pleasures is not tainted by blemish.

An aspirant whose intellect is unattached to any object, person, etc., whatsoever, whose self is disciplined, and who is free from all longing, such an aspirant, through renunciation (*Jñānayoga*), attains to the supreme state of actionlessness (*Naiṣkarmya-siddhi*). Such a person attains to the state of ‘actionless’ Self and all actions of that person become non-actions. O son of Kuntī! Now hear from Me briefly the spiritual means through which an aspirant, whose inner faculty (*antaḥakaran*) has become forever pure, attains to Brahman—the supreme consummation of *Jñānayoga* (the Path of Knowledge).

Endowed with a pure intellect, detached, cultivating solitude; eating but little, firmly restraining the senses, controlling body, speech, and mind, turning away from sound and other objects of sense; casting aside attraction and aversion; remaining ever engaged in meditation and concentration (on God); forsaking egoism, obstinacy, arrogance, lust for sense gratification, anger, possessiveness (greed for hoarding objects for sense indulgence); devoid of the feeling of ‘I and mine,’ and tranquil in mind—such an aspirant becomes worthy of becoming one Brahman.

Having become one with Brahman or eligible for Brahman (experientially) and being cheerful in mind and tranquil in spirit, such an aspirant (*sādhaka*) neither grieves nor desires. Alike to all beings, he attains supreme devotion to Me. By virtue of My devotion supreme, he comes to know Me, what My measure is and who I am in essence. Knowing Me thus in very truth and essence, he enters into Me straightway.

A devotee who has taken refuge in Me with exclusive and unswerving devotion, even while performing all ordained actions, by My Grace, attains to the Eternal, Imperishable Abode (*mat-prasādāt avāpnoti śāśvataṁ padam avyayam*). Therefore, mentally surrendering all actions to Me, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, and resorting to the *Yoga* of equanimity—i.e., by severing affinity with the world—fix your mind and thoughts constantly on Me. By being constantly absorbed in Me, you will, by My Grace, overcome all difficulties. [*The devotee’s only duty is to take refuge in God alone and to remember God*]

* All undertakings, including ordained actions, are tainted with some blemish—this means that all actions are inherently “binding” in effect as they lead to good, bad, or mixed results. But when the actions are performed with pure intention—i.e. without attachment to actions or fruits thereof—they become free from the blemish. Swamiji clarifies that when a surgeon performs a surgical operation with the intention of helping the patient (and not to earn money), even though he cuts the parts of patient’s body, yet he is not tainted with any blemish for he performs the operation selflessly for the welfare of the patient. *Sādhaka-Saṅjivanī*, p. 1193.

constantly. Then all the work of such a devotee is essentially performed by God. By His very special Grace, the Lord removes all the obstacles that lie on the spiritual path and grants His attainment.]

But if, from self-conceit, you will not listen to Me, you will perish. Your resolve, filled with self-conceit, that ‘I will not fight,’ is vainly directed; for your warrior-nature will compel you to engage in the battle. O son of Kuntī! Led by the compulsion of your warrior-nature, you will helplessly end up engaging in the battle which, out of delusion, you do not wish to engage.

O Arjuna! The Lord resides in the hearts of all beings. Those who regard their physical body as “I” and “mine,” the Lord causes them to wander around in the world by His mysterious power as if they were mounted on a machine (according to their good or bad actions). O Bhārata (Arjuna)! Seek refuge in Him alone, surrendering your whole being (*sarvabhāvena*). By His Grace you shall attain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.

Thus I have revealed to you the utmost secret of all secrets—this knowledge of the nature of *surrender* to the Lord. Reflect over it deeply and act as you will.

Listen again to My supreme word—the most exalted mystery (*sarvaguhyatamam**) of it all. You are my utmost dear friend; therefore, I will reveal to you what is best for you. Be My devotee—i.e., transform your ‘I’-ness by accepting that ‘I am verily God’s only.’ Fix your mind on Me—i.e., accept Me as your very own; worship Me with all your actions; and bow to Me with reverence—i.e., *be completely surrendered to Me*. By turning completely towards Me in this manner, you will verily attain to Me—This is my sincere pledge to you because you are dear to Me. **Giving up dependence on all duties—relinquishing deciding about them—take refuge in Me alone. I will release you from all sins. Do not grieve.**

[Taking refuge in the Lord (śarṇāgati) is the quintessence of the entire message of the Gita. In surrendering to the Lord lies the culmination of the Gita’s teachings. The devotee who has taken refuge in the Lord accepts firmly the belief that ‘I am God’s and God is mine.’ Then the devotee becomes forever free from the pangs of fear, sorrow, worry, etc.]

You should never impart this secret and supreme knowledge of *śarṇāgati* (surrender to the Supreme or taking refuge) to anyone who is devoid of austerity, or has no devotion and faith in Me and My words, or who is unwilling to listen to it due to arrogance, or who speaks ill of Me.

[By following the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā, all human beings can easily seek their spiritual welfare under all circumstances. That is why Śrī

* The expression ‘*sarvaguhyatamam*’ (the utmost supreme secret of all) occurs only once in the entire *Gītā*. According to Swamiji, taking refuge in the Lord-with-the-form (*sākār Paramātmā ki śaraṇāgati*) is the supreme secret of it all. —*Gītā Prabodhani*, p. 542.

Bhagavān declares its unique glory.—] Whosoever, with the sole purpose of attaining my consummate devotion (*parā-bhakti*), will narrate this most profound *Gītā* scripture among my devotees, that person shall undoubtedly come to Me. Not only this, among humans in this world, there is none who does a more loving service to Me, nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than a person who preaches My word to My devotees. And whosoever studies this sacred dialogue of ours, by that person too would I be worshiped through the *Yoga* of Knowledge as a sacrifice (*‘Jñāna-yajña’*). And he who listens to this dialogue with full faith and without fault-finding, that person too, by being liberated, shall attain to the worlds of the righteous (such as heaven).

O son of Prithā (Arjuna)! Have you listened to this teaching with an attentive mind? O conqueror of wealth (Arjuna)! Has your delusion born of ignorance been dispelled?

Arjuna said—O Changeless One (Śrī Kṛṣṇa)! My delusion has been dispelled and I have regained my memory (of Truth) *through Your Grace*. That is, I have realized that ‘God is all there is.’ I now stand firm, with all my doubts cleared, *ready to do as You command*. It means that, having taken complete refuge in You, I have now nothing left for me to do, except only following Your command!

Sañjaya said to Dhṛtarāṣṭra—Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Bhagavān Vāsudeva (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and the great-souled Arjuna, causing my hair to stand on end. Having been blessed with the divine vision by the grace of the great Sage, Veda Vyāsaji, I have heard this supreme and most profoundly secret *Yoga* (Gospel) directly from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Lord of *Yoga*—and not indirectly by way of tradition. O King! As I recall repeatedly this marvelous and sacred dialogue between Keśava (Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and Arjuna, I am thrilled with joy again and again. O King! Remembering also, again and again, the most wonderful cosmic form of Śrī Hari (Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa),* I am evermore struck with wonder and rejoice again and over again. Wherever there is Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of *Yoga*, and wherever there is Arjuna (the wielder of the *Gāndīva* bow), there will surely be fortune, victory, prosperity, and unfailing righteousness. Such is my conviction.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



Śrī Kṛṣṇarpanamastu



* The Lord, out of His boundless compassion, showed His Universal Cosmic Form to Arjuna in chapter 11.

ESSENCE OF GITA

Essence of the First Chapter—

Overpowered by the delusion of the mortal world, humans get confused about their real duty by being caught up in this dilemma—‘What should I do and what should I not do.’ Therefore, one should not become victim to delusion or get attached to sense pleasures.

Essence of the Second Chapter—

The (physical) body is perishable and the self (soul) which knows it is imperishable. Giving importance to this discriminating reasoning (*viveka*) and fulfilling one’s allotted duty diligently—by practicing any one of these two methods, worries and sorrows come to an end.

Essence of the Third Chapter—

Fulfilling one’s duty unselfishly for the well-being of others verily leads to spiritual welfare (or liberation).

Essence of the Fourth Chapter—

There are two ways to be free from the bondage of actions—Performing actions unselfishly by understanding the true essence of actions or by realizing (or attaining) the knowledge of the essential reality (*tattva-jñāna*).

Essence of the Fifth Chapter—

A person should not become happy or unhappy due to favorable or unfavorable circumstances. One who becomes happy or unhappy due to circumstances, cannot rise above the mundane world and experience the Bliss Supreme.

Essence of the Sixth Chapter—

Whatever be the spiritual practice, one should attain equanimity (*samatā*) of mind. Without equanimity of mind, a person cannot become completely free from the agitations of the mind (or the sway of the thoughts).

Essence of the Seventh Chapter—

‘God is all there is’—to accept this is the best spiritual practice.

Essence of the Eighth Chapter—

The fate of an embodied soul is determined according to its state of mind at the time of death. Therefore, remembering God at all times, we should perform our allotted duties. Only then shall we be able to remember God during our critical last moments.

Essence of the Ninth Chapter—

All human beings are entitled to God-realization, whatever be their social classification, stage of life, tradition, country, outer appearance, etc.

Essence of the Tenth Chapter—

Wherever any uniqueness, special quality, beauty, prominence, brilliance, strength, etc., are observed in the world, considering them to have sprung from the Lord, one should constantly contemplate on God alone.

Essence of the Eleventh Chapter—

Regarding this universe verily as God's cosmic form, everyone can have a vision of God's universal form—constantly.

Essence of the Twelfth Chapter—

A devotee, who fully surrenders himself to God, with his body, senses, mind, and intellect, is dear to God.

Essence of the Thirteenth Chapter—

There is only One Supreme Reality (*Paramātam-tattva*) which is to be known; knowing which one attains to immortality.

Essence of the Fourteenth Chapter—

To be free from the bondage of *saṃsāra* (mortal world), one has to rise above the triad of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—the three modes (*guṇas*) of material nature. One becomes free from these three modes through exclusive and unswerving devotion to God.

Essence of the Fifteenth Chapter—

The sole source and support of this universe, the infinitely superior Supreme Person is the One Lord only—knowing thus, one should worship the Lord with exclusive and unswerving devotion.

Essence of the Sixteenth Chapter—

Due to bad qualities and bad conduct only, an embodied soul roams about in 84,00,000 life forms (or lower regions) and suffers. Therefore it is essential to give up bad qualities and bad conduct in order to be free from the cycle of birth and death.

Essence of the Seventeenth Chapter—

Whatever auspicious task one begins with loving-devotion, one should begin it by remembering God and by uttering His Holy Name.

Essence of the Eighteenth Chapter—

Vedas are the essence of all scriptures; *Upaniṣads* are the essence of all *Vedas*;

the *Gītā* is the essence of *Upaniṣads*; and the essence of the *Gītā* lies in taking refuge in God (*Bhagavān ki Śarṇāgati*). One who takes refuge exclusively in the Lord, the Lord frees that person of all the sins.

Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!



*Seekers after Truth who would like to understand the message of the *Gītā* in great detail, must study Paramśraddheya Swamiji Shri Ramsukhdasji Maharaj's Commentary on Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, entitled 'Sādhaka-Sañjivanī.' This scripture has been published by 'Gita Press, Gorakhpur' and is also available in English, Bengali, Gujrati, Maraathi, Ordiya, Tamil, and Kannada language translations.*



GREATNESS OF THE GITA

When I read the *Bhagavad Gita* and reflect about how God created this universe everything else seems so superfluous. —*Albert Einstein*

“...a magnificent flower of Hindu mysticism.” —*Count Maurice Maeterlinck*

“...the *Bhagavad Gita*, perhaps the most beautiful work of the literature of the world.” —*Count Hermann Keyserling*

“...probably the most beautiful book which has ever come from the hand of man.” —*Emile-Louis Burnouf*

The *Gita* is one of the clearest and most comprehensive summaries of Perennial Philosophy ever to have been made. Hence it’s enduring value, not only for Indians but for all mankind. The *Bhagavadgita* is perhaps the most systematic scriptural statement of the Perennial Philosophy. —*Aldous Huxley*

In comparison to the *Bhagavad Gita* our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial. —*Henry David Thoreau*

The *Bhagavad Gita* is a magnificent philosophical-religious poem. It is in fact the most revered and celebrated text in Hinduism. This is indeed a teaching that has meaning and value for all times and places. —*Eliot Deutsch*

“Among the priceless teachings that may be found in the great Hindu poem of the *Mahabharata*, there is none so rare and priceless as this, ‘The Lord’s Song’.” —*Annie Besant*

When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to *Bhagavad Gita* and find a verse to comfort me. —*Mahatma Gandhi*

From a clear knowledge of the *Bhagavad Gita* all the goals of human existence become fulfilled. The *Bhagavad Gita* is the manifest quintessence of all the teachings of the *Vedic* scriptures. —*Sri Shankaracharya*

परमश्रद्धेय स्वामीजी श्रीरामसुखदासजी महाराजकी वाणीपर आधारित
'गीता प्रकाशन' का शीघ्र कल्याणकारी साहित्य

१. संजीवनी-सुधा—'गीता साधक-संजीवनी' पर आधारित शोधपूर्ण पुस्तक।
२. सीमाके भीतर असीम प्रकाश—मार्मिक प्रवचनोंका सार-संग्रह।
३. बिन्दुमें सिन्धु—मार्मिक प्रवचनोंका सार-संग्रह।
४. नये रास्ते, नयी दिशाएँ—मार्मिक प्रवचनोंका सार-संग्रह।
५. अनन्तकी ओर—मार्मिक प्रवचनोंका सार-संग्रह।
६. स्वातिकी बूँदें—मार्मिक प्रवचनोंका सार-संग्रह।
७. अनुभव-वाणी—चुने हुए अनमोल वचन। अँग्रेजी-भाषान्तरसहित।
८. सहज गीता (अँग्रेजीमें भी)—नये पाठकोंके लिये गीताका सरल हिन्दीमें भावार्थ।
९. हे नाथ! मैं आपको भूलूँ नहीं (गुजराती व अँग्रेजीमें भी)—इस प्रार्थनाके रहस्य तथा महत्त्वका अद्भुत वर्णन।
१०. कृपामयी भगवद्गीता (गुजराती व अँग्रेजीमें भी)—गीताकी महिमा और उसकी विलक्षणता।
११. लक्ष्य अब दूर नहीं (गुजरातीमें भी)—परमात्मप्राप्तिके विविध सुगम साधनोंका अनूठा संकलन।
१२. सहज समाधि भली (गुजरातीमें भी)—'चुप साधन' का विस्तृत विवेचन।
१३. अपने प्रभुको पहचानें—भगवान्के समग्ररूपका विस्तृत विवेचन।
१४. एक सन्तकी अमूल्य शिक्षा (क्या करें, क्या न करें)
१५. विलक्षण सन्त, विलक्षण वाणी—परमश्रद्धेय श्रीस्वामीजी महाराजकी वसीयत-सहित।
१६. गोरक्षा—हमारा परम कर्तव्य
१७. क्या करें, क्या न करें?—आचार-व्यवहारसे सम्बन्धित शास्त्र-वचनोंका अनूठा संग्रह।
१८. भवन-भास्कर (परिशिष्ट-सहित)—वास्तुशास्त्रकी महत्त्वपूर्ण बातें।
१९. सुखपूर्वक जीनेकी कला—सर्वोपयोगी प्रश्नोत्तर।
२०. क्या आप ईश्वरको मानते हैं?—साधकोंके लिये चेतावनी।
२१. सन्तवाणी (प्रथम शतक)—चुने हुए सौ अनमोल वचन।
२२. सन्तवाणी (द्वितीय शतक)—चुने हुए सौ अनमोल वचन।
२३. रहस्यमयी वार्ता—हस्तलिखित डायरीसे। विविध विषयोंसे सम्बन्धित मार्मिक प्रश्नोत्तर।
२४. जीवन्मुक्तिगीता—हस्तलिखित डायरीसे। तत्काल जीवन्मुक्तिके उपाय।
२५. बोलनेवाली श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (अर्थसहित)—इसे पढ़नेके साथ-साथ शुद्ध उच्चारणमें सुन भी सकते हैं।
२५. ग्लोब गीता—आकर्षक ग्लोबके आकारमें सम्पूर्ण गीता।

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